



SUPPORT OUR PARAS
Regimental Headquarters
The Parachute Regiment
Merville Barracks
Colchester, CO2 7UT

25 April 2023

THE SUPPORT OUR PARAS 'BEACONS INITIATIVE'

On behalf of the Chairman and Trustees of the Parachute Regiment & Airborne Forces Charity (PRAFC), also known as *Support Our Paras*, we are proud and pleased to introduce you to our first volunteer '**Beacons**'.

Supporting the welfare needs of our serving and veteran paratroopers is and will always be the absolute and unquestionable Main Effort of *Support Our Paras*. As such, we are constantly striving for better ways to do more good and meet more need within our nationwide community of Airborne veterans.

The PRAFC's Beacons Initiative aims to do just this by using local knowledge, peer experience, empathy and shared service experience as a way of investigating, confirming, assessing and addressing potential welfare issues within the PARA and Airborne veteran community. The individuals who we have now selected, trained and tasked to do so as our first Beacons are all fellow veterans. Their role is to operate at local level to identify cases of potential need early, interact quickly and address the issues that they find. Wherever possible, they will aim to solve problems at the lowest level, but where they cannot be dealt with quickly and easily by informal means, then these issues will be confidentially raised for early professional intervention by the PRAFC's full-time, professional Welfare Team.

Bringing all this together, the Beacons' mission statement can be summarised as follows:

To provide and facilitate peer-driven, PRAFC-funded, one-to-one bespoke welfare support to PARA and Airborne veterans via a programme and pathway configured to enable earlier awareness, identification, intervention and management of our veterans' welfare issues and concerns.

Developed in concert with Regimental Headquarters of The Parachute Regiment and the Parachute Regimental Association, this Initiative relies heavily upon us recruiting the right sort of people as Beacons; all Airborne veteran themselves, they cover a range of ages and backgrounds but what they have in common is that they are all people who can provide the right type of support to fellow paratroopers in need via the instinctive understanding and personal empathy which can only come from a shared, lived service experience.

The help to be provided could range from as little as a chat with a friendly face over a brew or a walk in the hills, or else maybe a link-up with the local PRA or fellow veterans from the same unit, sub-unit or tour experience, through to recommending enabling a full-on intervention by the Welfare Team and coordinating local support from RBL, ABF or SSAFA.

The Beacons are live as of today, 02 May 2023. If you think that you know somebody who needs their help then please contact the PRAFC Welfare Manager, Lisa Stapleton. Lisa is our PRAFC Beacons Coordinator and she is contactable at WM@supportourparas.org, on landline at 01206 817103 or on her mobile at 07340 347136.

Patron: His Majesty King Charles III KG KT GCB OM AK QSO PC ADC

Chairman: Lt Gen Sir John Lorimer KCB DSO MBE

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