

# Alabaré HOMES FOR VETERANS

## Moses' Story

Moses joined the Army in 1980, and served until 1986 in the 1st battalion Welsh Guards. During these six years, he served one tour in West Belfast and was part of the Task Force sent to the Falklands. In 1982 he and his battalion were preparing for action whilst being transported to shore on the Sir Galahad when it was struck by enemy aircraft fire and suffered catastrophic damage. Moses witnessed horrific injuries sustained by his colleagues, some fatal, in the incident that cost 48 personnel their lives.

Nightmares plagued Moses, even after he left the Army in 1986. He started drinking to try and forget them. Much later, Moses was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. His drinking increased, and eventually he started using drugs to numb his pain. Almost inevitably his relationship with his wife broke down and he lost his job. Moses became homeless and ended up living on the streets.

Life on the streets became the norm for Moses for several years.

Around three years ago, Moses made contact with Alabaré's Trowbridge Drop In Centre, and started regularly coming to the centre to get hot food and wash. Whilst at the centre he was also able to access practical help for the first time thanks to support from Alabaré Drop In staff and Wiltshire Addiction Support Project (which works in partnership with Alabaré in Trowbridge). Through this combined support Moses was able to control his addictions and eventually stop his dependencies altogether. He also accessed some additional support from Combat Stress.

Moses is now committed to helping others to access the support he has benefited from.



It is estimated that more Falklands veterans have taken their own lives since the end of the 1982 war, than the 255 British troops who died in action. (source: South Atlantic Medal Association)

**What's needed?** Alabaré plans to develop 5 Veterans homes, creating 35-40 bed-spaces, to provide supported accommodation for ex-Service Personnel. Located in Hampshire, Wiltshire, Dorset, Devon and Bristol each of the 5 homes will have 2 FTE staff. We anticipate supporting a total of 80 people per year – equal to 400 over 5 years.

Alabaré will also develop up to 10 'Move On' homes to support ex-Service Personnel on their journey to independent living. Each home will have 3 bed-spaces supporting 30 people per year equal to 150 over 5 years.

**Crisis Support for Veterans** - Alabaré is committed to ensuring that our Drop In Centres are accessible for ex-Service Personnel in crisis. We will meet their day time shelter needs and make referrals to appropriate projects. We anticipate supporting 20 people per annum – a total of 100 over 5 years.

**Preventing Homelessness** – Alabaré will have a trained staff member on each of our support teams in Wiltshire, Bournemouth and North Somerset to assist Veterans and their dependents who are at risk of homelessness. We anticipate supporting 40 people per annum – a total of 200 over 5 years.

**Training** – Alabaré will develop a range of training initiatives to ensure ex-Service Personnel have skills to manage their own accommodation and seek and maintain employment. These services we anticipate will support 100 people each year, a total of 500 over 5 years.

**To provide this support for veterans Alabaré needs to raise funds of £5 million.**

At Alabaré Christian Care and Support we help some of the vulnerable people in our communities, enabling them to overcome the barriers they face and achieve fulfilling lives. Through more than 40 projects in the South and South West, we provide support, accommodation and training for:

- People who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless
- People with learning disabilities
- Prisoner & Ex-Offenders
- People with mental ill-health
- Women leaving the sex industry
- Young people
- Ex-Armed Forces personnel

ENABLING A FULFILLING LIFE

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# Alabaré Homes for Veterans

SUPPORTING EX-FORCES PERSONNEL



Alabaré is leading the way in providing dedicated support for those Service veterans who struggle to cope after leaving the military.

Our specialist teams give each person practical and emotional help to deal with the experiences that they have had, the skills and ability to rebuild their lives and the support to regain their independence.

We are already supporting veterans of conflict in Afghanistan, the Gulf Wars, Northern Ireland, Bosnia, the Falklands and others.

10.5 million veterans and their dependents make up the ex-Service community. It is estimated that 19,000 Service personnel return to civilian life each year.

## Alabaré's approach

Alabaré is unique in providing accommodation, combined with dedicated, intensive support for veterans in the South West.



Leaving the Armed Forces is a massive step – Alabaré, founded in 1991, has been supporting veterans in our projects for many years. We have come to recognise that ex-Service personnel progress most significantly when supported by people who understand Service life and recognise the challenges they face when leaving. Our focus is on helping each person to achieve stability in their lives through improved health, securing their own home and employment or training to achieve their vocational goals.

**"This home offers hope, respect and honour"**  
Resident at Alabaré's Plymouth Home for Veterans

Individuals may not recognise the symptoms of post-traumatic stress, and physically the condition may not manifest for several years after the trauma. Some veterans do not seek help for their condition for many years after leaving the services - Combat Stress report that on average veterans accessing their support left the Forces 14 years prior. (Source: Combat Stress)

Alabaré is very grateful for the support of:



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## Alabaré Homes for Veterans in:

- Plymouth (opened in February 2009)
- Bristol (planned opening in November 2010)
- Weymouth (planned opening in November 2010)

## Dedicated accommodation and support

**Plymouth** Working in partnership with The Royal British Legion in Plymouth, Alabaré opened its first residential project specifically for veterans in 2009. Supporting seven ex-Service veterans at one time, the project was full within one week of opening. Each resident receives practical and emotional support tailored to their own specific needs in an understanding and non-judgemental environment. Support is provided by both our Alabaré team and external agencies, including those specialising in issues such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, working to deliver the goals of each person's individual support plan.

**In its first year of operation, Alabaré's Plymouth Home for Veterans supported 20 ex-Service personnel.**

In 2010, The Forces Trust generously funded the remodelling of the ground floor of Alabaré's Plymouth Home for Veterans, improving the residential facilities and reflecting our belief in the importance of the built environment of our projects.



Photographs are used for illustrative purposes only and are not necessarily of service users referred to in the text

The Royal British Legion are currently receiving requests for help from at least 6 homeless veterans per week in Bristol.

This summer, ABF- The Soldier's Charity, The Royal British Legion and The Grocers' Charity generously approved grants to Alabaré to help set up further houses for veterans in the Bristol and Weymouth areas.

**Bristol** In the Bristol area, two houses will provide support for a total of eight veterans at any one time, providing them with the space and support they need to address the challenges they are facing, and set goals which focus positively on their future. Staff will help them to move through a programme that assists residents both practically and emotionally aiming to help them move on to successful sustained independence.

House one will provide medium to intensive support to veterans entering the project, helping them to access appropriate specialist support to address any specific health or addiction issues that they may have. Residents will subsequently have the opportunity to move on to a second home with lower levels of support, which will act as a stepping stone and help prepare residents for the transition to independent living. In this way, we aim to reduce the probability of relapse.

Alabaré is seeking additional funding to support our veteran's programme in the Bristol area.

**Weymouth** In Weymouth, the Royal British Legion have provided three years of funding to support Alabaré's Homes for Veterans scheme in the town. As well as being open to referrals from agencies and individuals, the project will link up with local prisons in the area to help veterans who are leaving custody access support. Eight veterans at one time will be supported in Weymouth. Additional support will be available to those residents who have moved on from the project but who need advice and encouragement when they first start living independently again.

**Alabaré aim to support at least 15 ex-Service personnel per year in each of our Homes for Veterans.**

Alabaré's Plymouth Home for Veterans' first resident served in the RAF. He said...  
*"I am a recovering alcoholic.....For the first time since leaving the Services I was around people who thought the same way as me. It is extremely difficult for some ex-Service men and women to fit into civvy street; here we all had something in common."*

# Alabaré HOMES FOR VETERANS



John was living in Bournemouth when he faced eviction due to unpaid rent following an error with his benefits payments. Following service for four years with the Army Parachute Regiment, John was suffering with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Alabaré's Bournemouth Floating Support team worked with John and specialist charities to help him pay off his rent arrears, and supported him to find more suitable accommodation. He is now managing well and is learning a trade at his local college, after which he hopes to return to full-time employment.

The most common issues for those ex-Service veterans aged under 45 are financial difficulty, unemployment, lack of skills or training, depression and mental health problems. The rate of unemployment amongst veterans is also twice that of the rest of the population.\*

(Source – Profile and Needs of the Ex Service Community 2005-2020 (Summary and conclusions of the Welfare Needs Research Programme September 2006)).

## Front line support

Alabaré's Drop In Centres in Salisbury and Trowbridge offer a welcoming safe daytime shelter for adults who are homeless or living in unsuitable accommodation. For ex-Service personnel who are struggling, the Drop In Centres offer hot food, clothing and support and advice on housing, health and employment. This walk-in service provides a stepping stone to more structured support, opportunity to find out about other Alabaré services and help accessing appropriate accommodation.

## Helping veterans in accommodation keep their home

Alabaré's Floating Support Services provide accommodation related support to people in their own homes aiming to help them to maintain their tenancies and prevent homelessness. Help is provided with budgeting, claiming benefits and form filing. Once the support is no longer needed it "floats away".

## Learning new skills

Alabaré's Home and Money Training Programme is a series of group workshops, covering issues such as benefits and budgeting and is aimed at equipping people with skills to maintain their tenancies/accommodation. We are seeking funding to run a Home and Money Training Programme tailored to the specific needs of veterans, working with those exiting the Services and veterans already in accommodation. Our aim is to help prevent veterans becoming homeless in the first place.

## Alabaré Homes for Veterans aims:

- To encourage an awareness of personal responsibility around budgeting, good relationships and safety and security.
- To enable veterans to build constructive and positive relationships within the wider community.
- To increase awareness around physical and mental wellbeing and enable service users to access appropriate health and mental welfare services.
- To enable veterans to enjoy, identify and pursue their aspirations through training, education, employment and hobbies thus increasing their confidence and self worth.
- To enable veterans to gain the skills and confidence to move on to sustainable independent accommodation.
- To encourage veterans who have successfully moved on to become mentors to current residents.

An estimated 20,000 veterans are in the British criminal justice system, including almost one in ten of the prison population. There are more ex-soldiers in prison, on parole or serving community sentences than actually serving in Afghanistan. (Source: Napo, Summer 2009)