**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

**Section A: The Research Project**

1. **Title of project:** Building the Bigger Picture: Establishing a dataset to understand ex-serviceperson’s experience in the UK Armed Forces, and address gendered harms
2. **Purpose of study**

The aim of this project is to transfer the dataset of veteran narratives that Diane Allen (OBE) collected as part of the ‘Forewarned’ project, to the Centre for Military Women’s Research at Anglia Ruskin University.

This will help us to create the largest dataset in the UK about ex-serviceperson’s experiences and challenges whilst serving in the UK armed forces, to support  large-scale academic research on pervading themes and issues that arise from these experiences. At the moment, there is still very little socio-cultural research looking at women veteran’s experiences during service and the kind of challenges that many face. By building this archived dataset and conducting academic research on key themes, we hope to support the identification of common challenges and drive actionable recommendations for change, to better support both veterans and serving personnel. We know these socio-cultural challenges not only affect women's experience and men have also shared their narratives with Dianne. As such we have chosen to be purposefully inclusive in compiling this archive and will also archive the narratives of men who chose to take part.

Because you shared your experience with Diane via the Forewarned email inbox, we are approaching you to see if you would consent for Diane to share this narrative with the research team. The narrative will be anonymised and information about what we will do with the data is outlined throughout this document.

Additionally, the Centre for Military Women Research will be applying for further opportunities to fund the staff time required to undertake a comprehensive analysis of the dataset to explore women’s in-service experiences, which may include experiences of gender discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment and assault in service. We will also consider options to explore men’s experiences of military culture.

We are very happy to arrange a phone call or virtual meeting (via. Microsoft Teams, Zoom etc.) to discuss the project and answer any questions you may have. This can be organised via Diane, or by emailing Abigail Adams at abigail.wood@aru.ac.uk.

1. **Who are the researchers?**

The research team are all part of the Centre for Military Women’s Research at Anglia Ruskin University. The researchers are:

* **Dr Lauren Godier-McBard –** Director of theCentre for Military Women’s Research
* **Dr Charlotte Herriott** – Senior Lecturer in Criminology and Policing, and Military Sexual Trauma lead for the Centre for Military Women’s Research
* **Abigail Adams** – Research Fellow at the Veteran’s and Families Institute for Military Social Research, and the Centre for Military Women’s Research
1. **Why have I been asked to participate?**

You have been asked to be a part of this research as you previously shared your experiences with Diane Allen OBE as part of the Forewarned email inbox.

1. **How many people will be asked to participate?**

We are asking everyone who shared their experiences with Diane Allen OBE as part of the Forewarned email inbox to be a part of our research. This is approximately 300 veterans.

1. **Do I have to take part?**

There is absolutely no obligation to consent to your experience being shared with us for our research. Consenting to sharing your data is entirely voluntary and under no circumstances, should you feel pressured into taking part.

1. **Has the study got ethical approval?**

Yes. The study has been approved by the ARU ethics committee: ETH2425-3337

1. **Legislation relating to this study**

We will comply with the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act (2018).

1. **Source of funding for the research, if applicable**

The transfer of anonymous veteran experiences for this research, is being funded by the Faculty of Arts, Humanities, Education and Social Sciences [AHESS] at ARU, as part of the research and innovation funding scheme.

1. **How will the archived dataset work?**

More information is provided in Section 4, point B. In brief, anonymised written accounts will be stored within an archive solution. Access to the anonymised data will be granted only to researchers with a positions at an academic institution, who are looking to better understand women’s military experiences, and who have ethical approval from their institution.

1. **What will happen to the results of the study?**

The CMWR will be applying for further opportunities to fund the staff time required to undertake a comprehensive analysis of the dataset. The results of this subsequent analysis will be written up for academic articles published in relevant journals, prepared for audience specific briefs as necessary (e.g. a short brief for a charity to help them better understand women’s needs), and presented at academic conferences.

1. **Contact for further information**

For more information about this project, please contact Abigail Adams (n.Wood) at, abigail.wood@aru.ac.uk

### Section B: Your Participation in the Research Project

1. **What will I be asked to do?**

If you agree to participate in the research, you will need to send a signed consent form to Diane Allen and the research team via Microsoft Forms. After this, Diane and the research team will take care of the rest of the process, and you do not need to do anything further unless you wish to amend the information previously shared.

Diane will send the research team your original email narrative that you sent to the forewarned inbox having made sure that your name and any personal details are removed. However, if there is anything you wish to remove details from or add to the narrative, then please feel free to do so and you can discuss this with Diane Allen, who will then share your amended narrative.

1. **In relation to this specific research project, we need to make you aware of the following:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ☐ |  We do not need your personal data at any stage of this research project |
|  We are responsible for the personal data you give to us as a: |
| X | **Data Controller**(We are in sole control over the research) | Who are we?:  |  Centre for Military Women’s Research, ARU |
| ☐ | **Joint Controller**(Where ARU and another organisation are working together on research) | with: |  |
| ☐ | **Data Processor** (Where the data will belong to another organisation and ARU is being engaged under contract/agreement to conduct the research and provide an outcome but has no rights over the personal data)  | on behalf of: |  |

1. **I will be asking you for the following information:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Personal Data** | **Sensitive Personal data** |
| ☐ |  Name/Contact details | ☐ |  Image (photo or video) | ☐ |  Racial/Ethnicity data |
| ☐ |  Age | 🗙 |  Experiences | ☐ |  Political/Religious beliefs |
| ☐ |  Address/location data | ☐  |  Opinions | ☐ |  Trade Union membership |
| ☐ |  Employment & Earnings | ☐ |  [Other] | ☐  |  Genetic/Biometric data |
| ☐ |  ID Numbers (e.g. NHS) | ☐ |  [Other] | ☐  |  Health |
| ☐ |  Online identifier | ☐ |  [Other] | ☐ |  Sex life/orientation data |

We will comply with the UK GDPR, Data Protection Act (2018).

1. **What will happen to your data?**

*Anonymisation*: Before Diane sends the research team your narrative, she will make sure that your name and any personal details are removed. In addition to this, the research team will remove any reference to specific roles, personal details, or locations when publishing outputs for the research. Tags identifying some broad information about you (i.e., service branch, length of service, year of discharge) may be included but we will endeavour to ensure that any information that carries an increased risk for identification, is not included in any published work from this dataset.

Non-identifiable quotes may be used in research outputs, to illustrate key themes and issues, however, as above, the CMWR and researchers accessing the archive will endeavour to ensure that these cannot be linked back to you. There is a small risk that those familiar with your speech style or specifics of your military background may be able to identify you, but this is unlikely.

*Data Transfer*: Diane will upload anonymised written accounts to a Microsoft Teams Folder to make sure that the data transfer is secure and cannot be accessed by and third parties.

*Data Storage:*Initially, your anonymised written account will be stored securely at Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) in a password protected Microsoft Teams Folder only accessible to the researchers named in this form. Digital consent forms will be stored in Microsoft Forms at ARU, separate to all other research data collected.

Later the anonymised accounts will be stored within an archive solution that is GDPR compliant. Access to this archived will be managed by the CMWR. The CMWR will review the continued academic and societal value of archiving the dataset every 10 years.

Archive Access: Access to the archive will be managed by the CMWR. Access to the anonymised data will be granted only to researchers with a position at an academic institution, who are looking to better understand ex-serviceperson’s military experiences, and who have ethical approval from their institution. In each case, any researcher must sign a data sharing agreement prior to access being granted that will outline what usage is permitted, and what steps must be taken to protect those who share their written accounts.

This project will comply with the GDPR and Data Protection Acts (2018). The Centre for Military Women’s Research at Anglia Ruskin University will act as the Data Controller for this project.

Our general privacy notice explaining our use of your personal data for research purposes is available here:  [https://www.anglia.ac.uk/privacy-and-cookies/research-participants](https://www.aru.ac.uk/privacy-and-cookies/research-participants). Please visit this link for information about how long we keep your data, how we keep your data secure, how you can exercise your rights over your data, and make a complaint over our use of your data.

1. **Are there any possible disadvantages or risks to taking part?**

We are aware that some of the experiences you shared with Diane as part of the Forewarned email inbox may be sensitive and potentially distressing. Though we are not asking you to provide any further information or detail to these experiences, we are aware that revisiting these experiences could be challenging. We want to reiterate that you are under no obligation to consent to these experiences being shared with the research team and your wellbeing is imperative.

 **What to do if you need further support at any time:**

If at any time you feel you need to access support for your mental health, we encourage you to contact your GP or call NHS 111. Alternatively, you can contact the following, veteran specific support services:

Salute Her: A mental health support charity with services specifically for women veterans:

* Call Paula Edwards on 01912 504877 or email paula@forward-assist.com

Forward Assist: A mental health support charity supporting all veterans:

* Fill in the contact form at <https://www.forward-assist.com/contact> or email admin@forward-assist.com

NHS Veterans Mental Health Services (Op Courage): Contact your regional Op Courage services using the details below:

* North of England: 0300 373 3332 or email OpCourageNORTH@cntw.nhs.uk
* The Midlands: Call 0300 323 0137 or email mevs.mhm@nhs.net
* The East of England: Call 0300 034 9991 or email mevs.mhm@nhs.net
* London: Call 020 3317 6818 or email nlft.veterans@nhs.net
* Sussex, Surrey or Kent: call 020 3317 6818 or email cim-tr.veteranstilservice-lse@nhs.net
* South of England: 0300 365 2000 (option 4) or email gateway@berkshire.nhs.uk
* Southwest England: Call 0300 034 9986 or email mevs.mhm@nhs.net

**If you feel like you might attempt suicide, or have seriously harmed yourself, you need urgent medical help. Please call 999 for an ambulance.**

1. **What are the likely benefits of taking part?**

It is unlikely that you will see any direct personal benefits to taking part, other than taking the opportunity to share your experiences for the purpose of further research. We hope that the wider benefits of the work will include a better understanding about women’s experiences of military service, and therein potential gendered challenge. In turn, this will help to develop guidance and recommendations for improvement. Furthermore, we hope that this project will allow for a better understanding of men’s experience of military culture, and again inform recommendations for improvements.

1. **Can I withdraw at any time, and how do I do this?**

Should you wish to withdraw your data, we are able to withdraw your data until the data is transferred to the research team at CMWR. At this point the data will be anonymised, and the ARU researchers will not be able to identify your data to remove it. You do not have to provide a reason for withdrawing your data.

Diane will transfer the anonymised narratives to the research team at ARU between March-June 2025.

To withdraw your data from the study, please email Dianne, or the research team (via abigail.wood@aru.ac.uk) – who will then relay your wishes. You do not need to give a reason why.

1. **What will happen to my data?**

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| --- |
| **Our general privacy notice explaining our use of your personal data for research purposes is available here:**<https://www.aru.ac.uk/privacy-and-cookies/research-participants>**Please visit this link for information about how long we keep your data, how we keep your data secure, how you can exercise your rights over your data, and make a complaint over our use of your data.** |

1. **Contact details for complaints**

If at any point during the research, you wish to raise a complaint then we encourage you to contact Abigail Adams in the first instance, at abigail.wood@aru.ac.uk.

Alternatively, you can contact ARU’s Office of the Secretary and Clerk directly, without speaking to a member of the research team: complaints@aru.ac.uk

[Postal address: Office of the Secretary and Clerk, Anglia Ruskin University, Bishop Hall Lane, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 1SQ.]

**Thank you for taking the time to read this participant information sheet. If you have any questions about the research study, please contact Abigail Adams (****Abigail.wood@aru.ac.uk****).**

Date 22 January 2025

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