

# ERSKINE News

Issue 35, Autumn 2022



# New Gym

Helping to keep our Veterans fighting fit!

Full story on page 6

# Welcome



I started my career in the Royal Navy at 17 as a 'Writer', it was the best time of my life. I will be forever grateful for the experience and opportunities it has opened up for me since leaving in 1998.

Little did I know, or plan, that 30 years later I would be the Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development (HR&OD) for Scotland's largest and most iconic Veterans Charity!

It is an honour and privilege to work with the most amazing, hardworking, resilient, dedicated, caring and compassionate colleagues. It certainly feels as if I have gone full circle and come right back where I belong. I joined Erskine on the 1 December 2020, slap bang in the middle of the pandemic, to say it was a slightly unusual introduction is an understatement. Infection and prevention control meant that everyone was wearing masks, protective equipment and keeping their distance, all for the right reasons of course - to protect our Veterans.

This meant that getting to know people was slightly more challenging than I was used to pre-pandemic but nevertheless I had a job to do. After spinning a few 'dits' with my fellow Veterans, I followed the example set by the entire Erskine team and got on with the job in hand, no matter what.

As Director of HR & OD, I am here to ensure that Erskine remains a fabulous place to work for every single person. I am committed to ensuring that our workforce feel cared for, supported by us and get the opportunity to do what they love every single day so that they can focus on doing what they do best for our Veterans.

I have a vested interest in how employees feel about working at Erskine and as a Veteran, I may rely on their care, support, and services in years to come as will my husband Gary (Royal Navy - Electronic Warfare). I want people to love what they do and feel supported which will be visible through the services we deliver to Veterans.

I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your support for Erskine. I get to see first-hand the impact of your generosity in the services we deliver for Veterans, and it means the world to us!

With warm thanks and best wishes,

**Sarah Bickerstaff**  
Director of Human Resources & Organisational Development

# Meet THE TEAM!

There are many different roles within Erskine and each one is taken on by an amazing individual offering their skills and knowledge to help continue to make Erskine's care of the highest standard.



**Catering Manager**  
John Booth

*Over 16 years ago I was working for an agency and was given a shift to work at The Erskine Home. I did my shift and never left. All these years later I still really enjoy my job as Catering Manager. No two days are the same and I meet so many different people. I am very fortunate to have a great team around me. We are all likeminded, working to the common goal of caring for our residents.*



**Social Media Officer**  
Luisaidh Davidson

*The work we do gives back to those who have given so much, which is hugely motivating. There are plenty of opportunities for personal development, with in-house and external training, and you're always encouraged to extend your knowledge and skillset. Coming from a corporate background, finding a role with a great work-life balance was a big priority for me, and I've found that at Erskine.*



**Care Assistant**  
Jennifer McCabe

*I love working for Erskine and caring for our residents. We have such a good team and over the past year we have all put in 100% effort, working extra shifts and pulling together just as a good team should. When our families couldn't visit we had to be our resident's stand-in families and we didn't let them down, caring for our Veterans is so rewarding.*



SCAN ME

We're proud to care and are looking for people to join us who are proud to care too.  
**Scan QR Code to view our current vacancies.**

Our services for Veterans and their families address three fundamental needs – Care, Accommodation and Community.

# Our Services

## During the year our services included:

### Care

Our homes provide nursing, dementia and end-of-life care to Veterans and their spouses ensuring they are provided with the best possible care during later life.

### Community

The Erskine Reid Macewen Activity Centre (ERMAC), a Veterans Activity Centre within the Bishopton Veterans village. ERMAC aims to enhance the quality of life and wellbeing of Veterans in the community, providing the opportunity to engage with people who have shared experiences and history, learn new skills, explore their interests and access support services.

### Accommodation

Transitional Supported Accommodation for Veterans who leave the military at relatively short notice and need more assistance to reintegrate productively back into civilian life, within 24 apartments located at our Bishopton Veterans Village.

44 Family cottages and 5 Assisted Living Accommodation apartments for Veterans and their families to live independent lives within our Bishopton Veterans Village.

Accommodation and support services for the Army Personnel Recovery Centre which supports service men and women to recover post service, within the 16 room recovery facility located within our Edinburgh Home.



ON OUR ESTATE  
IN BISHOPTON  
WE HAVE



44  
VETERAN FAMILY  
COTTAGES



5  
ASSISTED LIVING  
APARTMENTS



24  
TRANSITIONAL  
SUPPORTED  
APARTMENTS



HOW  
OLD  
ARE OUR RESIDENTS  
21-102



4,169  
1:1 PHYSIO  
TREATMENTS\*



199  
PHYSIO GROUP  
ATTENDANCES\*



120  
VETERANS AT  
OUR ACTIVITY  
CENTRE

\* In 2021

Veterans  
will be fighting  
fit thanks to

# New Gym

Veterans at Erskine Reid Macewen Activities Centre (ERMAC) lead and shape the service on offer, based on the needs of the Veteran community. A gym was something they always wanted.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Veterans' Foundation a specially designed, fully equipped and accessible gym is now in place at the Activities Centre.

Many Veterans at ERMAC had experienced challenges when using public gyms. This was due to them not often catering for the needs of amputees or people with physical disabilities. Those with conditions such as PTSD, can often find busy public environments overwhelming.

The gym has been created in a previously unused space within the Centre. The grant will also pay for tuition, servicing and maintenance of the gym for a three-year period.

With the help of supporters like you and the generous grant from the Veterans' Foundation's support, the gym will offer our Veterans the opportunity to improve their physical and mental wellbeing whilst in a safe space.



# One-Stop-Shop

Saving  
Veterans  
Thousands

Many Veterans leave the Forces unaware of the full catalogue of support available to them – step up One-Stop-Shop!

Through funding from The Scottish Veterans Fund we've been able to appoint a Financial Inclusion Officer working out of the Activities Centre. The One-Stop-Shop gives Veterans access to advice, guidance and support across a wide range of financial topics. Within the first six months the project was already showing incredible results; 44 Veterans and 12 spouses had made use of the new service, attending 211 appointments between them. Each time receiving a tailored service, bespoke to their individual circumstances.

Now over a year into the project, our Veterans have gained access to over £100,000 of financial support!



## About Erskine's Activities Centre

ERMAC is open 5 days a week to all Veterans, with evening and weekend access to onsite residents.

Members can take part in a timetable of meaningful activities, with opportunities to learn new skills, socialise and with easy access to support services.

Classes include IT, art, and woodwork alongside therapies, social activities and outings. Transport and hot lunches are provided daily. The entire ERMAC service is free of charge to any Veteran, carer or spouse wishing to attend.

*Coming to this centre has been life-changing for me. It has given me structure, a sense of belonging and a routine. I feel better about myself and I have met so many nice people.*

Here's what one Veteran said

## How your support helps

- £2** Provides a hot meal for a Veteran
- £9** Covers weekly volunteer expenses for those giving up their time to support the Centre members
- £50** Funds transport for a day to enable vulnerable Veterans to attend the Centre
- £60** Provides an IT class for up to 6 veterans
- £125** Provides five Veterans access to wellbeing and holistic therapy classes

# The Secrets of Sonas



Your support helps provide Veterans and their spouses with high quality care and support. Sonas sessions are just one of the ways your donations help staff to support elderly residents and those living with Dementia.

Sonas is a programme of therapeutic activity which involves stimulation of all five senses, gentle exercise, relaxing music, singalongs and memory-focused exercises.

These multi-sensory sessions help health care workers and those living with dementia to connect with each other. Sessions follow a clear structure and are repeated over time. This supports familiarity, a sense of safety and communication.

The sessions can include anything from playing percussion instruments, reciting poems, phrase completion, gentle exercise, a taste of chocolate or discovering a scent.

The benefits are enormous for all of those who take part.



## Top Ten Benefits of Sonas

### 1. Communication

Understanding is promoted through the linking of words and actions, helping to establish participants association and expression through percussion.

### 2. Awareness

If a person is more aware of their surroundings through the stimulation of the senses, they're more likely to interact with the environment.

### 3. Initiative

Sessions encourage participants to take their own initiative and contribute within a lively group rather than passively sit alone.

### 4. Relaxation & enjoyment

As sessions are repetitive people are more able to relax and enjoy themselves through familiarity.

### 5. Memory

In an instant a smell or song can transport us back to a place or take us to a memory in our life. As well as long term memory being triggered, the constant repetition of the Sonas programme may help to build up new pathways which could aid memory.

### 6. Self-worth and Positive Attitude

If participants find they are able to do things, and are appreciated for what they do, they are likely to gain a more positive attitude to themselves.

### 7. Time

Group and individual sessions give quality time to participants as opposed to functional time. This creates real connections and facilitates social interaction alongside relaxation.

### 8. Individuality

Focusing on each person with frequent use of their name, together with recognition of and reinforcement of abilities, acknowledge each person as an individual.

### 9. Abilities

Because the emphasis is on activating potential, the focus is on abilities

### 10. Fun for all

There are smiles all round as residents and staff alike enjoy a bit of Sonas session fun to brighten up everyone's day!

## Here's a few memories from our some of our favourite Sonas Sessions.

Michelle handed out the percussion instruments, she turned to find Robert had placed his tambourine on his head and was waiting for us to notice. This had everyone laughing! So much so, there was a bang from next door as staff joked with us to keep the noise down.

Our scent today was imperial leather and this led the group into reminiscence about soap they used to use, lifebuoy, carbolic soap and the fancy one Lux soap.

This morning our smell was Marzipan which prompted Bobby to share with the group his opinion on the smell which was *"Better than the smell of my grandfather's pipe"*. Our conversations got our taste buds tingling just before lunch as we spoke about fish and chips, toast and cheese, bubble and squeak and of course brought on by the smell of marzipan... Battenberg cake.

As the residents completed the song title and lyrics during our phrase completion, Noreen said she loved the song 'A nightingale sang in Berkeley square' so Michelle played it from our Spotify and we watched Noreen sing her heart out, eyes closed and smiling, just beautiful.

Michelle asked the group if anyone had a rhyme they remembered and Bobby started us off with Twinkle, Twinkle. This led us onto children's rhymes which came flowing back to us all, one lady commented *"It's funny how these never leave you"*.

# SPOTLIGHT ON Steve Wylie Army Veteran

**You served 14 years with the Army Catering Corps (Royal Logistic Corps), where were you stationed?**

During my time I was all over the world – Northern Ireland, Germany, Falklands, Canada and my last posting was in London with the Royal Engineers. London was a really happy time in my career, within 18 months I was promoted to Lance Corporal then Corporal.

**If London brought you good times are you able to share some tougher ones with us?**

Looking back, being away from loved ones was always tough. My time in the Falklands with the 3rd Royal Green Jackets however, was life changing. I'd just arrived home for leave and there was a knock on the door *"You're needed in the Falklands."*

**Aged 31 you came back to "civvy street", what was it like trying to adjust to civilian life?**

I was still quite young, 31, was told *"Thanks for your service."* and left to figure out a world I didn't know much about. All I'd known for half of my life was the military way so it was a huge shock to the system!

After I made my way back to Scotland I spent six or so years in and out of temporary accommodation before being offered a council house. Having my culinary skills made it a little bit easier to find the odd job here and there but my mental health was suffering and I missed having structure to my days.

**Were you aware that you could be suffering from PTSD? (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder)**

I don't think I was, all I knew was my head wasn't in a good place. When PTSD was first mentioned to me it did make sense. Being in the Catering Corps you don't expect to be so close to the action as it were; but when help's needed you step up. In the Falklands I done a lot of stretcher bearing, helping the medics and there were moments in Northern Ireland that I will never forget – they still affect me to this day.

**How did you come to hear about Erskine and the Activity Centre?**

My GP told me about their Shoulder to Shoulder mentoring project and it was then I learned that the Erskine Reid Macewen Activity Centre (ERMAC) was opening soon. That was four years ago now and I can't express how much it has turned my life around. It's been a godsend.

**What do you think it is about ERMAC that has made it so special for you and other Veterans?**

The people. Being with fellow Veterans who all speak the same language and have a personal understanding of what you've been through is comforting. Without ERMAC I wouldn't have been able to do some of the things I have achieved in the past four years. My confidence has grown, I've made great friends, gained new skills and the biggest accomplishment – travelling. Before coming to ERMAC I wouldn't have even contemplated going abroad and yet here I am awaiting my next trip in September!

**In the picture:** Steve enjoying some woodwork skills thanks to the facilities at ERMAC

*"I don't think at the time I realised just what an impact it would have on my life after the Army as well."*



## The Future

We're excited to tell you we're giving consideration as to how we can replicate the success of the Activity Centre in other regions.

With highly promising talks ongoing with the Leancoil Trust in Forres, Morayshire, we intend to occupy the west wing of the stunning Leancoil Cottage Hospital building.

Watch this space!

# BOWLS SCOTLAND

We'd love to hear your ideas of what will make the Erskine and Bowls Scotland partnership great.

Get in touch at: [community@erskine.org.uk](mailto:community@erskine.org.uk)



Veterans are about to be bowled over, thanks to a partnership between Bowls Scotland and Erskine.

The organisations have had affiliations for many years. A number of clubs already choose to raise vital funds for Erskine. So we are delighted to make the partnership official.

The three-year partnership will offer a new pathway for Veterans to explore lawn bowls at over 800 bowling clubs throughout Scotland. We will work together with Bowls Scotland to promote the mental and physical benefits of playing bowls.

Future plans include increasing engagement and fundraising for Erskine among the bowls community. Alongside new projects to make bowls more accessible for residents within Erskine Veterans Village. As well as the development of para players as part of the ongoing rehabilitation of ex-servicemen and women.

**Bowls Scotland Chief Executive, Alan McMillan, said:** "We are delighted to be partnering with Erskine as our official charity partner. The partnership will give us a great opportunity to increase our coverage of bowls amongst the ex-military personnel. Who knows, at future Commonwealth Games we may have Erskine Veterans playing for Scotland!"

**In the picture:** Erskine Veteran, Bill McDowall and Bowls Scotland's 2014 Commonwealth Games competitor Billy Allan - along with fellow Veteran, Mary Wilson, of Bowls Scotland's High Performance programme - threw the first bowls to launch the partnership at Doune Castle Bowling Club.

## Did you know?

Bowls is Team Scotland's most successful Commonwealth Games sport with 37 medals won since the inaugural Games in Canada in 1930.

# MOTORBIKE Meet



A rip roaring success!

May saw the return of the ever popular Motorbike Meet, now in its 16th year the turnout of bikers proved it's going nowhere fast.

Organised by Erskine Ambassador, volunteer Heather Clissett, with support from our fundraising team, the annual event brings flocks of two and three wheels bikes on to our Veterans Village.

### Let's hear from Heather:

"Nearly 1,000 bikes turned out to ride from Park Mains High to the Erskine estate! It was great to also see the return of two vintage wedding cars heading up the procession chauffeuring some of our Veterans along the route. Over the years the relationship that has built up between the bikers and the charity is something very special and unique.

There are far too many thank yous to hand out, I'd be able to fill two issues of Erskine News! To everyone involved in the day - from the stall holders and volunteers to the performers, bikers and members of the public who came along on the day - thank you very much, here's to year 17!"

## Be part of our 200+ strong volunteer family!

Many hands make light work and we always appreciate any time you can spare.

For more information on Erskine's volunteering opportunities or fundraising activities please get in touch:

### Volunteer Department

E [volunteering@erskine.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@erskine.org.uk)  
T 0141 812 1100

### Fundraising Department

E [fundraising@erskine.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@erskine.org.uk)  
T 0141 814 4555

# THANK YOU



## Small steps make a BIG impact

Over £50,000 has been raised so far this year by our brilliant Kiltwalk participants! There's still time to sign up to the Edinburgh Kiltwalk – Sunday 18th September – and join the Erskine Tartan Army. Go to [Kiltwalk.co.uk](http://Kiltwalk.co.uk) to sign up.

## Famous Friends share a pint

Thanks to Dalkeith Miners Club for having Erskine Edinburgh residents to their Still Game meet and greet. Alec and Albert were fair pleased to meet “Booby the Barman”, Gavin Mitchell and “Naveed”, Sanjeev Kohli.

## John's rowing the Atlantic

Veteran John Baillie is once again raising funds for Erskine. In 2019 he rowed one million metres on his faithful rowing machine, this time around he's going the distance of the Atlantic and this time aims to go over two million metres! We're delighted to tell you he will smash that mark as at the time of writing John celebrated not only his 80th birthday but hitting two million metres too. Go on John, we're all behind you.

**Erskine is lucky to have support from so many wonderful people like you.**

Whether you take part in fundraising activities or donate when you can, every single donation makes a huge difference to the lives of our Veterans and their families.

 **57%**  
**OF OUR RESIDENTS SERVED IN THE ARMY**

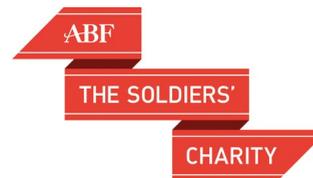
 **17%**  
**OF OUR RESIDENTS SERVED IN THE NAVY**

In May, Erskine was delighted to receive an outstanding grant of £150,000 from ABF The Soldiers' Charity. This grant was given to support our delivery of sector-leading care to elderly Army Veterans and spouses at The Erskine Home, Bishopton.

Our Home continues to provide outstanding care and support for Veterans and spouses, most of whom are living with dementia or other cognitive impairments. More than half of Erskine's residents are Army beneficiaries. Our incredible staff offer a huge range of enhanced care services such as physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, support from our Advanced Nurse Practitioners and our extensive daily activities programme. These key aspects of Erskine's care are funded by voluntary income and continue to rely on donations from our loyal supporters.

Erskine has a long-standing relationship with the ABF The Soldiers' Charity and we are hugely grateful for their outstanding generosity towards our Army beneficiaries.

With thanks to



The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and Greenwich Hospital also continued their generous support for our Veterans this year. In March, Erskine was awarded a grant of £50,000 to support the enhanced care services provided at The Erskine Home, Bishopton for Royal Navy and Royal Marines beneficiaries. We would like to thank the RNRMC and Greenwich Hospital once again for this terrific grant and for choosing to regularly support our Navy and Marines Veterans for over ten years.

**The RNRMC's Director of Relationships and Funding, Mandy Lindley said:**

*"The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and Erskine have worked together for many years to support the Royal Navy's Veteran community in Scotland. We understand how important quality care is for our elderly Veterans and Erskine are a crucial provider in this area. We are very pleased to continue our close partnership with Erskine."*

With thanks to



# CARE HOME Week 2022

From the 27th June – 3rd July we celebrated Care Home Week alongside 17,600 across the country. Erskine Director of Care, Derek Barron, tells us what the week means to him.

*“Care Home Week gives us time to focus on and share some of the excellent, person-centred care that is delivered daily in our Homes. Residents are at the centre of our daily activities. Our staff care about residents, delivering excellence in care is what drives them every day. Residents enjoy spending time doing meaningful activities with staff, in the Home as well as participating more widely in their communities. I’m proud to be the Director of Care at Erskine.”*

## I care about care because...

### What our Staff and Residents said

*I am well cared for and my son is happy, I am happy and I get to meet lots of other people.*

*The people we support become like extended family members.*

*It is very rewarding when things go well and you can improve the quality of life for individuals you care for.*



# Leave A LEGACY

Legacy giving is a hugely precious gift and something that we are incredibly grateful for, as it accounts for almost half of Erskine’s voluntary income each year.

Legacies play a huge role in the running of Erskine. The majority of legacy gifts help pay for the everyday running costs of care and support for our Veterans, enabling us to quickly deploy resources to the areas of greatest need.

Unfortunately, the pandemic has impacted on our ability to meet supporters, therefore, this year we introduced some resources to help supporters.

This first is a free Will writing service for Erskine Supporters. We have joined the ‘Free Wills Network’ which is an agency who put you in touch with local solicitors to write your Will.

The second resource is Bequeathed, an online service which allows you to write your Will quickly and easily. The online portal is secure and user friendly.

**To leave a gift in your Will to Erskine, all you need to provide your solicitor with is:**

**Name of charity:** Erskine

**Scottish Charity number:** SC006609

**Address:** The Erskine Home,  
Bishopton, PA7 5PU

Our Legacy Fundraiser Sarah Morgan is always on hand and happy to chat if you have any questions.

You can contact her on **0141 814 4520** or email [sarah.morgan@erskine.org.uk](mailto:sarah.morgan@erskine.org.uk)





**ERSKINE**  
Caring for Veterans since 1916

# ERSKINE MILITARY JUBILEE BALL

FRIDAY 7TH OCTOBER 2022  
DOUBLETREE BY HILTON HOTEL, GLASGOW

Sponsored by The Highland Club

Join us for a night of glitz and glamour as we dance through the Jubilee Decades with our forces sweetheart Kirsten Orsborn and military band.

**Military Tickets:** £70pp | **Table of 12:** £800 (tables of 10 available)  
**Standard Tickets:** £80pp | **Table of 12:** £900 (tables of 10 available)  
**Dress:** Mess Dress | Black Tie

T: 0141 814 4555 | E: events@erskine.org.uk

**erskine.org.uk**  
Scottish Charity Number: SC006609



## Yes, I want to support Veterans at Erskine Today

### 1 Your Details

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please cut/tear here

### 2 Please accept my gift of £

### 3 Did you know the taxman can care for Veterans too?

*giftaid it*

If you are a UK taxpayer, let us know and we can boost your donation by 25% at no extra cost to you.

I want to Gift Aid my donation and any donations to Erskine that I make in the future or have made in the past four years. **In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the box below and insert today's date:** I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 I have given.

I am a taxpayer  I am not/no longer a taxpayer

Signature  Date

### 4 Donation Payment

I enclose my cheque made payable to Erskine  
**OR** please debit my Visa/Mastercard/Maestro/CAF Charity Card

Card No.

Start Date  Expiry Date  Security No.  (Last 3 digits on the back of your card)

Signature  Today's Date

No thank you letter required

### 5 Please send me information about leaving a gift to Erskine in my Will.

Erskine, Bishopton, Renfrewshire, PA7 5PU  
Telephone 0141 814 46416 | www.erskine.org.uk | Registered Scottish Charity No. SC006609

Erskine Hospital Ltd, incorporated in Scotland as a non-profit making company limited by guarantee No 174103  
Registered Office: 7 West George Street, Glasgow G2 1BA

# ERSKINE FIREWALK 2022

The Hottest Challenge of the Year

Friday 30th September 2022

Registration fee £10  
Sponsorship target £100

For further information please contact Jim Watret on:

**0141 814 4622**

Or visit

[www.erskine.org.uk/events](http://www.erskine.org.uk/events)



**ERSKINE**  
Caring for Veterans since 1916

# PROUD TO WALK

kiltwalk



GLASGOW

ABERDEEN

DUNDEE

EDINBURGH

2022

EDINBURGH  
18th September

2023

GLASGOW  
30th April  
ABERDEEN  
DUNDEE  
EDINBURGH  
VIRTUAL EVENT  
Dates TBC

WALK WITH OUR VETERANS  
For more info call 0141 814 4620  
[erskine.org.uk/events](http://erskine.org.uk/events)

# Yes, I'd like to make a difference via Direct Debit

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to make a regular gift of: **£5**  **£10**  **Other £**

I would like this gift to be made: **Monthly**  **Quarterly**  **Annually**

Please start my payments on: **1st**  **15th**  \_\_\_\_\_  
(insert month/year)



**Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit**



**Please fill in the form and send to:** Fundraising Department, Erskine, Bishopton, PA7 5PU

Name and full postal address of your bank or building society

To: The Manager Bank/Building Society

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

\_\_\_\_\_

Branch Sort Code

Bank/Building Society Account Number

## Instruction to your Bank or Building Society

Please pay Erskine Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with Erskine and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society.

Service User Number

Reference

Signature(s)

Date

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions for some types of account.

Please cut/tear here