

# Blesma

THE LIMBLESS VETERANS

## The Blesma Members' Proposition



## What can Blesma do for you?

Blesma, The Limbless Veterans is a unique association of 3,000 Members with a defining commitment to help them live independent and fulfilling lives. Blesma is one of only 10 or so charities that still exist from the 18,000 born out of WWI.

Although medical practices have come a long way since those days, there is still a great need to support those who experience the impact of their life-changing injuries on a daily basis.

Blesma continues to work hard to provide practical help, emotional support and financial assistance to injured veterans and their families as they rebuild their lives.

We support our Members for life. Just as we are still caring for our World War II veterans, we also look after younger generations who have survived complex trauma injuries in recent conflicts and who will need our specialised support as they face the long journey ahead.



# We assist limbless and injured veterans to lead independent and fulfilling lives

***Being a Member of Blesma gives you and your family access to:***

## Fellowship

Members have helped each other since the first days of Blesma. This ethos lies at the very heart of what we do. We can apply our knowledge of Members' shared experiences; of traumatic injury, recuperation, and eventual stability. We provide several ways for our Members to meet, including through our Activities Programme, Blesma Branches, Members' Weekend, Branch meetings and more.

## Communication

Members being in touch with one another is the foundation of Blesma, but in our modern world it is not always easy or convenient for us to take the time out to meet. To ensure all our Members find it easy to stay connected to each other, and the Association, Blesma has a variety of print publications, social media channels, and even an app to stay in touch and informed.

## Advice on prosthetics and mobility aid provision

Blesma works closely with the Health Services across the UK to ensure that the latest advances in the relevant medical fields are converted into practical solutions to benefit all our Members. Our Support Officers are ideally placed to help you get the best service possible, and we have a dedicated in-house prosthetics expert to assist directly with Members' prosthetics issues.

Blesma is a specialist charity but recognises the holistic needs of Members and, where necessary, can put you in touch with specialist agencies and charities that offer bespoke support.

## Advice on pensions, benefits and compensation schemes

We are experts in the War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS), as well as a range of other allowances. Our team of Support Officers can give advice and assistance on applications for entitlements and continue to

aid our Members and Widows at War Pension Tribunals and AFCS Hearings.

## Grants

We offer our Members financial assistance with the additional costs and hardships of disability. We regularly contribute to the provision of wheelchairs, stair lifts, and home and garden adaptations so Members can remain mobile and live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. Our aim is to ensure that all our Members can reach their full potential and live with purpose, so we offer opportunities such as the Making Generation R programme, which enables Members to gain public speaking skills and turn their inspiring life stories into employment opportunities.

## Members' Activities

Staying active and socially engaged after injury is essential to continued health and wellbeing. Our comprehensive range of activities is designed to empower and inspire our Members, and get them socialising. There's more than one event in the calendar for every taste, level, age and ability – from beginner to serious adventurer – spanning the cerebral to the physically challenging.

## Independent Advocacy

Blesma believes prosthetics and disabled provision should meet the needs of every Member. Our advocacy networking to local and national representatives ensures this happens. We aim to correct anomalies, deficiencies and unfairness. We speak up for our Members and campaign where necessary.

## Opportunities as a volunteer to help fellow Members

Whether it be welfare or activities, the opportunity to assist a fellow Member can be very rewarding. We encourage our Members to take the lead in

planning and delivering local activities, sharing their passions and knowledge with one another.

### Personal Approach

Our Support and Outreach Officers will visit or call you to check in, but you can always get in touch with our head office in Chelmsford, too. We place great emphasis on caring, listening and striving to learn more, never being patronising and always putting Members' needs above everything else.



## In the last year...

**2,362** visits by Blesma Support Officers

**1,601** home visits, **761** other visits, **17,529** contacts/communications

**1,485** grants paid to **861** recipients

**29** Members addressed **12,177** youth in Making Generation R.

**100%** of Members involved testified to greater confidence, whilst **91%** of teenagers felt more resilient

**2,297** Member activity days provided **65** total activities across **29** categories to **445** participants. **36** of these activities were led by Members. **91%** of participants reported that the activities improved their wellbeing and confidence

**25%** of attendees to Blesma activities were new to the programme

**5** Members were supported at Paralympic and elite level

**151** New Members

**32** collaborative grants and **88** referrals to other charities

**496** prosthetic interventions, **469** successful prosthetic panel applications, **280** Members advised, including **9** tribunals

**50** individual counselling provisions

For more, call **020 8590 1124** or email us on [info@blesma.org](mailto:info@blesma.org)