

DRAFT PRESS RELEASE

(Location – insert your location - man/woman/veteran/ group delete as appropriate) to take part in Royal British Legion Industries' The Great Tommy Sleep Out on (date) in March in support of veterans



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BAE SYSTEMS



This March, individuals, groups, and communities across the UK will come together for Royal British Legion Industries' (RBLI) The Great Tommy Sleep Out. Throughout the month they will sleep outdoors for one night or more to raise awareness of the issue of veteran homelessness, drawing attention to veterans that are homeless in the UK right now.

One **(delete as appropriate – person/veteran/group/community)**, sleeping out in March is **(insert your name)** from **(insert your location)** who explained why they are taking part in RBLI's The Great Tommy Sleep Out. **"Insert a quote giving your reason for taking part in RBLI's The Great Tommy Sleep Out – why you are sleeping out, where and the date – will you be alone or with people, will you use a tent or sleep under the stars, anything of interest."**

If you would like to sponsor **(insert your name)** please go to **(insert your fundraising details)**.

RBLI's The Great Tommy Sleep Out is a fundraising challenge that is designed to support ex-service personnel who find themselves without a roof over their head. People who take part sleep outside for as many nights as they want to, in a tent or directly beneath the stars. As everyone has different abilities it's up to the person or people taking part to pick their location, plan their night sleeping out and fundraising to help RBLI in its work with the most vulnerable veterans.

Lisa Farmer, RBLI's Chief Executive said, "The Great Tommy Sleep Out is a powerful reminder of the sacrifices made by servicemen and women who find themselves without a home when they return to civilian life. Part of the support we provide to the country's most vulnerable veterans is homes for those who were street homeless. The veterans who live in our emergency accommodation have access to welfare and healthcare support, employment training and work experience to help them on the road to independence after leaving the Armed Forces.

"This is an important issue, and we are working tirelessly to reduce veteran homelessness. I'd like to thank everyone participating for helping us in our ambition by taking part in The Great Tommy Sleep Out and sleeping outdoors for one night in March. Not only are they raising vital funds for our work, but also shedding light on veteran homelessness."

If you would like to take part in The Great Tommy Sleep Out go to rbli.co.uk/rbli-events/the-great-tommy-sleepout to sign up.

RBLI can move homeless veterans into their emergency accommodation within 24 hours of referral and can offer an established pathway with housing providers nationwide. This includes The Riverside Group, who as part of Op Fortitude, an initiative from the Office for Veterans' Affairs, are working together to speed up access to emergency accommodation for homeless veterans in every corner of the UK.

ENDS



Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI) Hall Road, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NL. Registered Charity Number: England & Wales 210063 | Scotland SC048795 | VAT Number GB916326234

RBLI is completely separate to The Royal British Legion and receives no financial support from the annual poppy appeal. The charity must raise its own funds to deliver care and employability support, and build more homes

✉ fundraising@rbli.co.uk

🌐 rbli.co.uk

📘 [@RoyalBritishLegionIndustries](https://www.facebook.com/RoyalBritishLegionIndustries)

📷 [@RBLICharity](https://www.instagram.com/RBLICharity)

Notes to Editors

For more information about RBLI, photographs or interviews, please contact Marcus Jones on T: 01622 795900 or E: marcus.jones@rbli.co.uk

To interview **(insert your name)** please contact **(insert your contact details)**.

About RBLI (Royal British Legion Industries)

Established in 1919, Royal British Legion Industries is an independent national charity that provides housing, employment, training, and support to veterans of the British Armed Forces, their families, and dependents; as well as those with a disability or health condition and people who have been long term unemployed. RBLI provides a home to more than 300 veterans and their families on its Kent village, including homeless veterans through its on-site emergency accommodation. Royal British Legion Industries is a separate charity from Royal British Legion but has a shared ethos of supporting the Armed Forces community.

At Britain's Bravest Manufacturing Company and Scotland's Bravest Manufacturing Company, the charity's social enterprise factories, the signs that line the nation's roads and motorways are made by veterans and people with disabilities.

At Mountbatten Pavilion in Aylesford, RBLI's emergency accommodation, veterans who were previously street homeless go through RBLI's STEP-IN programme, when staff provide employment coaching and vocational assessment. This includes paid work placements, phased gradual return to work plans start with just one or two sessions each week. RBLI also works with NHS partners, mental health partners, local sport clubs and colleges, employment as well as finding volunteering opportunities.

RBLI's Lifeworks course is a free employment support programme that teaches participants the tools they need to find employment outside the military. As the course is run by veterans and supported by spouses of serving personnel, they understand the needs of the people who take part. Everyone who takes part in the course will receive an internationally recognised SQA qualification. The course is open to all veterans, no matter how long they've been out of the military.

November 2024



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