



# FELIX FUND IMPACT REPORT 2020/2021



**THE BOMB DISPOSAL CHARITY FOR THE  
ENTIRE EOD & SEARCH COMMUNITY**

Since 2011

Registered Charity No. 1142494

# Felix Fund Impact Report 2020/2021

Felix Fund the bomb disposal charity exists to provide help to any military from across all three services and SO15 (Metropolitan Police Counter Terror Unit) personnel who have conducted or assisted with Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and Search duties.

The charity provides welfare support and financial assistance serving personnel, veterans and their dependents. Founded in April 2011 the charity works across the UK.

## Message from the Chairman

As we celebrate an incredible 10 years since the launch of Felix Fund - The Bomb Disposal Charity, I want to reflect on its key achievements in supporting our EOD and Search community to consider the challenges that lie ahead.

Felix Fund was founded in April 2011. It was born from a need to exercise an additional duty of care to our EOD and search community (beyond that which the MOD provides) and focused not just on physical need, but offering financial assistance (through grants), mental resilience training and signposting to wider support networks where required. Felix Fund was enabled to provide timely, direct and tailored assistance 'by the community, for the community'.

Although world beating medical support was available to our armed forces caught in the grip of protracted kinetic operations in Afghanistan (and before that, Iraq), the provision of bespoke support to EOD and search teams (in particular, dealing with mental health) was inadequate. Many lives were lost and countless servicemen and women were injured, with our own community suffering the loss of several friends, colleagues and loved ones who will never be forgotten. The physical injuries received by a number of our EOD, search, military working dog handlers, ECM operators and infantry escorts returning home provided a stark reminder to us all of the need to care for our own in time of need. But it was not just those carrying physical injuries that needed help. Many of our EOD and search family bore the mental scars that were not (and, in some cases, still are not) readily seen.

The chance of death or serious injury is a sword of Damocles hanging over the head of every operator and his team. Over time, this pressure can take its toll; not just on them, but their families and loved ones. Coming to terms with the physical and psychological aftermath of their ordeals can be extremely hard. Recognising this, Felix Fund created a successful 'Normalisation' program in 2011 that sought to bring together EOD and search teams who had served together on Operation HERRICK. The aim was to allow individuals to re-engage with each other in a relaxed environment, using team building exercises to help peel back the mental layers. These 'normalisation breaks' facilitated a journey towards greater wellbeing, mindfulness and future mental resilience. 100 teams benefitted from this experience and the feedback was extremely encouraging.

Events such as Manchester in May 2017 put sharp focus on the domestic pressures our EOD and search teams face. Operations in Afghanistan and Iraq may have ceased, but EOD teams still operate across the world and especially in our own back yard, tackling over 2500 tasks per year. Felix Fund drew on the positive lessons from normalisation breaks and created our now flagship 'Dashboard' program. This program has been running since 2016 and consists of tailored mental resilience training (currently delivered residually and now online due to COVID) designed to equip our EOD and search personnel with the tools to identify mental stress warning signs early on and take proactive steps to deal with them. In essence, the aim of Dashboard is to apply prevention rather than cure. A long waiting list and many plaudits show how popular and well regarded Dashboard is!

Continued ...

In terms of grant making, Felix Fund has raised over 2.6 million pounds and provided in excess of 1.5 million pounds in direct grants since 2011. This is a staggering amount and testament to the huge amount of donations the charity has received from the EOD and search community, keen to help its own, and external supporters and corporations wanting to show their respect for the job that our professionals carry out. Beneficiaries rank in their hundreds, but a few stand out: Speech therapy and physio treatment for a Clearance Diver who had suffered a stroke; funeral costs for the mother of a young Sapper; replacement parts for a powered wheelchair for a former soldier injured in Afghanistan; rowing equipment for a soldier selected to row in the Paralympic Games; financial support to a soldier requiring pioneering limb surgery and assistance to the children of those who lost their lives in the line of duty for educational costs (through our 'Holly Davies Memorial Fund'). There are many more.

As co-founder and Chairman of Felix Fund, I want to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to those of you who have lent your support to the charity over the years. Our 10th anniversary is indeed a milestone but there is much more work to be done in servicing the needs of our brave EOD and search professionals (serving or retired), their families and dependents. To do this, and especially under the spectre of COVID, it is absolutely critical that we are able to rely on your continued help. Through individual donations and your outstanding community fundraising efforts, Felix Fund will be well placed to assist our EOD and search family for many more years to come. Remember: 'By the community, for the community'.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl Frankland', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Karl Frankland

Co-founder and Chairman

Felix Fund - The Bomb Disposal Charity

# Who We Are

Melanie Moughton - CEO  
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Hayley Paintin - Fundraising Assistant  
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Elaine Fisher - Treasurer



## Trustees

Col Karl Frankland late RLC - Chairman

Col Daniel Reyland late RLC

Brig Gareth Collett, CBE late RLC

Cdr Alan Nekrews, QGM RN

WO1 RSM Tom Kowalewski RE

Sgt Kenny Scott RE

Mr David Hunkin OBE

## Ambassador

Brig Adam McRae, MBE late RLC

## Patrons



Andy Torbet - Underwater Explorer, Deep Sea and Cave Diver, Television Presenter, Author & Film Maker

Adnan Sarwar — Former Royal Engineer (33 EOD), Award-winning Writer, Editor, Film Maker & Television Presenter





## Our Year in Numbers

**4,345**

Facebook  
followers



**1,970**

Twitter  
followers



**1,177**

Instagram  
followers



**667**

LinkedIn  
followers



**20,288**

Visits to  
our website



**12** Serving personnel and  
their families helped



**£11,023**

Given out in grants

**9** Veterans helped



**£15,115**

Given out in grants



Number of  
Dashboard  
courses

*The majority of courses were  
cancelled due to Covid-19  
restrictions*

**20**



Number of  
Dashboard  
attendees

**2,719**



Copies of  
the  
newsletter  
sent out



# How We Have Helped

Covid-19 hit the UK in March 2020 and life changed for everyone. Felix Fund worked hard to try and maintain a level of business as usual but with no Dashboard programs able to run it was not always easy. Our first task was to offer up alternatives to the mindfulness training with a series of short tutorial videos on our YouTube Channel.

These went a small way to helping some people although the take up was not as popular as we would have hoped. In addition to this Felix Fund offered emergency Covid grants to veterans who were not eligible to be furloughed or for the other Government support being offered. With many veterans leaving the forces and setting up their own business there were a number who did not have three years accounts to show in order to receive self-employed support grants. Like us all they still had bills to pay and families to care for, so Felix Fund was able to step in and offer a one-off grant to tide them over until other support became available.

*"When Coronavirus hit the UK, my hours were cut by 60% and I was struggling with bills and being able to feed my family. Felix Fund provided an emergency Covid-19 grant which eased the burden at an incredibly stressful time."*



*"I had just started my own company when the UK was put into lockdown. Very quickly I had no work and was not eligible for Government support. Felix Fund provided an emergency Covid-19 grant within hours which took the pressure off."*



*"Like many people when Covid-19 caused the UK to lockdown I was suddenly without an income. I am so thankful to Felix Fund for providing an emergency Covid-19 grant to help with bills and food. They helped me and my family through a difficult time."*



*"Having left the military some years ago I had set up as a self-employed travel agent. All work dried up instantly in March 2020. I am grateful to Felix Fund for giving me an emergency Covid-19 grant to help pay my rent when I had no income."*

# Our Strategic Plan

In 2020/2021 Felix Fund's objectives are:

To be in a position of 'business as usual' both during and following the Coronavirus Pandemic

To continue to increase awareness of the work of the charity within the wider EOD and Search communities

To continue to increase support from the general public nationally

To continue to expand our Dashboard programme

To maintain and increase support from across all income streams

To expand the number of individuals we help annually

To mark the 10th Anniversary of Felix Fund

We will achieve these objectives through:

Providing trustees and staff with appropriate fundraising training

All trustees agree to support major events

Trustees to identify potential supporters through their personal and professional networks

Growth and development of the website, a new design of which was launched in March 2020. Social media activity and wider distribution of the E-newsletter

Targeted marketing campaign in key locations around the UK aimed predominantly at veterans

To plan a series of events and activities to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of Felix Fund

## Thank You

Felix Fund can only continue to help this unique group of men and women through regular support and donations from you all. Following what has been a very difficult year for us all your support is even more invaluable – thank you.

