

**HELP for
HEROES**

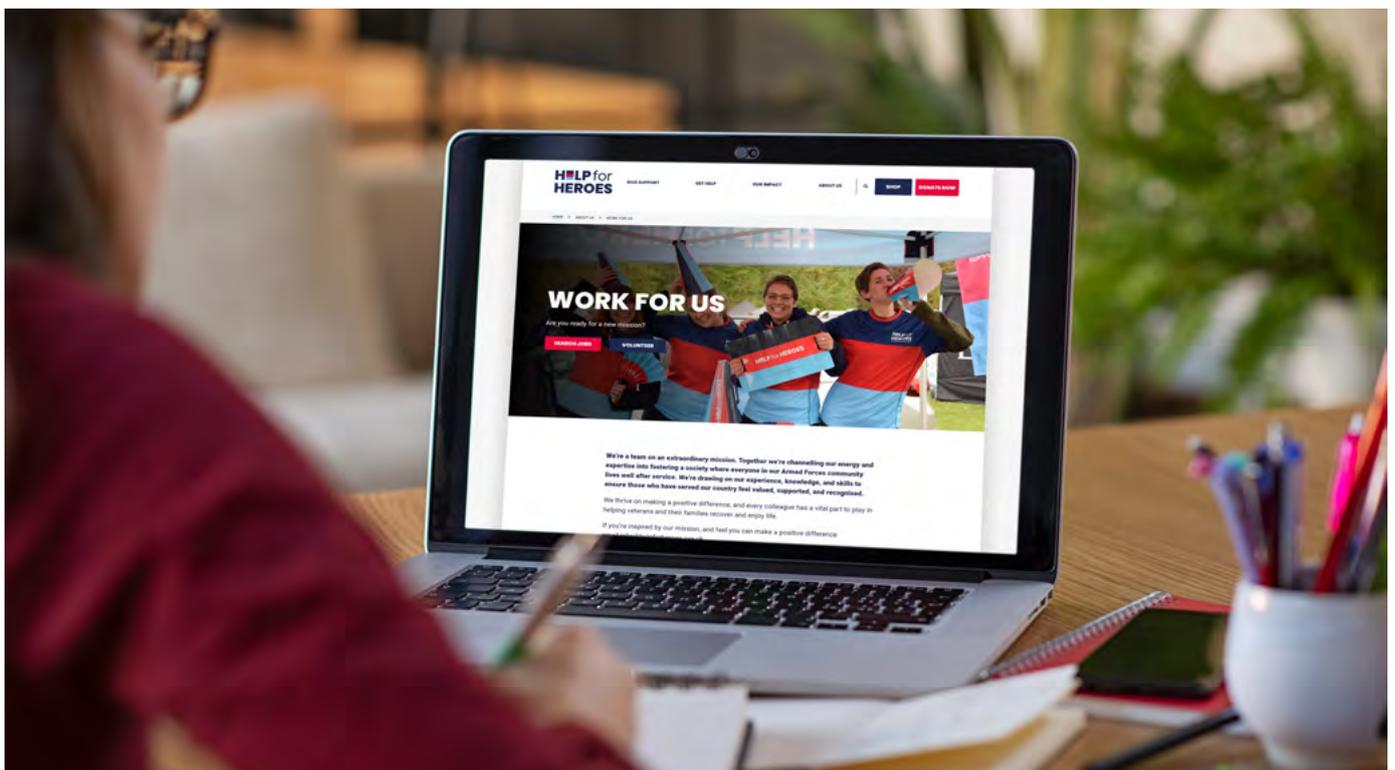
2023 INCLUSION REPORT



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Our diversity and inclusivity mission statement:

Together we will develop and nurture an inclusive organisation and culture which values diversity. This will mean all employees, volunteers, beneficiaries and supporters see and experience Help for Heroes as a charity for them, somewhere they will belong and thrive.



BELONGING AND INCLUSIVITY

A key theme we focused on last year at Help for Heroes was that of belonging.

In the military, many people feel a strong sense of belonging. The unique way of life, the deployments, the training, the pledge you've made to possibly risk your life to protect others. It creates real camaraderie. And for many, the Armed Forces community is a tight knit family.

But that's not always the experience for everyone, particularly once they leave.

Every day we help people with physical and mental health conditions, disabilities, welfare issues and other challenges to feel included in society again.

Our accessible sports allow people of all abilities to be active.

Along with our colleagues at partner charity Blesma, our lobbying was instrumental in securing the return of the Veterans Mobility Fund, to provide specialist equipment to veterans with physical disabilities. This helps people lead more fulfilling lives and access their local community.

We've also been working with people who've not experienced that sense of belonging, and instead have faced discrimination, exclusion and hardship:

- members of the LGBT+ community who were kicked out of the Armed Forces simply because of who they loved
- Afghan civilians who served on the frontline alongside British troops and had to flee their homeland in fear of their lives, who are now separated from their families.

There are many active strands to our internal diversity and inclusivity (D&I) agenda, and we're proud of the progress we're making.

Our flexible working arrangements help colleagues across the UK juggle life, family, caring responsibilities, and work.

We have a D&I forum where we celebrate successes and discuss areas for improvement.

Through our huddles, networks of colleagues support others with a shared experience, such as neurodiversity, long-term illness, or the menopause.

Knowledge and understanding can lead to better empathy and working relations. That's why we invite experts to give guest talks and workshops on a range of topics affecting people in our workplace.

We're a listening organisation. Through regular surveys we give colleagues the chance to have their say on workplace wellbeing, and our leadership team and trustees scrutinise those survey findings and act on them. Everyone has the chance to discuss those survey findings in teams.

A workplace where all colleagues feel they belong and fulfil their potential, has a direct benefit for all those we serve.



James Needham
Help for Heroes chief executive officer



PROUD TO SUPPORT OUR LGBT+ VETERANS

Up until the year 2000, if you served in the Armed Forces, it was illegal to be gay.

You could sacrifice everything for your country. But under criminal law, you weren't allowed to love who you wanted to. Doing so meant you risked being hounded out of the military and even going to jail.

We're proud of the work we've done with our partners at Fighting with Pride, the UK's only LGBT+ veterans' charity, to raise awareness of the impact the ban has had on people's lives.

We've supported Fighting with Pride's campaigning and continue to fight for justice and financial compensation for the hundreds of veterans who served in the military, and who suffered substantial harm to their health,

emotions and finances because of the ban.

Veterans unfairly dismissed are living in poverty in their old age because they were denied a military pension and have not received compensation due to them. This is a matter that we're continuing to campaign on.

At Help for Heroes, we support everyone in the Armed Forces community. We want all veterans and families to feel confident accessing our services and support, knowing they'll be treated with dignity, respect and understanding. To demonstrate this to the LGBT+ veteran community we've joined the Pride in Veterans Standard (PiVS).

PiVS is a programme developed by Fighting with Pride. Being part of PiVS demonstrates our commitment to delivering the highest standards for LGBT+ veterans. Organisations who have acquired the PiVS standards will work proactively to deliver the following commitments:

- Warmly welcome LGBT+ veterans, serving personnel and their families.
- Ensure all staff, volunteers, and members have an awareness of the different challenges faced by LGBT+ people, in particular, those who were impacted by the Armed Forces 'gay ban'.
- Have a clear understanding of the needs of LGBT+ veterans and tailor support to meet their specific needs.
- Understand that for some LGBT+ veterans, their experiences have impacted their mental health, so ensure any support in this area is tailored to meet their specific needs.
- Promote inclusion, dignity and respect for LGBT+ people in everything they do.
- Recognise the different groups in the LGBT+ community and understand their needs may be different.





FLEXIBLE WORKING

We are a team dedicated to making a positive difference, with each colleague playing a crucial role in helping veterans and their families recover and enjoy life.

We are committed to fostering a positive, flexible and enjoyable place to work where everyone can perform at their best and feel a sense of belonging.

Flexible and remote working provides fantastic opportunities for people to balance work and life. It also means that the Charity can attract talent from a wider

geographical area. Currently, one third of our colleagues work a flexible pattern to support their work-life balance.

In our recent all colleague survey, 86 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I am happy with the flexible working practices here."

We continue to support our colleagues through our flexible ways of working. Our core working hours are 10am to 3pm, Monday to Friday. Colleagues are required to work core hours, but can complete the rest of their hours at their convenience between 7am and 9pm over the course of a fortnight.

HUDDLES



In 2023, we expanded the number of huddles. These are colleague-led groups designed to foster mutual support and drive improvements and deeper understanding on specific interest areas.

These forums have been invaluable in building a strong, interconnected community within our Charity and have driven business improvements.

The increased number of huddles has had a significant impact, providing a platform for colleagues to share their experiences, offer insights, and collaborate on solutions to common challenges. This

initiative has not only enhanced communication but has also driven meaningful changes in our workplace policies and practices.

By participating in these huddles, colleagues are empowered to voice their concerns and help shape a more inclusive and supportive work environment. This collaborative approach ensures that diverse perspectives are heard and valued, leading to

more effective problem-solving and innovation.

These forums have facilitated greater awareness and understanding of various issues, from mental health and well-being to diversity and inclusion. As a result, our organisation has become more responsive to the needs of our workforce, fostering a culture where everyone feels supported and valued.



Menopause Huddle

Our Menopause Huddle was instrumental in the creation of our menopause Policy which was launched in 2023. This policy sets out the rights of employees experiencing menopausal symptoms and explains the support available to them.

Neurodiversity Huddle

Our Neurodiversity Huddle has championed the use of technology such as Grammarly, to support colleagues with dyslexia. They are also working with our people team to create tools and training to support colleagues with a neurodiverse condition, as well as training for managers to support their teams well.

Welsh Speakers and Learners Huddle

The Welsh Speakers and Learners Huddle offers a chance for colleagues who love the Welsh language to get together and practice.

Running huddle

Where runners of all abilities support one another on their journey to fitness and fun.

Work-Life huddle

The Work-Life huddle brings together colleagues managing a life-changing health condition or supporting a loved one. It offers a space to discuss unique challenges faced by colleagues in this situation, and to explore how we can support each other and make the workplace as comfortable as possible.

Working Families Huddle

The Working Families Huddle is a chance for parents, grandparents or carers of a dependent of any age, to connect with colleagues with similar responsibilities and explore changes the Charity could make to help people.

Men at Work huddle

With 30 per cent of the workforce men, being a little outnumbered can sometimes lead to isolation, the Men at Work huddle is a chance for men to meet and chat.



Serving Partners Huddle

The Serving Partners Huddle is for colleagues who understand the unique challenges and wonders of being in a relationship or family with someone serving in the military. Training for managers to support their teams well.

STANDING UP FOR OUR AFGHAN ALLIES

In 2023, we joined forces with the Refugee Council to speak out about the UK Government's failure to keep its promise to reunite Afghan refugees with their families.

These are people who served on the frontline alongside our troops, risking their safety to provide information that saved the lives of British Armed Forces.

When the Taliban seized power in Afghanistan in August 2021, the UK Government made a commitment to all Afghan citizens who served under British command that they would be resettled in the UK; along with their families who were also at risk from Taliban reprisals.

However, two years on many families remain separated.

Figures from December 2023 suggest there were over 2,000 people who were eligible for the Afghans Relocation and Assistance Policy (Arap) but were awaiting relocation to the UK.

A letter from our Chief Executive James Needham and the Refugee Council Chief Executive Enver Solomon was published in the [Daily Mail](#) highlighting their plight.

Through our own Project Solidarity, we have supported over 200 Afghan civilians and their families who have resettled in the UK. Safe relocation from Afghanistan is merely the first step in their journeys.

Our teams are on hand to offer further help where needed, such as mental health support, welfare advice and help with living arrangements as many refugees have spent long periods of time in bridging hotels.





LINE MANAGER DEVELOPMENT

We recognise that the work environment is evolving and effective management is critical in supporting our colleagues to perform to their best.

We continue to invest in the professional development of our line managers through programmes that focus on their remote management skills, enhancing communication skills and fostering team collaboration.

This ongoing learning ensures that our managers are well-prepared to handle the challenges

of remote management and are up to date with best practices.

By empowering our managers with the right skills and knowledge, we ensure that they can lead their teams effectively, support their colleagues' well-being, and drive our Charity towards continued success.

It is also a chance to further establish a supportive network of colleagues from across the Charity.

SUPPORT WITH MOBILITY – THE VETERANS MOBILITY FUND

In the 2023 Spring Budget, the Chancellor announced £3 million in funding to reopen the Veterans Mobility Fund, following a two-year campaign led by Help for Heroes and Blesma, the limbless veterans charity. And we then put huge effort into our subsequent application to assume responsibility of the fund's administration.

We worked with MPs, the Office for Veterans' Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and the Department for Health and Social Care to build the case for the continuation of the Mobility Fund stating that UK to Government has a duty meet its Armed Forces Covenant commitment of 'special consideration' for veterans with serious physical injury resulting from their Service.

The momentum had been building before the Treasury announced funding in March 2023. We reached 30,000 signatures on our public petition to extend the Veterans Mobility Fund in under a four-week period.





WORKPLACE WELLBEING

We continue to recognise the importance of supporting colleagues and line managers around wellbeing and we're committed to creating a positive, flexible and enjoyable workplace that works for everyone – a place where everyone belongs, and everyone thrives.

In the year we refreshed our Wellbeing Hub where we bring together a bank of resources to support wellbeing.



Our wellbeing

Wellbeing tips & resources
Listening programme
Key policies



Diversity & Inclusion

Our D&I strategy
Huddles
Data
Our D&I Forum



Need support?

Employee Assistance Programme
Pension and life assurance

ACCESS TO WORK

In 2023 we saw an increase in access to work grants after we made efforts to raise awareness with colleagues and managers that this funding is available.

These grants have been used to support a range of access needs such as tools to support dyslexia and hearing support. They enable us to support our colleagues with what they need to work for Help for Heroes.

We have seen that colleagues are open to sharing their personal challenges with their line managers, actively seeking support to navigate their work environment. This is demonstrated by 84 per cent of colleagues in our last all colleague survey agreeing or strongly agreeing with the phrase "I am comfortable being myself at work."





LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL COLLEAGUES

We are committed to creating an inclusive environment, so all colleagues feel valued, respected, and supported regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, or any other characteristic.

In 2023 our D&I Forum organised talks on the following subjects:

- menopause
- living with a hearing impairment and an introduction to British Sign Language
- experiences of members of the LGBT+ community in the military by colleagues from Fighting with Pride
- disability inclusion
- neurodiversity

We have additional resources available via our learning platform. These courses focus on providing our colleagues with the skills and confidence to not only comply with legal requirements but to be allies and help make the Charity a more supportive and inclusive environment.

GENDER PAY GAP

At Help for Heroes in 2023, 71 per cent of employees were women and women occupied 63 per cent of our highest paid roles.

In our lower and lower middle roles, women occupied 75 per cent and 77 per cent of roles. This has an impact on the gender pay gap which measures the difference between men and women across the whole Charity.

In the last year, we've seen a slight widening of our gender pay gap.

The increase is partly due to a higher number of male colleagues in senior, higher paying roles.

The gender pay gap is a complex issue that requires ongoing effort and strategic initiatives. We remain steadfast in our commitment to closing this gap through fair and inclusive hiring practices and transparency around pay and pay progression.

Achieving pay equity is not just about the numbers; it's about creating an inclusive culture where every colleague can thrive.

Mean gender Pay Gap



7.32%

The average pay for women is 7.32% less than the average pay for men.

Median gender Pay Gap



11.01%

Median women's pay is 11.01% less than the median pay of men.



Mean and Median Gender Pay Gap explained:

Mean Pay Gap:

This is the difference in average hourly pay between the two gender groups, men and women. The average hourly rate of pay is calculated by adding up all the hourly pay rates of each gender group and dividing it by the total number of people in that gender group.

Median Pay Gap:

This is the difference in median earnings between men and women. It is calculated by comparing the earnings of the middle employee for one gender group (men) to the middle earner of the other gender group (women).

*ACAS hourly rate calculation.

HELP for HEROES

Find us at: helpforheroes.org.uk Give us a call on: **0300 303 9888**

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