



## Associate Parliamentary Limb Loss Group

for the Promotion of the Prevention of Limb Loss and of the Provision of Prosthetic, Orthotic, Wheelchair/Special Seating, Medical and other vital Rehabilitation Services to persons of all ages suffering Limb Loss and associated Complex Physical Disabilities in the United Kingdom and Internationally

# JOAN WALLEY MP Welcomes Support to Ex-Service Men and Women as Big Lottery Fund Announces £35m Forces Fund

A partnership of forces charities and mental health organisations, led by the Confederation of British Service and Ex-service Organisations (COBSEO), has been given the green light to push ahead with the formation of the £35 million lottery-funded FORCES IN MIND TRUST.

The Big Lottery Fund is enabling COBSEO to set up the independent FORCES IN MIND trust supporting former UK military personnel and their families over the next 20 years.



**Joan Walley MP** for Stoke-on-Trent North says: *“As a member of the Parliamentary Limb Loss Group, and having spoken with the Royal British Legion in my constituency, I know that this announcement will be very welcome. We now need to ensure that as many people as possible take advantage of this funding so that when our men and women return from active service they are given all the support they need to adapt back to civilian life”*

The £35 million Trust will provide UK-wide long-term support and advocacy for former forces personnel to make a successful transition to civilian life, including those who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. The focus will be on addressing a range of problems that some ex-service personnel and their families can experience back in civilian life, such as poor mental health, family breakdown and alcohol-related problems.

Other work will include commissioning research to improve knowledge of the issues affecting veterans and their families, which will help shape new services and inform national policy. The Trust will also undertake awareness raising campaigns, and provide peer advice and support particularly to those veterans who are most vulnerable.

COBSEO will now begin work to set up the Trust using a development grant of up to £200,000 from BIG. Subject to award of the full endowment by the Big Lottery Fund it is planned that the remainder of the £35 million Lottery award will be transferred to the partnership by the end of summer 2011 when the Trust will become operational.

As well as working with a number of other contributing members and supporting organisations, the main partner organisations in the COBSEO led partnership are:

- ✓ Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA) – Forces Help
- ✓ Seafarers UK
- ✓ ABF Soldiers' Charity
- ✓ Veterans Scotland
- ✓ Mental Health Foundation
- ✓ Centre for Mental Health
- ✓ Shaw Trust



**Mike Bray, Secretary of COBSEO, says: “COBSEO, the Confederation of Service and ex-Service Organisations, provides a focus for co-operation and collaboration among the service charities. Our vision for the Forces in Mind programme is to make a positive difference to transition from military service to civilian life for all service men and women and their families. We intend to develop a comprehensive approach, embracing, not only employment, but also welfare, education, healthcare, psychological and housing needs.”** also **“The Forces in Mind programme will provide a unique opportunity to undertake focused research and from that, to identify key areas of need and then directing the funding to address that need. Our aim is to give those leaving the armed services and their families the best opportunity to return to civilian life and participate in society.”**

Chair of the Big Lottery Fund, **Sir Clive Booth**, said: **“The partnership we have identified to take the Forces in Mind Trust forward has a huge role to play in bringing improvements to the lives of those who have served our country in the armed forces.”** and **“In spite of help available from the Armed Services, Ministry of Defence, NHS and a wide range of charities, there are still gaps in the support available for our veterans and the 20,000 people leaving the forces each year. By investing this £35 million, the Big Lottery Fund is providing the resources for interested parties to use their expertise to organise a succession of**



***interventions and activities that positively inform national policy and practice as well as offering essential direct assistance.”***

**Further Information available from:**

Big Lottery Fund Press Office: 020 7211 1888 or Textphone: 0845 6021 659 or via  
[www.biglotteryfund.org.uk](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk)

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