



THE WARRIOR



Newsletter for ESVH & the Military Community In East Sussex

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WELL DONE!



AND all other essential services, postmen, milkmen, paperboys (and ladies) waste collectors, etc., plus all volunteers across the County

Coronavirus: 'Pandemic is not over' says PM

At a Downing Street press conference on Monday, the Prime Minister confirmed that 'freedom day' would take place on Monday, 19th July, despite the growing number of cases, driven by the Delta variant.

However, he warned that the coronavirus pandemic "is not over" as he said mask use will be advised in crowded and enclosed spaces even after legal controls end.

"It is absolutely vital that we proceed now with caution and I cannot say this powerfully or emphatically enough: this pandemic is not over." He emphasised.

A "gradual return to work over the summer" is expected rather than a rush back to the office en masse. Nightclubs and other venues with crowds should use vaccine passports for entry "as a matter of social responsibility".

A number of scientists and medical experts have expressed unease about the plans as COVID-19 case numbers accelerate rapidly across the country.

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Support Services Telephone Contact Numbers

NHS 111 Any suspicion of coronavirus, ring 111 IMMEDIATELY, for advice. Some GPs have a telephone triage service as well. Also ring 111 for veterans' mental health service HIS.

ESVH 07884263824/01424 446292/Freephone 0330 1077 808

STAR Freephone 0300 303 81600

ESRA 01424 435318

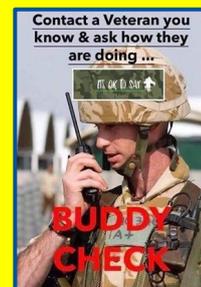
Seaview 01424 717981

Job Centre Plus Hastings 0800 169 190

Samaritans Hastings Freephone 0330 094 5717

Bexhill Caring Community 01424 215116

Hastings Covid-19 Community Support Hotline 01424 451019



East Sussex Veterans Hub 99/100 Group, 5 Harold Place. Hastings TN34 1JA
01424 446292 Email: ESVH99100@esvh99100.onmicrosoft.com

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There are now 34 hotspots in the UK. The exponential growth means that as of 7 July, the latest date for which data are available, 37 areas of the UK had more than 500 cases per 100,000 people.

In the seven days up to 12th July, there were 228,189 positive tests across the UK, up 28.1% on the previous seven days.

Hospital admissions, while relatively low compared to the winter, are also increasing. In the seven days to 6 July, there were 3,081 hospitalisations, up 56.6% from the previous week.



Afghanistan Over?

The head of the Royal Navy has praised the dedication of the service throughout two decades of UK involvement in Afghanistan.

Britain's military mission in the country has almost come to a close, with Prime Minister Boris Johnson stating that the majority of personnel have now withdrawn.

Personnel from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines have been present since UK forces entered Afghanistan in 2001, the latter taking the lead on elements of Operation Herrick - the British combat operation in the country ending in 2014.

Naval divers, surgeons, medics, engineers, technicians, logisticians and more have been at the heart of British efforts in Afghanistan over the last 20 years, while 60 Commandos lost their lives there.

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Tony Radakin said: "Today we mark the immense contribution of all those in defence,



in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines who served with distinction during 20 years of operations in Afghanistan.

"We particularly thank serving personnel, veterans and families for your commitment and dedication. "We will never forget your courage and service, particularly of those who were injured and those who made the ultimate sacrifice."

Britain entered Afghanistan with the US in 2001 following the 9/11 attacks in New York and Washington, mounting an assault on the Taliban. Since, UK involvement has featured Naval Strike Wing air strikes, submarine-launched cruise missile strikes on enemy positions and thousands of troop transport flights from the Commando Helicopter Force.

Whilst reconnaissance flights from Fleet Air Arm have provided counter-terror intelligence from above, tracking weapons and bomb-making shipments to assist arrests on the ground.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Wigston's also made a statement to the RAF.

"We can be very proud of all that we did to support the people of Afghanistan, to stabilise and build capacity and, above all, to deny extremists a safe haven to plot terror on our streets," he said.



His message thanked the RAF Whole Force, including reservists, civil servants and contractors, for their sacrifices.

"We faced a ruthless enemy, which fought in unconventional ways, without morals or care for the civilian population they hid behind," ACM Wigston said.

In the "heartfelt thank-you", the RAF chief encouraged the entire service community to "look back with pride in the knowledge you did your best when called upon to serve".

"You were tested and were not found wanting," he said.

Chief of Defence Staff General Sir Nick Carter said The UK may be withdrawing most of its troops from Afghanistan, but it was not defeated on the battlefield.

"All those who fought in Afghanistan can hold their heads up very high," he said.

"The British military showed remarkable adaptability against a very cunning and nefarious opponent, and they showed phenomenal courage under great pressure.



"And, we have prevented attacks like the one we saw from al-Qaeda on 9/11 ever occurring from Afghanistan in this intervening period, and I think there's no reason to suppose that that can't prevail."

At the height of the war, NATO had more than 130,000 troops from 50 nations in Afghanistan. The UK had 9,500 personnel and 137 bases in Helmand province alone.

But with both the US and UK withdrawing their troops from Afghanistan, violence has been rising and the Taliban are thought to now control more than a third of the country's 400 districts.

Gen Carter said the Afghan army had made a strategic decision to withdraw from some rural parts of the country and concentrate forces on key urban areas.

Asked if he thought the almost two decades spent there had been a success or a failure, Gen Carter said it was "too early to judge" - and he saw three possible scenarios that could play out.

"I think, first and foremost, the current Afghan government, with its very well-trained army, could hold the ring, as it's demonstrating through holding all of the provincial capitals at the moment," he said.

"The second scenario - a very sad scenario - is where the country fractures and you see that government collapse, the Taliban perhaps controlling part of the country and the other nationalities and ethnicities controlling other parts of the country, like we saw in the 1990s.

"Then I think there is a third, more hopeful scenario, which is where you actually see a political compromise and talks occurring.

"If the current Afghan government holds on for long enough and proves to the Taliban it can't be defeated, then I think the third scenario becomes ever more likely."

Asked if the US and UK were abandoning their responsibilities by leaving, the general said both nations would maintain a "diplomatic presence in Kabul for the foreseeable future".

He added the current Afghan army was the best the country had ever had, and that Afghan government institutions, including the army, would continue to receive support in the form of international funding.



HMS Prince Of Wales Visits Gibraltar

HMS Prince of Wales has arrived in Gibraltar for her first port visit outside the United Kingdom. The Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carrier is there as part of a programmed logistics visit as she continues training and sea trials.

The 65,000-tonne Royal Navy vessel has been undergoing different simulations to prepare for active deployment and will move on to Carrier Sea Training later this year.



Last month the aircraft carrier trained with three British Army Apaches developing their take-off and landing capabilities.

The training marked the first time an Apache and an F-35 have operated from the same flight deck.



Blind Champion Veteran

A blind veteran from East Sussex decided to walk 100 laps around the garden at Blind Veterans UK's training and rehabilitation centre in Brighton, in order to raise money for the national charity for vision-impaired ex-Service men and women.

Nancy Bowstead, 99 who lives in Brighton, will turn 100 on 18 September this year and has been inspired by Sir Captain Tom's fundraising efforts. Nancy says:



"I would love to do a fundraising challenge before my 100th birthday. Sir Captain Tom was a great inspiration and I hope that I can raise as much money as he did!"

Nancy joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) in 1941, training at Lancaster and Oswestry. Selected for officer training, she trained at Harrogate and Edinburgh and was commissioned as an officer in 1943. She was then on a gun site in Swansea for the remainder of the war and was discharged as a Subaltern in 1948.

Nancy lost her sight due to glaucoma but fortunately she found Blind Veterans UK and started to receive support from the charity in 2011. She says:

"I have been a resident at the Brighton for nearly five years. I've lived here during lockdown and haven't been able to see my family. It's so important to keep supporting charities especially at the moment and I want to do my bit to get the country back on its feet again"

Last year during the lockdown period, Nancy sadly lost Peter whom she met at the Brighton Centre. In March 2019, Nancy and Peter had a love blessing at the charity's chapel in Brighton.

The staff at the Brighton centre decorated the garden ahead of Nancy's walk with bunting and music was played to encourage her on her way round. Nancy says:

"The garden will be in full bloom in July so I decided to do 99 smaller circuits of the garden and then my final lap including the whole garden".

Nancy has fundraised a lot over the years and did a similar walking challenge for her 90th birthday. She says:

"For my 90th birthday, I did a 90-minute walk and raised £3000! I've always wanted to give something back. When I was younger, I used to knit for the soldiers. I began knitting when I was five years old and I've never stopped! My mother once saw an advert which was asking people if they could knit balaclavas and mittens for the soldiers as their guns and metal caps were cold. We went to the hospital to collect the wool and I knitted 14 of each in total".

Chief Executive of Blind Veterans UK, Major General (Rtd) Nick Caplin CB said,

"I am not surprised that Nancy has been inspired by Captain Sir Tom Moore to take on this extraordinary feat. She has an indomitable spirit and is always looking for ways to help others. Nancy is quite simply magnificent and deserves our full support for her 100th Birthday Challenge to raise funds to help her fellow blind veterans".

To support Nancy in her walking challenge, please visit her fundraising page: <https://bit.ly/3hhpvM3>

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic Blind Veterans UK has adapted its service to support its 5,000 beneficiaries, 90% of whom are over 70 and were advised by the Government to self-isolate. The National Support Service has helped blind veterans through this period of social isolation.



Orangemen celebrating the Battle of the Boyne 1690 with 100 marches held, traditionally, on 12th July.

Memories of days gone by?



Armed Forces Bill Challenged

Twelve of the UK's forces charities have signed an open letter to the Government, claiming the Armed Forces Bill "does not go far enough" in protecting the military community.

The legislation aims to see the Armed Forces Covenant enshrined in law and introduce a legal duty for certain UK public bodies, including local councils, to have due regard for the covenant principles – a pledge to ensure the military community isn't disadvantaged by its service.

If passed, the legislation would currently impact decision-making across housing, education and healthcare issues, while special consideration may be deemed appropriate for certain community members, such as for the injured or bereaved. While the charities say they "welcome" new provisions which will improve service members' access to services, they said the exemption of national Government and devolved administrations from that duty is a "major gap".

They added in their open letter: "This is compounded by the omission of important topics including employment, pensions, compensation, social care, criminal justice, and immigration from the bill's scope."

Introduced to the House of Commons in January, the bill's overarching purpose is to renew the Armed Forces Act 2006 for the next five years.

Jeff Harrison, Interim CEO of Combat Stress, said the scope of the bill seemed "strange".

"We're a health-based charity, a mental health-based charity, so it's pleasing that our part is in there – but there are plenty of areas that aren't in there, ones that were in the covenant," he said.

"Things like compensation and pensions, immigration and the criminal justice system – those are areas that we shouldn't miss out on.

"Our worry really is that you don't get this opportunity very often," adding that "recognition" of sacrifice is important to the forces.

Matthew Seward, of the Royal British Legion, has encouraged those in support of the open letter to contact their local MP, insisting the bill must be broad enough to future-proof it for future issues.

Among other amendments to the bill is one to ensure serious offences such as murder and rape are dealt with in the civil justice system. An MOD spokesperson said:

"The Armed Forces Bill delivers for our service personnel and veterans, for the first time ever, by strengthening the Covenant into law and supporting our Armed Forces community, when it comes to such key matters as housing, healthcare and education."



New Colours for Paras

Prince Charles has presented the Parachute Regiment with new Colours in a 'once-in-a-generation' ceremony, in Colchester.

The socially distanced event marked the first time the regiment had received new Colours since 1998 and 50 years since the Prince of Wales did his first parachute jump.

Presenting the Colours at Merville Barracks in Colchester, the Prince, who is Colonel-in-Chief of the Parachute Regiment, also inspected the front rank of the accompanying parade representing the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Battalions.



Accompanying Charles at the event was the Parachute Regiment's Colonel Commandant, Lieutenant General Sir John Lorimer, for his last outing in the role.

After talking to a number of the paras at the event, Prince Charles undertook the formal presentation of the new regimental Colours, handing them to the battalions after they had each received blessings.

Shetland pony Pegasus, the regimental mascot, led the band off parade as the Red Devils parachute display team dropped smoke and parachuted into the square for an eye-catching finish. They brought with them a surprise package for the Prince, a Denison Smock, which he can wear on future visits to the regiment.

The Prince of Wales made his first parachute drop on 29 July 1971, and six years later was made Colonel-in-Chief of the Parachute Regiment.



**Milo Says:
A Few Snippets**



**Shoreline
Tranquillity
By Dr S**



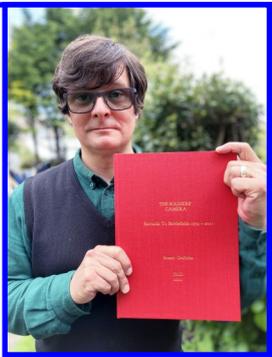
If you have not engaged for some time due to Covid, now is the time, after 19th, to get in touch and find out what's going on. Subject to confirmation the following is planned during August. Computer Club, Modelmaking, Meditation, Woodcraft Day, Families & Friends Day, Camping Weekend. Make sure you don't miss out

Congratulations to Tango on starting a 10 week training course this week. Keep at it...



Tell me about it! Hastings....

Stuart Griffiths
PhD in Art and Design



Dr Stuart's Got It! PhD Whoopee!

“ Before taking on a PhD, I was a freelance photojournalist. Before that, I did a Degree in editorial photography at the University of Brighton, prior to that I was a British soldier. My research is based upon British soldiers' personal photographs and my research "question" was why is this area of "war photography" not acknowledged and without agency.



Next stop Profship...

Douglas settles into a new home this week Good luck DT



It's Free!
*Travel arranged or costs covered
Camp over if preferred*
Only 5 Names required for 'Old Man of the Woods' Woodcarving Course Battle
Friday 23 July-Sunday 25 July

Steve's Special Summer Pudding

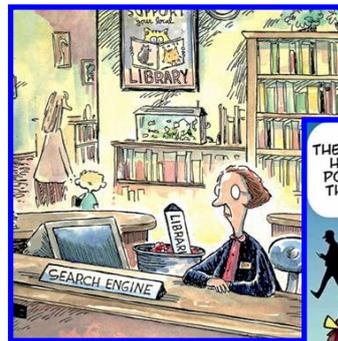
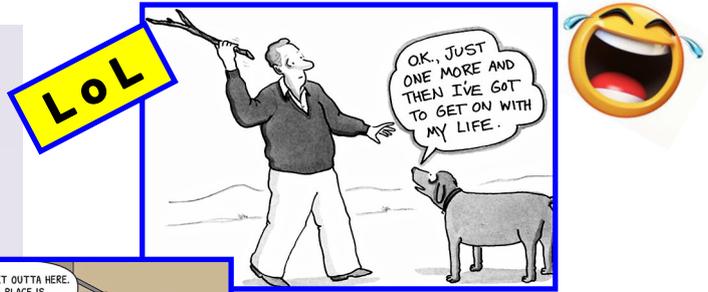


Ingredients

- 750g mixed summer fruit (such as raspberries, red, white and blackcurrants, tayberries, loganberries, blackberries, cherries and blueberries)
- 185g/6½oz caster sugar
- 1 medium loaf good-quality white bread, slightly stale
- 2 tbsp cassis or blackcurrant cordial

Method

- Place the fruit in a pan. Remove the stems from the redcurrants (if using) with a fork, pour the sugar over the fruit and stir gently to mix together.
- If you have time, cover the pan with a tea towel or cling film and leave for 3-5 hours (or overnight) to get the juices running. Place the pan over a moderate heat and bring gently up to the boil.
- While the fruit is simmering, cut the bread into thin slices and remove the crusts.
- When the juices are beginning to flow, raise the heat slightly and simmer for about 2-3 minutes. Then turn off the heat and stir in the cassis or blackcurrant cordial.
- Cut a round out of one slice of bread to fit the bottom of the bowl, then cut the remaining slices into triangular wedges.
- Dip one side of the bread circle into the juices in the pan containing the fruit, then place the circle in the bottom of the pudding basin, juice-side down. Do the same with the bread triangles, dipping one side of the bread into the juices before placing them around the edge of the bowl, with the dipped side facing outwards. The tips of the bread triangles will be sticking up from the top of the bowl at this stage.
- Once the bowl is completely lined with the juice-soaked bread (be sure to plug any gaps with small pieces of bread if necessary), spoon all of the fruit and its juices into the pudding basin. Trim the tips of bread from around the edge. Cover the top of the fruit with more wedges of bread. Place the pudding basin on a plate to collect any juices.
- Find a saucer that fits neatly inside the bowl. Place it on top to cover the upper layer of bread, then weigh the saucer down with weights - bags of rice, tins of baked beans, or whatever comes to hand. Let it cool, then place in the fridge overnight.
- The next day, remove the weights and the saucer. Run a thin blade around the edges, then invert the basin onto a shallow serving plate.
- Turn the pudding out, cut into thick slices and serve the summer pudding with cream. YUM! YUM!



Why you shouldn't wait until retirement to travel...



Jason, our IT man, taking a break



Every time I go into a room, people ignore me!

I saw a man pushing a lion and a witch into a wardrobe. I asked "what are you doing?" He replied....

Go away, it's Narnia business.