



VETERANS FOR PEACE UK
HANDBOOK 2019

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Veterans for Peace (VFP) was founded in the United States of America in 1985 and has over 100 chapters in the USA and a growing number of international chapters.

Veterans for Peace UK (VFP UK) was founded in London in 2011.

Veterans For Peace UK is a voluntary and politically independent ex-services organisation of men and women who have served in conflicts from WW2 through to Afghanistan.

As a result of our collective experiences we firmly believe that “War is not the solution to the problems we face in the 21st century”.

We are not a pacifist organisation; we accept the inherent right of self-defence in response to an armed attack.

We work to influence the foreign and defence policy of the UK, for the larger purpose of world peace.

This handbook is the governing document of VFP UK. For further information including contact, details please visit our website vfpuk.org

SECTION 2: VFP UK STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We, veterans of the armed forces, having dutifully served our nation, do hereby affirm our greater responsibility to serve the cause of world peace.

To this end:

- a. We will work toward increasing public awareness of the costs of war.
- b. We will work to restrain our government from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations.
- c. We will work to end the arms race and to reduce and eventually eliminate nuclear weapons.

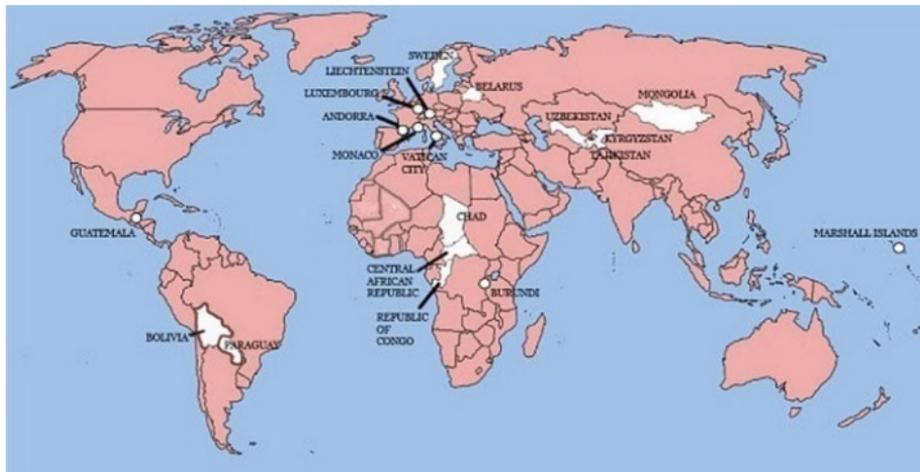
To achieve these goals, members of Veterans for Peace pledge to use non-violent means and to maintain an organisation that is both democratic and open with the understanding that all members are trusted to act in the best interests of the group for the larger purpose of world peace.

We urge all veterans who share this vision to join us.

SECTION 3: VFP UK STATEMENT OF CONDUCT

1. We will use our anger at injustice as a positive, nonviolent force for change.
2. We will not assault, verbally or physically, in person or online, those who oppose or disagree with us, even if they assault us.
3. Our attitude, as conveyed through our words, symbols and actions, will be one of openness, friendliness, and respect toward all people we encounter.
4. We will follow the directions of the designated coordinators during public actions.
5. We use consensus-based decision making within our groups.
6. We reject military clothing and symbols.
7. We speak as members of VFP UK but not for VFP UK, unless designated as a spokesperson.
8. Rank, unit, combat experience, age, gender, race, wealth, education, class, religion and nationality carry no status within VFP UK.
9. Sexist, racist, homophobic and other discriminatory language and actions are common within the military; they are not acceptable within VFP UK.
10. Our words and actions will maintain the political and financial independence of VFP UK.

SECTION 4: UK CONTEXT



Only the countries coloured white have not been attacked by forces from the island of Great Britain.

The UK is one of just nine nuclear-armed states.

The UK is one of the largest global arms exporters.

The UK has soldiers deployed in over 80 countries worldwide.

The UK has permanent military bases in 14 countries and overseas territories.

There are 10,000 US service personnel based in six US military bases on UK soil.

The US has access to our military and intelligence installations.

SECTION 5: PRIORITY CAMPAIGN



NEUTRALCOUNTRY.UK

Our Statement of Purpose tells us to “work to restrain our government from intervening, overtly and covertly, in the internal affairs of other nations.” In order to achieve this goal we are working to build support across the political spectrum for the UK to become a permanently neutral country.

Participation in the campaign is be open to those outside of VFP UK.

VFP UK Outreach Groups and individual members are asked to promote this campaign at every available opportunity and sign up members of the public to the campaign via the website neutralcountry.uk

SECTION 6: MEMBERSHIP

6.1 Eligibility for membership

- a) Veterans of the Armed Forces of the United Kingdom.
- b) Veterans of the Armed Forces of other countries.

6.2 Definition of a veteran

We use the official UK government definition; "Everyone who has performed military service for at least one day and drawn a day's pay is termed a veteran".

6.3 Conditions of membership

- a) Members will provide proof of military service.
- b) Members will comply with the VFP UK Handbook.

6.4 Record of membership

The Policy Group ensures the maintenance of an accurate record of the VFP UK membership.

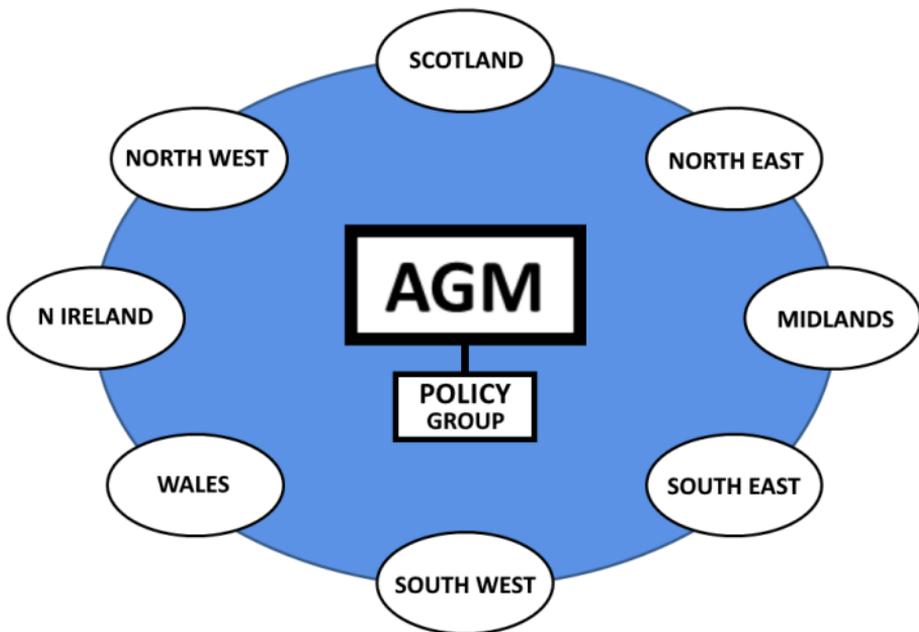
6.5 Restrict or expel from membership

The Policy Group has the authority to admit, restrict or expel to and from VFP UK.

The Policy Group shall state their reasons for any action taken under this section to the Annual General Meeting.

Any action taken under this section may be appealed at the Annual General Meeting.

SECTION 7: STRUCTURE



7.1 Annual General Meeting

VFP UK is governed by the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The AGM is held in November.

Proposed changes to the Handbook are discussed and decided on during the AGM.

Priorities for the following year are discussed and decided during the AGM.

The Policy Group is elected as last item of the AGM.

The authority of the AGM is delegated to the Policy Group in between AGMs.

SECTION 7: STRUCTURE

7.2 Policy Group

Comprises five members elected at the AGM.

Responsible for maintaining the integrity of VFP UK.

Responsible for decision making on behalf of the AGM.

Develops VFP UK policy and strategy.

7.2.1 Chair

Coordinates the Policy Group ensuring all roles and tasks are fulfilled.

7.2.2 National Coordinator

Responsible for day-to-day business and the delegation of administrative work required for VFP UK to function on the national level. Is the point of contact for our Regional Coordinators and outside organisations.

7.2.3 Treasurer

Ensures the integrity of our financial records,

7.2.4 Membership Secretary

Ensures the integrity of our membership records.

7.2.5 National Events Organiser

Responsible for the execution of our two national events, the Annual Gathering and Armed Forces Day.

SECTION 7: STRUCTURE

7.3 Regional Coordinators

Operate in the geographical areas as set out in the structure diagram.

Work as the VFP point of contact within their region. Keep abreast of VFP members, groups and activity within their region.

Ensure that activity within their region is within the framework of the Statement of Purpose and Statement of Conduct.

Regional coordinators are appointed by members of their region present at the AGM and report to the National Coordinator.

7.4 Outreach Groups

Outreach Groups can be formed by members of VFP UK. They can be organised geographically or around a distinct project. Outreach Groups should report to their Regional Coordinator or if project based to the National Coordinator.

SECTION 7: STRUCTURE

7.5 Trustees

There are three trustees of VFP UK.

Each trustee has previously served on the Policy Group for at least three terms.

The trustees authorise the addition and removal of signatories to VFP UK bank accounts.

The Trustees hold the key passwords to VFP UK infrastructure.

In the event of a resignation from the Policy Group the trustees will appoint a VFP UK member to the Policy Group.

SECTION 8: ELECTIONS AND POSITIONS

8.1 Qualification

To stand for election to the Policy Group candidates will:

- Be a member of VFP UK for at least two years.
- Commit to being present at Policy Group meetings.
- Commit to taking part in day-to-day communication.

8.2 Election

The election is held in November at our AGM.

Candidates will submit for election to a position on the Policy Group by 15th of October.

A list of candidates will be published before the AGM.

Each candidate may speak for two minutes at the AGM.

Members will vote at the AGM by choosing between the candidates for each position on the ballot paper.

The candidates with the most votes for each position will be elected to the Policy Group to serve in that position.

8.3 Term of office

Members shall have a term of office lasting one year and be able to stand for re-election.

SECTION 9: INDEPENDENCE

9.1 Financial

VFP UK does not apply for funding or accept donations from individuals or organisations deemed to speak or act in any way contrary to our Statement of Purpose.

The most effective way for VFP UK to maintain financial independence is through regular donations from our own members.

9.2 Political

VFP UK is politically independent and does not:

Subscribe to any specific ideology or religion.

Endorse any political party or politician.

Enter into coalitions.

Endorse other groups.

Work for governments.

SECTION 10: LEGAL STATUS

10.1 Type of organisation

VFP UK is an Unincorporated Association.

10.2 Regulations

VFP UK have no legal obligation to any regulatory body.

10.3 Financial obligation

VFP UK have no legal obligation to submit financial accounts or reports to anyone outside of VFP UK.

10.4 Contracts

VFP UK cannot enter into contracts, own property, rent premises or employ people.

10.5 Liability

As an unincorporated association VFP UK cannot sue, or be sued.

SECTION 11: FINANCES

11.1 Accounts

Policy Group shall ensure that annual financial accounts are published in accordance with standard accounting practices.

11.2 Transparency

Copies of the annual accounts review shall be available on request.

11.3 Fiscal year

The fiscal year of Veterans for Peace UK shall be from April 1 through March 31 of the following year.

11.4 Dues

VFP UK does not collect membership dues.

11.5 Grants

Applications from members and groups should be made in writing to the Policy Group.

11.6 Expenses

Wherever possible hosting organisations should pay members expenses. Members of VFP UK who have incurred costs on VFP UK business can apply to the National Coordinator for reimbursement if required.

SECTION 12: REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY

Date: Remembrance Sunday.

Time: After the official state parade has finished.

Location: The Cenotaph

Meeting point: Whitehall Place, SW1.

The walk to The Cenotaph:

Never Again banner at the front, wreath carried directly behind. Remainder in threes, bugler in the last row. VFP UK banner at the rear. All supporters follow behind the VFP UK column.

The Ceremony:

Line up facing The Cenotaph.

Designated member sings the song “1916”.

Designated member reads the poem “Suicide in the Trenches”.

Lay the wreath of red and white poppies.

Bugler plays “The Last Post”.

All observe one minute of silence.

Bugler to play “Reveille”.

The walk back to Whitehall Place:

VFP UK banner at the front. Remainder in threes, bugler in the last row. Never Again banner at the rear. All supporters follow behind the VFP UK column.

SECTION 12: REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY

Dress:

VFP members: VFP UK sweatshirt, shirt, black tie, dark trousers / skirt, dark shoes.

Followers: Dressed as though attending a funeral.

Equipment:

Never Again banner carried at the front.

Wreath of red and white poppies.

Megaphone.

VFP UK banner, carried at the rear.

No other banners, placards or megaphones allowed.



SECTION 13: AMENDMENT OF HANDBOOK

13.1 Proposed amendments

Amendments to the handbook should be submitted before the 15th of September to be considered for the AGM in November. Submissions can be made by completing the form on the VFP UK website; vfpuk.org/handbook-amendments/

13.2 Additions

Proposed additions are in green italics.

13.3 Subtractions

Proposed subtractions are in red italics and struck through.

13.4 Approval

Amendments must be approved by two thirds of verified VFP UK members in attendance at the AGM.

VETERANS FOR PEACE UK

**“WAR IS NOT THE SOLUTION TO THE
PROBLEMS WE FACE IN THE 21ST CENTURY”**

WWW.VFPUK.ORG