

Reading Force

2025 Impact Report

Helping families stay connected when it matters most



Welcome to our impact brochure for 2024-5, in which we demonstrate just how effective Reading Force has been in reaching the British Armed Forces community – and how they have responded to what we offer.

This is also a good time to celebrate our 15th anniversary, and our long history of supporting the connectivity and resilience of military families through shared-reading.

When we began, in Aldershot in 2011, we had to work hard to demonstrate that reading connected people through a strong shared experience, and that books were not as widely available as many had thought. Fifteen years on, we are available wherever military community is posted, and work through schools, charities and support agencies, and many other key collaborators.

We hope you enjoy the information that follows, but for any further details do please get in touch, either through our website **www.readingforce.org.uk** or direct to **alison@readingforce.org.uk**

Very best wishes,

Alison Baversoch

Alison
Founder and Director

A year of uncertainty – and connection

Military families live with uncertainty as a constant companion. Deployments, relocations, transitions, and separation are among the many emotional upheavals and impacts of daily service life.

Through something as simple as a book, we helped families talk again. Laugh again. Share again. Feel close again.

What do we do?

We send books and special resources to families with children of all ages to share and chat about. We encourage the military community, of all ages, to connect through reading – through book clubs, and talking about books.

Throughout 2025, Reading Force didn't just distribute books. **We increased communication inside thousands of Forces families.**

Our **mission** is to improve communication in all military families and networks, tri-service, serving, veteran, and reserves.



What did we achieve in 2025?

Across the UK and overseas, Reading Force:

- ▶ Supported **6,700** families at moments of real emotional need
- ▶ Placed **5,454** books and **over 16,000** creative journals directly into children's hands
- ▶ Delivered **31** book clubs that reduced loneliness and built community
- ▶ Reached families who would never have asked for help
- ▶ Provided continuity in a world where everything else can change overnight

And we did it with a small team, a powerful model, and ambassadors embedded in the heart of military communities.

“Spending time together and talking about the story – we could connect on a different level and it was calming to be able to read together.”

Reading Force family

How we support families...

With encouragement and the right resources, families are supported to read and chat together.

Reading Force turned moments of strain into moments of connection for families who often feel forgotten — and we did it through the power of shared reading.

What families told us:

- ▶ Children who rarely opened up began talking about their feelings
- ▶ Parents separated by deployment found a way to stay emotionally present
- ▶ Veterans connected with their children and grandchildren
- ▶ Young people struggling with confidence discovered a love of reading
- ▶ Families navigating divorce, bereavement, or transition found comfort, common ground and connection

This is not a literacy programme.

This is a connection programme.

“The memories of doing this scrapbook together will always be with us and when we were having a bad day or not a lot of time we would have five minutes doing this scrapbook and we all felt better.”

Reading Force family

“It’s more than receiving books — it’s about feeling recognised and connected.”

Participating veteran family



How we support veterans

Our Reading Force ambassadors: the human engine of our impact on serving families and veterans.

Our regional ambassadors provided coverage across the UK, each offering deep insight into the unique challenges and opportunities involved in reaching beneficiaries, alongside specialist book club and veteran ambassadors - each one transformed lives not through grand gestures, but through presence, trust, and understanding.

They are known by name.

They are welcomed with smiles.

They are relied upon.

Their work is the reason families say:

“This is the first time we’ve talked about Dad being away.”

“My daughter finally enjoys reading.”

“Our family history is no longer lost.”

This is impact you can feel and why we won the 2025 Northern Irish Veterans Awards Veteran Group of the Year Award.



Book Clubs

Our book clubs fill the need for adult groups, they take the pressure off, reduce isolation, and create community.

“I’ve said it many times before but I will keep saying it. Setting up our book club with you guys has been phenomenal – it’s still going strong and has had quite a profound effect on the members. Thank you Reading Force.”

Laura Robbins MBE
Chair of the Royal Air Force Widows’ Association

“As I’m disabled I don’t go out much, this gave me other people to chat to. Made me feel that I belonged.”

Book Club member

“The benefits include not feeling so lonely and isolated and better able to support each other.”

Book Club member



Support us

Why Reading Force matters now more than ever.

Military families are facing rising emotional, financial, and practical pressures. Demand for our support is growing fast — and every year, more families turn to us because they trust us.

We are cost effective, collaborative, and deeply embedded in the communities we serve.

But we cannot meet the need alone.

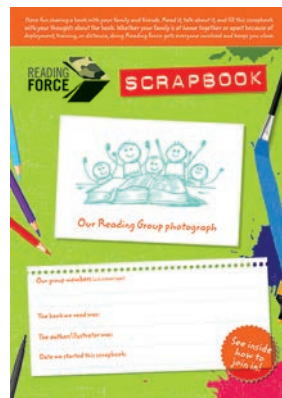
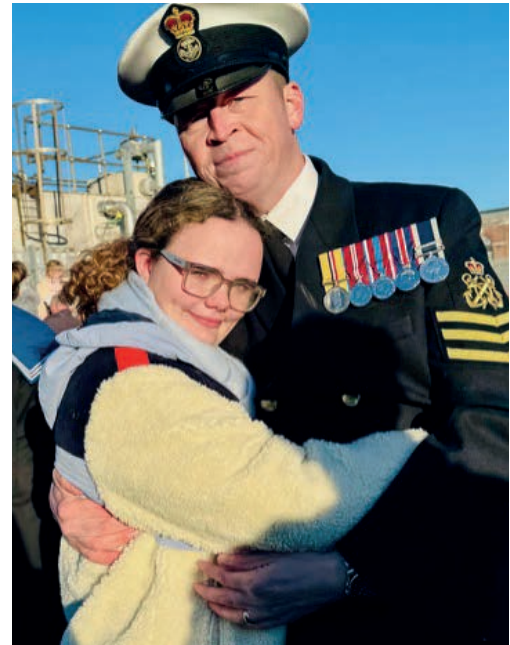
The call to action

Your support doesn't just fund books.

It funds **connection, communication, and belonging** for families who give so much and ask for so little.

There are over **120,000 UK military children.**

Help us reach the families who need us next.





Thanks to funders

We couldn't have done it without you... thank you!

When a child curls up with a book their parent sent from deployment...

When a veteran opens up to their family for the first time in years...

When a teenager uses a journal to express feelings they couldn't say aloud...

That is Reading Force.

Support our work to continue. Donate today.

www.readingforce.org.uk

