



Aberdeen, Banff & Kincardine Area

It has been a busy time in A,B&K over the past year with everyone knuckling down and working hard to push Legion Scotland as the best option for providing welfare, befriending and comradeship and more importantly remembrance of which we have the honour to be guardians of.

A,B&K over the years has supplied a wheel chair service to ex-service personnel this has been built up over the years to the extent that we now hold over 150 motorised wheelchairs and some normal chairs as well. This operation is carried out by our Area Secretary, Matt Fyfe and the only cost to the user is the insurance payment for its operation. I would point out the service is so well received that NHS and SAAFA point any ex-service personnel who require wheelchairs in our direction. In Banchory we hold 12, one and two bedroom flats and houses for ex-service personnel this has also proven a most welcome service.

As an Area we are currently working with Aberdeenshire Salutes which was the brainchild of Jill Sowden of Aberdeenshire Council and our CEO Kevin Gray. Aberdeenshire Salutes is an umbrella organisation with some 30 odd organisations at its fingertips waiting to help any ex-service person who is in need of help of any shape or form. It is refreshing to join forces with organisations who share the same passion in helping ex-service personnel here are too many organisations out there all doing their own thing as opposed to A,B&K where we are even in these early days that there is strength in working together.

We trialled Banchory Legion as a Hub for this activity which meant that at particular times during the week a member of ASAP would wait in the building to provide assistance. This proved to be very successful and after consultation with Turriff, Ellon and Fraserburgh it was agreed that their buildings would also be used as Hubs and later in the year there is the possibility that Stonehaven and Inverurie will also become Hubs.

We have also had a meeting with Lt. Cdr Glen MacDonald of Combat Stress who is hoping to get more involved with ourselves and Aberdeenshire Salutes with likelihood of the using the Hubs for his organisation. Other interested parties are First Point NHS, DPHS Aberdeen City and Housability Peterhead.

Over December and January Legion Scotland, Aberdeenshire Salutes and the Reservists gave talks to the six Area Councils which covered most the Councillors in Aberdeenshire. These talks were to give an up to date on the reservist situation then a history of the Legion and what we hope for our future and finished with Aberdeenshire Salutes. The Councillors following these were very positive about what we were trying to achieve and I believe from the feedback if help is needed we have a good ally in Aberdeenshire Council.

There are many other things going on all around our Area many of which we don't know about and we need to get Branches to start forwarding the good things we do to the Area and HQ. In Banchory we allowed the Deeside Radio Station to use one of our rooms and it is proving a success, the Breakfast Clubs they are taking off and proving very popular and we are finding it very successful where Branches/Clubs who have welcomed with open arms different uses for their buildings be it ex-service or the community.

There are many organisations out there all striving with the same aim of helping ex-service personnel but no one organisation can provide everything required by individuals as we all have expertise and our strengths and weaknesses so it therefore stands to reason that the only way we can ensure that the individual requiring help is getting the best possible deal is to work together and no longer isolate ourselves.