

Case Study for Tina, aged 46, Single

I left the Army 2012 after serving 13 years around the world. During the time after the Army I had planned to marry & move to Canada once my service was complete. Circumstances had changed to the point I called off the wedding and didn't move to Canada.

As I had no history/eligibility for support outside in of the Military once I completed my Military service, when I approached the council regarding the support available through the Armed Forces Covenant, they were not aware of the Covenant and offered little or no help. I went down the private renting route due to no previous employment history or being in paid employment and did not have a wage coming in.

I arrived at the job center to look for work & to seek any additional help and advice that could have helped with housing contributions. After what seemed to be a million forms and the ins & outs of my history, I was informed of an opportunity with the Olympics being held in London and around the UK, feeling that this was an opportunity that doesn't often present itself, I took up the offer of a short-term job opportunity with them, and I became a member of the team that was supporting Olympic events being held at Coventry Ricoh Stadium. When this ended I had a part time job cleaning boats on a Saturday along with another part time cleaning job, both 10 hours a week. I was in receipt of benefits whilst working part time.

I was caught by a routine audit check by the HMRC/DWP for claiming benefits whilst in work and not informing them of my change of situation which resulted in court proceedings with the outcome of a probation order of supervision, 20 rehabilitation days and 150 hours of community pay back and paying back the benefits, which will take me forever to do but I am committed to doing so.

During the court appearance, I mentioned that I was a Veteran/Former member of the UK Armed Forces and that this was my first offence Probation put me in touch with the Veterans Contact Point. After leaving the Army I wasn't aware of how much support there was so much support outside the Army, usually its promoted to Families and not so much Single personnel.

My probation officer put me in touch with VCP, I called & spoke to a gentleman called Simon who took information about my circumstances and informed me what they did and how they could help me. The VCP also referred me to SSAFA for help with my rent arrears, as I was struggling to pay and threaten with eviction, one month payment help bridge the gap with a shortfall of wages from working 2 jobs to one job with the changeover of job & receiving a payment was a Godsend.

During one of my appointments with my Offender Manager, Pam, I meet Len the RV project manager who invited me to help at Armed Forces Day which would allow me to see what the VCP did and for me to meet other veterans, many whom were in a similar position as to me. I was told a little bit of the Center and some of the characters who worked there. As a female that arrived to the VCP having spent most of my Army career in a very much male dominated environment, I was made to feel welcome and saw an opportunity to give something back and to help other people like myself. When I returned to the VCP to see what was on offer, I was introduce to Chris a fellow Veteran who took the time to show me

and introduced me to what they do, how they support other veterans, I agreed to become a volunteer and was offered two personal development courses, the Peer Volunteer Course and MMHFA.

Aspirations & The Future.

Having met the team, and getting to know what the VCP does and that other veterans were in a similar situation to my own, I want to help others come to terms outside the Military lifestyle, to develop to their full potential, as life is for living. This is not based on seeing action/conflict/war but on the circumstances of how military personnel have been dealt with during their military career and what their support systems/coping mechanisms are.

I have undergone a lot of personal development since I have left the military and learnt a lot of skills and experiences, given there is also so much on how different personalities learn from some people have a variety of personalities and approaches to life and dealing with situations. There are four colour groups that can be related to their various groups, blue for those that like to party, green for numbers, yellow for helping and red for assertive or leaders.

There is a lot of information regarding personal development it seems to be complex upon first sight, once it's understood it becomes easier. It's all about mind set & self belief.

Since attending the Veterans Point I have found a lot of help and support around to advice and lead people to information that they need to overcome their challenges in life.