

Service Provider – Andy Miller – Kent Police

Sergeant Andy Miller has only been a Service Champion since February 2018, but has made a marked impression on the Network over this time. He has actively encouraged the Kent Police to become Service Champions with 22 now trained. He has actively supported and intervened on some difficult cases that the Network has been managing. Nothing is too much for him, he provides support wherever he can. This can be seen by the way he stepped up to the mark on running the domestic abuse workshop.

Statutory Provider – Fiona Hamilton – Department of Work and Pensions (accepted by Julie Wan, Department of Work and Pensions)

Fiona Hamilton, is a great ambassador for what a Service Champion can do. Within her area of work in the DWP she ensures that the Armed Forces clients are identified. She provides support and guidance and regularly contacts the network to ensure her clients get their wider needs met; whether mental health, social or debt issues. She is a resource of advice for DWP and has facilitated training sessions for colleagues and held information events where charities and statutory services that can help this community/client and provide information and advice for staff are invited to attend.

Statutory Provider – Alexandra Sansom – Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Alex as the Communities and Armed Forces Lead Officer has shown significant support to the Armed Forces Community, whether it has been facilitating contacts particularly with the Gurkha/Nepalese community or supporting the council to have Armed Forces Mental Health training. As a Service Champion she has invited or made the Network aware of community events so that AF Network can have stands and raise the awareness of the support of that is available for the Armed Forces Community. She enabled a working group to be hosted at the council for discussions as to what the next steps the Network should take to support the local Gurkha and Nepalese community.

Commissioner – Dr David Chesover – West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group (accepted by Dr Nick Lake, Chair Sussex Armed Forces Network)

Dr David Chesover is a GP working with West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group. He initiated by getting all the CCGs across Kent and Medway to agree that by using the leadership of the Sussex Armed Forces Network team it enabled the establishing of the Kent & Medway Armed Forces Network and increase support for the Armed Forces Community. As a Service Champion and Clinical Leader within the Kent and Medway system, he has ensured that the Armed Forces Community in integrated into the strategic planning whether mental health, suicide prevention and general NHS services. He regularly talks to GP colleagues encouraging the support and has found that they are embracing supporting the community in his CCG area.

Team – Wrinkly Network (accepted by Kelly Duke and Kevin Collier)

The Wrinkly Network is a business membership providing a full range of support services for businesses, organisations and community groups who provide products and services for retired, elderly and vulnerable communities. Since becoming Armed Forces Champions and members of our Network, the founders, Kevin and Kelly, have taken on some very complex cases providing legal advice and advocacy support, giving a voice to veterans and their families particularly around health and social care. No case is too complex for the Wrinklys' and their compassion and strong sense of social justice enables them to achieve some fantastic outcomes for the most vulnerable members of our Armed Forces Community.

Team – Sussex Police – Flags for Forces (accepted by Andy Nicklin, Sussex Police)

Sussex Police have embraced the need to support the Armed Forces Community and are very supportive of the network. They have set up an excellent system within and the 'Flags for Forces' campaign was launched which highlighted the importance of 'flagging' veterans so that help from the Champions would be made available to them. Sussex Police increased their number of Service Champions and now have over 20 with more attending training in 2019 and a number of colleagues are now trained as mental health first aiders.

Individual – Lisa Halsey

Lisa is the Clinical Lead Occupational Therapist at the Crawley Assessment and Treatment Service within Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

Lisa has embraced the work with the Armed Forces veterans and family members offering mental health assessments, OT assessments and reports. She has been representing the Community at events raising the profile of both the Sussex Armed Forces Community and the Sussex Armed Forces Network. She has assisted with supporting Armed Forces families transitioning from the forces to civilian life. She has worked well with wives and children signposting to support when needed. She has also been involved in raising the profile of Occupational Therapy with building recovery programmes and de-briefing of service users in therapy. Lisa has also taken on the role of Vice-Chair of the Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Armed Forces Community Group and contributes in all areas including social media.

Lisa has also worked with SPFT organising community members to become involved with the project moving forward. She has been setting up volunteering opportunities within SPFT to support the group which is assisting with upskilling and recovery planning. She is always willing to help the Armed Forces community and is very well respected with the veterans and Armed Forces family members.

Individual – Margaret Wood (accepted by Debra Exall, Kent County Council)

Margaret was nominated for the individual award for the hard work, commitment, responsiveness and support for the Armed Forces Community. She is a volunteer with SSAFA as the Branch Secretary for Kent and Medway and the main contact for the Network. She always responds quickly and either deals with any issues concerns or directs us to the individual within SSAFA who can help. She has also being supportive in building relationships between the Network and the SSAFA. The Network is regularly asked to come and present at training sessions for the volunteer case workers.

Charity – Ursula Pile – SSAFA Sussex

Ursula is caring, polite, intelligent, highly experienced, and a friendly lady; she always maintains a professional approach. She is viewed as an immense asset to SSAFA, the Sussex Armed Forces Network and those who have served the nation and require help and support.

Ursula was nominated for the referrals made to SSAFA for carers of partners who are suffering from Alzheimer's, or another form of dementia and have served in one of the military forces.

Feedback is always provided to the referrer outlining what help and support was provided. The outcomes from which range from arranging befriending for persons with memory loss, providing support to the carers, or applying for funding to buy equipment, or other necessary items.

Charity – Janette Edis – Royal British Legion (Canterbury) (accepted by Jim France, Royal British Legion)

Ms Janette Edis singlehandedly and reliably 'mans' the SSAFA desk at Canterbury City Council on Friday mornings supporting the Armed Forces community. Janette also volunteers for the Canterbury Royal British Legion and goes out of her way to support clients and neighbours in any way she can. The Gurkha community also honoured her by inviting her on a trip to Nepal earlier in the year as their guest.

Behind the Scenes Award – Mandy Jameson, Armed Forces Network

Mandy has been nominated by members across the network and her own team. She is the rock behind the scenes who always efficiently organises the events, training and administration. Over the years she has taken on more creative work with the development of the website, design of posters. She never wants to be in the lime light and hates her photo being taken, so for that we now apologise! So it is with thanks that we wish to recognise her work and dedication, without which, the Network would struggle. Thank you Mandy.