



SURF ACTION IS A MILITARY CHARITY  
DEDICATED TO SUPPORTING SERVING  
AND FORMER MEMBERS OF THE  
ARMED FORCES, EMERGENCY SERVICES  
AND THEIR FAMILIES, WHO SUFFER THE  
EFFECTS OF PTSD, PHYSICAL INJURY OR  
HAVE DIFFICULTY RE-ADJUSTING TO  
CIVILIAN LIFE.



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# FIGHTING

DEPRESSION SADNESS ANXIETY REGRET  
GRIEF DESPAIR SUFFERING PRESSURE SUSPENSE  
PAIN EMOTION WOUND STRAIN DREAD DISAPPOINTMENT  
TROUBLE REGRET HARM SCORN TEARS  
ANXIETY DOUBT HOSTILITY FRUSTRATION  
SADNESS WOUND LOSS FALL SPIRITLESS  
HEARTACHE EMPTY BURDEN  
AFFLICTION STRESS SENSATION DISTURBED  
SORROW TRAUMA PAIN ANGUISH AGONY  
ANGER SHIP HATE DISTRESS



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IF YOU HAVE FACED A TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE, YOU MAY SIMPLY FEEL EMOTIONALLY NUMB TO BEGIN WITH AND FEELINGS OF DISTRESS MAY NOT EMERGE STRAIGHT AWAY, BUT SOONER OR LATER YOU ARE LIKELY TO DEVELOP EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL REACTIONS, AND CHANGES IN BEHAVIOUR.



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ON A PSYCHOLOGICAL LEVEL, WHEN PEOPLE ARE FRIGHTENED THEY REMEMBER THE INCIDENT VERY CLEARLY AND WHILE IT IS INCREDIBLY DISTRESSING TO REMEMBER, IT SOMETIMES HELPS US TO UNDERSTAND WHAT HAS HAPPENED AND COME TO TERMS WITH IT AND BE BETTER PREPARED SHOULD IT HAPPEN AGAIN. WE NEED TO LET GO OF THESE REMINDERS AS THESE CAN MAKE US JUMPY, OVER-CAUTIOUS AND WORRY THE PEOPLE WE ARE WITH. THEY INTERFERE WITH SLEEP, WELLBEING AND GENERAL HEALTH.



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## OBJECTIVES:

SURF ACTION IS A REGISTERED CHARITY. THE BLUE GYM IS ABOUT USING OUR NATURAL WATER ENVIRONMENT AS A RESOURCE FOR PURSUING HUMAN HEALTH AND WELLBEING THROUGH VARIOUS WATER-BASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES. WE USE THESE ACTIVITIES AND THE BEACH ENVIRONMENT AS A MEANS TO ESCAPE THE DAILY BARRIERS FACED BY FORMER AND CURRENT SERVICEMEN AND WOMAN AS A RESULT OF THEIR MILITARY EXPERIENCES. OUR PROJECTS ARE AIMED AT OFFERING FORMER AND CURRENT SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE THE OUTDOOR CLASROOM ENVIRONMENT FOR AN EXHILIRATING, POSITIVE AND SOCIAL EXPERIENCE.



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## OBJECTIVES:

SURF ACTIONS PROJECT IS TO:

- PROMOTE AND PROTECT THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND WELFARE OF THE ARMED FORCES, EMERGENCY SERVICES AND THEIR FAMILIES.
- BOOST MORALE, CONFIDENCE, SELF-ESTEEM AND CAN BE A POSITIVE AND COMPLIMENTARY THERAPY TO ONGOING REHABILITATION.
- TO ASSIST VETERANS IN ADJUSTING TO CIVILIAN LIFE INCLUDING THOSE CHALLENGED BY MENTAL AND PHYSICAL PROBLEMS AND IMPROVING THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE.
- TO MAINTAIN A HIGH LEVEL OF CARE AND UNDERSTANDING.
- BY USING VARIOUS WATER-BASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES AND THE SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT, SURF ACTION CREATES A SOCIAL NETWORK FOR VETERANS AND IMPORTANTLY THEIR FAMILIES, AND ALSO A STRONG BOND THAT ENABLES MANY TO HELP OTHERS.



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SERVICE FAMILIES MAY SUFFER PSYCHOLOGICAL INJURIES WHICH ARE NOT VISIBLE WOUNDS, BUT THE EFFECTS THESE WOUNDS HAVE ON FAMILIES CAN BE DEVASTATING. THE IMPACT ON CHILDREN IS OFTEN LOST AMONGST FINDING SUPPORT AND THE JOURNEY TO RECOVERY. CHANGE CAN BE UNSETTLING FOR ANY CHILD, AND FORCES CHILDREN EXPERIENCE MORE THAN MOST. ROUTINE IS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN COPING WITH CHANGE. OUR SURFING ACTIVITIES HELP FAMILIES TO ENGAGE WITH REGULAR ACTIVITY, BUILD FRIENDSHIPS AND HAVE FUN.



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SURF ACTION, THE CHARITY, WITH IT'S FULLY QUALIFIED PERSONNEL, HAS THE SKILLS AND QUALITIES NEEDED TO BUILD RAPORT AND RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES, INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS. SURF ACTION BOOSTS MORALE, CONFIDENCE, SELF-ESTEEM AND CAN BE A POSITIVE AND COMPLIMENTARY THERAPY TO ONGOING MENTAL AND PHYSICAL REHABILITATION. THE SIMPLE ACT OF GOING SURFING OR BEING INVOLVED IN WATER SPORT ACTIVITIES HAS SHOWN THAT ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE. OUR PROJECT HAS THE ABILITY TO CHANGE PERCEPTIONS, CHANGE ASPIRATIONS AND CHANGE CULTURES. WE HAVE SHOWN OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS THE PROJECT HAS A POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON CHANGING PEOPLES LIVES. BY ENGAGING AND MENTORING, SURF ACTIONS PROJECT MAKES A REAL DIFFERENCE TO TODAYS SOCIETY.



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SURFING IS NOT A CURE BUT A FOCUS, A PASSION AND AN ACTIVITY THAT REQUIRES DETERMINATION, PERSEVERANCE AND, ABOVE ALL, THE ASPIRATION TO SUCCEED. HOWEVER, FORGETTING ALL THAT, IT IS FUN, IT MAKES YOU SMILE, AND ENCOURAGES MUTUAL RESPECT WITH FELLOW SURFERS. SURFING LETS YOU APPRECIATE HOW STRONG THE OCEAN CAN BE. IT ALLOWS YOU BE PART OF THAT POWER AND CAN MAKE YOU WANT TO SUCCEED. IF WE CAN TAKE THESE ELEMENTS FORWARD INTO EVERYDAY LIFE THEN ASPIRATIONS MAY CHANGE AND THEREFORE ANYTHING BECOMES POSSIBLE.



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THE BEACH IS OUR LIFE AND PASSION; OUR TEAM HAS AN UNDERSTANDING OF JUST HOW PRECIOUS THE BEACH IS AND HOW IMPORTANT THE BEACH ENVIRONMENT IS TO OUR HAPPINESS. IF WE CAN SHARE JUST A FRACTION OF THAT OWNERSHIP THEN OTHERS MAY BEGIN TO FEEL THE SAME. THE ENVIRONMENTS THAT SURROUND US, WHETHER URBAN INNER CITY, RURAL OR COASTAL ALL HAVE HIDDEN VALUE; BY IDENTIFYING AND LEARNING ABOUT OUR SURROUNDINGS, THEIR STRUCTURE AND HOW TO ENJOY THEM WE CAN CHANGE PERCEPTIONS. BY CREATING A FORMAT THAT COMBINES THE BEACH ENVIRONMENT AND SURFING, THIS WILL ALLOW PARTICIPANTS TO IDENTIFY AND INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER. EACH SURF, WALK, FORAGE AND BEACH ACTIVITY WILL BE A VALUABLE, EDUCATIONAL AND MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE THAT CAN BE TAKEN INTO THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT OR PERSONAL LIVES.



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SURF ACTION VALUE TEAM BUILDING, PROBLEM SOLVING AND THE CREATION OF HEALTHY TEAMS CAN BE EXTREMELY POWERFUL. THEY CAN HELP UTILISE THE MAXIMUM POTENTIAL OF EVERY INDIVIDUAL WITHIN THE TEAM. INSTEAD OF JUST LISTENING TO INSTRUCTIONS EVERY MEMBER OF A GROUP CAN CONTRIBUTE EFFECTIVELY IN THE CONTEXT OF A TEAM. FROM A VARIETY OF EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING BACKGROUNDS WE HAVE COMBINED THESE SKILLS AND ABILITIES TO RECOGNISE AND DRAW UPON THE POTENTIAL OF OUR PARTICIPANTS AND LEAD TO POSITIVE CHANGES, SELF ESTEEM AND SELF BELIEF. A MOVE FROM A CULTURE OF INDEPENDENT, OFTEN SELFISH THINKING, TO ONE OF TEAM WORK AND CAMARADERIE. THIS IS SOMETHING THAT IS OFTEN MISSED FROM VETERANS FORMER LIVES. THIS SIMPLE ELEMENT COULD BE ALL THAT IS NEEDED TO BUILD CONFIDENCE AND MOVE FORWARD.



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BY COMBINING THESE ACTIVITIES WE BELIEVE OUR PROGRAMME IS EXCITING, EDUCATIONAL, INFORMATIVE, INNOVATIVE AND FUN. BY CREATING A REAL SOCIAL NETWORK BETWEEN OUR PARTICIPANTS AND STRENGTHENING BONDS WITH FAMILY MEMBERS WE ARE ABLE TO HELP DEVELOP NEW SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE. WE HAVE ALSO SPENT TIME LISTENING AND DISCUSSING FEEDBACK FROM THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY HAD SURF ACTION SESSIONS AND HAVE DEVELOPED A WORKING MODEL THAT IS BEING CONTINUALLY REVIEWED AND IMPROVED. BY USING THE BEACH AND MARINE ENVIRONMENT WE ARE HELPING VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES ESCAPE THE DAILY BARRIERS THEY FACE AND BUILD THEIR CONFIDENCE, SELF-ESTEEM AND STRENGTHENING THE FAMILY UNIT. ADD TO THIS THE PHYSICAL AND MOBILITY BENEFITS TO THE BODY AND MIND AND THE FEEL GOOD FACTOR FOR THE SOUL. THERE ARE MANY ISSUES ATTACHED TO PTSD SUCH AS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR. THE WIDER BENEFITS OF SURF ACTION COULD LEAD TO AVOIDING THESE ISSUES AND POTENTIALLY LEAD TO BETTER EDUCATION FOR YOUNGER FAMILY MEMBERS AND STRENGTHENING FAMILY BONDS. WE CAN PROVIDE THE MOTIVATION, THE INSPIRATION AND THE GUIDANCE, TO DEVELOP SELF-ESTEEM AND CONFIDENCE, WE SIGNPOST AND WORK IN PARTNERSHIP.



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SIMON - AFTER 9 YEARS SERVICE AND OPERATIONAL TOURS OF BOSNIA AND NORTHERN IRELAND I LEFT THE ARMY IN 2002. IT WASN'T UNTIL 8 YEARS LATER THAT I WAS DIAGNOSED WITH DEPRESSION AND PTSD CAUSED BY MY MILITARY SERVICE. I FOUND IT INCREDIBLY DIFFICULT TO WORK, TO COMMUNICATE WITH MY FAMILY AND BE IN SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTS. I BECAME AGGRESSIVE AND EMOTIONAL AND HAD REGULAR FLASH BACKS AND NIGHTMARES. I FELT LIKE NO ONE UNDERSTOOD WHAT I WAS GOING THROUGH. I MET RICH EMERSON FROM SURF ACTION WHO HAD SUCH A POSITIVE OUTLOOK ON EVERYTHING HE INTRODUCED ME TO OTHER VETERANS WHO WERE HAVING SIMILAR PROBLEMS AND ARRANGED FOR MY FAMILY TO ATTEND ONE OF THEIR SURF CAMPS. SURROUNDED BY OTHER VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES WE ALL HAD AN AMAZING TIME. SINCE THEN I HAVE BEEN ATTENDING SURF ACTIONS WEEKLY BEACH CLINICS. SURFING GIVES ME A CHALLENGE, SOMETHING TO ACHIEVE AND WHEN I'M IN THE WATER CONCENTRATING, I DON'T THINK ABOUT THE BAD THINGS. ITS NOT JUST THE SURFING THOUGH. SURF ACTION HAVE PROVIDED A NETWORK OF LIKE MINDED VETERANS AND INTRODUCED ME TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS WHO CAN HELP. THERE IS ALWAYS SOMEONE ON THE END OF A PHONE OR WILLING TO MEET UP FOR A CHAT OR JUST TO GIVE MORAL SUPPORT. SURF ACTION CONTINUE TO SUPPORT.



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# surf action

SUPPORTING MILITARY VETERANS AND  
THEIR FAMILIES

BRET - MY FIRST CONTACT WITH SURF ACTION (AND SURFING) WAS ABOUT NINE MONTHS AGO IN GWITHIAN, CORNWALL. I WAS OFFERED A PLACE ON A SURF ACTION WEEKEND. I WAS A BIT APPREHENSIVE AT FIRST AS I HAVE NEVER SURFED LET ALONE WITH A PROSTHETIC LEG, I TURNED UP ON THE FRIDAY AND WAS GREETED WITH LOTS OF HAND SHAKES AND SMILES EAR TO EAR, WE SURFED INTO THE DAY MY CONFIDENCE WENT FROM LOW TO HIGH IN A MATTER OF HOURS NOT JUST IN SURFING BUT IN MY FUTURE, THE CONSTANT PRAISING AND REASSURANCE FROM THE SURF ACTION TEAM INSPIRED ME. AFTER ATTENDING A FEW MORE SESSIONS I STARTED TO ENJOY IT MORE AND MORE, SINCE THEN RICH EMERSON AND I HAVE DISCUSSED A POSSIBLE FUTURE WITHIN SURF ACTION AND I JUMPED AT THE CHANCE TO WORK WITH A INSPIRATIONAL TEAM AND CHANGE OTHER PEOPLE LIFE'S THAT ARE IN SAME SHOES MYSELF AND RICH. I CANT THANK THIS LITTLE TEAM THAT DOES SUCH A BIG JOB ENOUGH FOR WHAT THEY HAVE DONE, HOPEFULLY THEY CAN SEE WHAT THEY HAVE DONE TO OTHER PEOPLES LIVES



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TREVOR - I SERVED IN THE BRITISH ARMY FROM 1964 TO 1996 RETIRING AS A MAJOR. I SAW ACTIVE SERVICE IN ADEN, NORTHERN IRELAND, OMAN AMONGST OTHER PLACES. IT WAS NOT UNTIL SOME TIME AFTER I HAD FINISHED MY SERVICE THAT I STARTED TO SUFFER FROM FLASHBACKS AND DREAMS WHICH OFTEN VIVIDLY TOOK ME BACK TO SITUATIONS I HAD ENCOUNTERED IN MY MILITARY SERVICE. I CAME TO SURF ACTION AS A RESULT OF ATTENDING A METAL HEALTH CLINIC IN PENZANCE WHICH TRIES TO HELP VETERANS SUFFERING FROM OFTEN SEVERE FORMS OF PTSD. I HAD NEVER DONE SURFING BEFORE AND WAS INTRIGUED AS TO HOW IT COULD WORK. ACTING AS AN IMPARTIAL OBSERVER I HAVE SEEN THE TREMENDOUS AND OFTEN RAPID IMPROVEMENTS IN OTHER PTSD SUFFERERS PARTICIPATING IN SURF ACTION ACTIVITIES AND I RAPIDLY FOUND OUT THAT SURF ACTION 'DOES EXACTLY WHAT IT SAYS ON THE TIN'. ON A PERSONAL BASIS I HAVE FOUND THAT LEARNING TO SURF CALMS ME DOWN AND THE SHEER PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OF JUST LEARNING TO SURF, PLUS THE VERY CLOSE CAMARADERIE BUILT UP WITH OTHER PARTICIPANTS HAS SHOWN ME THAT SURF ACTION IS A A VERY COST EFFECTIVE OF TREATING PTSD AS WELL AS PERSONNEL WITH PHYSICAL PROBLEMS



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WE PROVIDE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT ALLOWS INJURED VETS TO FEEL SAFE, COMFORTABLE AND LEAD TO A POSITIVE RECOVERY BOTH PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY. IN ORDER TO SUSTAIN OUR PROJECT WE MUST CONTINUE TO ATTRACT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THAT WILL ENABLE US TO DEVELOP OUR VALUABLE PROJECT AND ENCOURAGE MORE VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES TO JOIN US. ANY ADDITIONAL FUNDING RECEIVED, WE WILL ENSURE IS EFFECTIVELY USED TO MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE TO THE LIVES OF VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES. WE ARE ALSO ON THE LOOKOUT FOR VOLUNTEERS THAT CAN HELP US ON THE BEACH, WITH FUNDRAISING AND MANY OTHER ASPECTS OF THE CHARITY. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP, PLEASE CONTACT US!



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