

St. Mary's Church
Bampton



Marine Jason Robert Frederic Mackie

20th November 1987 – 14th May 2009

Thursday 4th June 2009

1.00pm

img536 - Lee Mackie, mother of Marine Jason Mackie who was killed in Afghanistan in 2009, gets comfort on Remembrance Sunday from Marines to Bampton to support her.

img154 - Lee Mackie, mother of Jason Mackie who was killed in Afghanistan, has been tricked out of £4,500.

img253 - Witney Gazette April 2nd 2014. Conman Gary Sheehy conned Lea Mackie out of £4,350, part of the £150,000 she received from the life insurance of her son Jason who was killed in Afghanistan. Sheehy was punished by given community service. He had previously got £10,000, then £3,550 and a further £850 before the final amount.

1a. The war memorial - A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. It had very recently been cleaned and the lettering repainted after the death of Jason Mackie in Afghanistan.

1n. Afghanistan - A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. The men listed in alphabetical order for Afghanistan. Jason Mackie. It was not called a war because it was to try and change a regime, not a fight against the people of Afghanistan.

1s. A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. The name of Jason Mackie being added to the memorial. Jason was killed by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan in 2009.

1u. A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. The name of Jason Mackie was being added to the memorial. Jason was killed by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan in 2009. These are the tools being used to add the name.

1v. Craftsman's tools - A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. The name of Jason Mackie was being added to the memorial. Jason was killed by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan in 2009. These are the tools being used to add the name.

1w. Lee Mackie's flowers - A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. Jason Mackie's mother put the flowers and card by his newly added name. 2009.

1x. All the names and 1y and 1z - A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. After the memorial had been cleaned and Jason Mackie's name added, the lettering all round was repainted.

2a. Whole memorial - A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. The whole memorial now cleaned, Jason Mackie's name added and all the lettering newly painted.

2b. Poppy wreaths - A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. The whole memorial now cleaned, Jason Mackie's name added and all the lettering newly painted. Poppy wreaths being laid on Remembrance Sunday 2009. Not very sharp picture because it's a still from a film.

img179 - Witney Gazette on line, October 28th 2014. This item recalls all the Oxfordshire soldiers and airmen and women from Oxfordshire who have lost their lives in the eleven-year campaign in Afghanistan. A quote from the article about Bampton's Jason Mackie reads:- "But Bampton resident Lee Mackie, 59, whose 21-year-old son Royal Marine Jason Mackie died in May 2009, said: "As a mother, nothing is ever worth losing your son for but I understand there are circumstances where we have to get involved to eradicate

extremism. I respect Jason's wish to serve in the Armed Forces and when I spoke to him about it he was proud of what he was doing and he felt they were making a difference to the normal Afghan people who just want to live their lives and educate their children. It's something I cling on to that my son was doing something worthwhile." Prime Minister and Witney MP David Cameron said: "Their tragic deaths remind us of the continued commitment and sacrifice of our Armed Forces and of their families and our deepest sympathies will always be with them."

Lea Mackie fostering - Witney Gazette June 10th 2015. Lee is now fostering children up to the age of 2 years old and for the first time since her son Marine Jason Mackie was killed in Afghanistan in May 2009 she feels life is good again.

A Service of Commemoration

The Revd Philip Francis CF welcomes the people and introduces the service.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen

We meet in the name of Jesus Christ, who died and was raised to the glory of God the Father. Grace, mercy and peace be with you always.

All And also with you.

'I am the resurrection and the life,' says the Lord. 'Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.'

John 11.25,26

Today we come together to remember before God our brother and comrade Jason Mackie, to give thanks for his life and to comfort one another in our grief.

Opening Prayer

Father in heaven, we thank you because you made us in your own image and gave us gifts in body, mind and spirit.

We thank you now for Jason and what he meant to each of us. As we honour his memory, make us more aware that you are the one from whom comes every perfect gift, including the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

All Amen.

Reading

John 15: 9-14

Memories of Mackie will now be shared by MNE Gray, Holt, Treadwell, Vowels and WO2 Tomlinson CGC ASG GSM.

The Prayers

Prayers will now be offered for the repose of the soul of Jason, giving thanks for his life and praying for his family and comrades who mourn his death, followed by the Lords Prayer.

Corps Prayer – OC ASG Maj Hopkins

O Eternal Lord God who through many generations has united and inspired the members of our Corps, grant your blessing, we beseech you, on Royal Marines serving all round the Globe. Bestow your crown of righteousness upon all our efforts and endeavours and may our laurels be those of gallantry and honour, loyalty and courage. We ask these things in the name of him whose courage never failed, our redeemer, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Conclusion

Neither death nor life can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Grant to us, Lord God, to trust you not for ourselves alone, but also for those whom we love and who are hidden from us by the shadow of death; that, as we believe your power to have raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, so may we trust your love to give eternal life to Jason and to all who believe in him; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

All Amen.

The Blessing

Act of Remembrance

They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old; Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn; at the going down of the sun, and in the morning, we will remember them.

Response:

We will remember them.

Opening Prayer

Father in heaven,
we thank you because you made
us in your own image
and gave us gifts in body, mind
and spirit.

We thank you now for Jason
and what he meant to each of us.
As we honour his memory,
make us more aware that you are
the one from whom comes every
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eternal life through Jesus Christ.

All Amen.

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Neither death nor life
can separate us from the love of
God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Grant to us, Lord God,
to trust you not for ourselves
alone, but also for those whom we
love and who are hidden from us
by the shadow of death; that, as
we believe your power to have
raised our Lord Jesus Christ from
the dead, so may we trust your
love to give eternal life to Jason
and to all who believe in him;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now
and for ever.

All **Amen.**

The Blessing

Act of Remembrance

They shall grow not old as we that
are left grow old; Age shall not
weary them nor the years condemn;
at the going down of the sun, and in
the morning, we will remember them.

Response:

We will remember them.

God of grace and glory,
We thank you for Jason,
Who was so near and dear to us,
And who has now been taken from us.

We thank you for the friendship he gave
and for the strength and peace he
brought.

We thank you for the love he offered and received
while he was with us here on earth.

We pray that nothing good in his
life will be lost,
But will be of benefit to the world;
That all that was important to him
will be respected by those who follow;
and that everything in which he
was great will continue to mean as much to us now
that he is dead.

We ask that he may go on living in his family and his
friends;
In their hearts and minds, in their courage and
their consciences.

We ask you that we who were close to him may now,
because of his death,
Be even closer to each other,
And that we may,
In peace and friendship here on earth,
Always be deeply conscious of your promise to be
Faithful to us in death.

We pray for ourselves,
Who are severely tested by this death,
that we do not try to minimize this loss,
or seek refuge from it in words alone,
and also that we do not brood over it so that
it overwhelms us and isolates us from others.

May God grant us courage and confidence
in the new life of Christ.

We ask this in the name of the risen Lord.

Amen.





1935 - 1945

J. LOVEDAY

H. E. BUSBY

E. J. C. HODGE

AFGHANISTAN

JASON MACKIE 2009



1939 - 1945

J. L. LLOYD

R. E. BUSBY

L. E. LLOYD

AFGHANISTAN
JASON MACKIE 2009

1939 - 1945
J. LOVEDAY
H. E. BUSBY
E. J. G. HORNE

AFGHANISTAN
JASON MACKIE 2009





E. J. JAMESON
J. JAMESON
L. LAY
L. LAY
D. LOCK
H. SHINGTON
R. GETTS

A. G. MARTIN
W. A. MORTON
R. G. M. NISBET
W. NORMAN
G. POOLE
W. J. POOLE
W. SAUNDERS

D. SKINNER
W. J. SMITH
R. G. SPIRETT
D. STRONG
F. T. TOWNSEND
J. H. WELLS
E. WELLS



H.A. GREEN
H. HAMPTON
G.F. HARVEY
J.E.J. HUNT
S. ST. J.A. HUNT

E.J. JAMESON
H.

G.O.D. JACKSON
H.A.L. JACKSON

E.J. COX
C.E. CRIPPS
J.F. CRIPPS
J.W. DAVE
J. DEWE
A.W. EDGINGTON
T.C.W. GILLETT



E. J. JAMESON

H. JAMESON

C. LAY

T. LAY

LOCK

WASHINGTON

MARGETTS

A. G. MARTIN

W. A. MORTON

R. G. M. NISDE

W. NORMAN

G. POOLE

W. J. POOLE

W. SAUNDERS





W WHEELER
F WHITE
H WHITING
W B WHITING
I WIDDOWS
I R WOODLEY
J C OATES

TO THE
GLORY OF GOD
AND IN MEMORY OF
BAMPTON MEN
WHO DIED FOR THEIR
COUNTRY IN THE
GREAT WAR 1914-1918

C H APPLEGATE
W C APPLEGATE
A J BASTON
J BROOKS
A J CARTO
S CLARK
C COLLIS

I ROBERTS
R M BIRCH

1939 - 1945
J LOVEDAY
H E BUSBY
E J G HORNE

J COVERDALL
H LEDGER

AFGHANISTAN
JASON MACKIE 2009

PLEASE
KEEP OFF
THE
WAR MEMORIAL



AFGHANISTAN

JASON MACKIE 2009

£4,500 taken in business start-up fraud

March 12th 2014

Fallen soldier's mother conned

By Dan Robinson

witney@witneygazette.co.uk

THE mother of a Royal Marine killed in action in Afghanistan said a man who admitted defrauding her "has no morals".

Lee Mackie, 58, from Bampton, spoke out after Gary Sheehy admitted two charges of fraud by false representation at Oxford Crown Court on Monday last week.

She said: "He's a cad – someone without morals who took advantage of my good nature when I was incredibly vulnerable after the loss of my son.

"He is totally self-absorbed and his own agenda is the only thing he cares about.

"This man wasn't a stranger and knew what the situation was – yet he was still quite comfortable about defrauding me out of this money."

Ms Mackie's 21-year-old son Jason died when his vehicle struck an explosive device in 2009.

Sheehy, 50, of Chetwynd Mead,



VICTIM: Lee Mackie

Bampton, was in a relationship with Ms Mackie's neighbour and helped her with jobs around the house and car maintenance after Jason's death.

He told her he was starting businesses selling used cars and camping equipment and asked her for investments of £3,500 and £850 between June 9 and November 20, 2011.

Police said he had no intention of starting the businesses.

Ms Mackie, who lives on her

own and has two other sons, used part of the life insurance she received after Jason's death to pay Sheehy the money.

She gradually grew suspicious when he did not pay her back after about 18 months and wouldn't answer her calls. She eventually complained to the police.

Ms Mackie, a former travel and tourism lecturer who now fosters children, said: "I thought I knew him but obviously not as well as I thought I did.

"If I had been of a sound mind at the time I probably would have realised what was going on.

"He was able to talk himself into my life by helping out with the jobs my son used to do. In hindsight, he was just buttering me up really.

"When I suddenly woke up and realised what had gone on, I thought I had been taken for a total fool. It makes me very angry that someone could do this and it's the reason I persevered and took him to court."

Sheehy will be sentenced at Oxford Crown Court on Monday, March 24.

April 2nd 2014

witneygazette.co.uk/news

Conman gets suspended prison sentence for his crimes

Don't be taken in by frauds, warns victim

THE mother of a Royal Marine killed in Afghanistan who lost £4,000 to a fraudster has warned others not to get taken in by such "ghastly" cons.

Gary Sheehy, of Chetwynd Mead, Bampton, was spared a prison sentence when he was sentenced on Tuesday last week but was ordered to carry out community service after admitting two charges of fraud.

Patrick Moran, prosecuting, said the 50-year-old father-of-two had "abused the friendship and trust placed in him by someone who was clearly vulnerable".

His victim, Lee Mackie, 58, lost her 21-year-old son Jason, of 3rd Armoured Support Group, Royal Marines, when his vehicle struck an explosive device in Afghanistan in 2009.

She had received a lump sum payment of £150,000 from her son's life insurance and was convinced by Sheehy's lies to invest about £4,350 in a camping equipment business.

Mrs Mackie, from Bampton, said she hoped the case would encourage people to learn from her mistake and be on the look out for fraudsters.

She said: "I'm very happy with the sentence - now he's got a criminal record. That's good enough for me.

"We've named and shamed him and hopefully raised awareness that people like him are out there.

She added: "These guys are so good at what they do. If I can just

By Joe Nimmo

witney@witneygazette.co.uk

raise awareness about how they get you in their grip, I think that would be fantastic.

"They're ghastly these people, absolutely ghastly, and they prey on the vulnerable. People need to be on the lookout and not get taken in."

Mr Moran told Oxford Crown Court that Sheehy, who was the boyfriend of Mrs Mackie's neighbour at the time, first convinced her to invest about £10,000 in a motor vehicle business.

The barrister said the fraudster then asked for further payments of £3,500 and £850, telling his victim he already had 140,000 orders for a piece of camping equipment he had invented.

Mr Moran said this was not true and the defendant told Miss Mackie "half-truths and down-right lies about his business ventures, in behaviour that was clearly dishonest".

She gradually grew suspicious when he did not pay her back after about 18 months and would not answer her calls. She eventually contacted the police.

Peter Du Feu, defending, said Sheehy had always intended to pay the money back, but had ended up digging himself "deeper and deeper" into financial trouble.

He said: "He asked her to invest in a business that was initially genuine. This was not an



FRAUD: Gary Sheehy outside Oxford Crown Court, above, and, left, Lee Mackie

invented business for the purposes of relieving her of her money."

Judge Ian Pringle gave Sheehy a nine-month prison sentence, suspended for two years, and ordered him to carry out 120 hours of unpaid work and pay £2,000 in compensation.

Marine's comrades support mother

THE mother of a soldier from Bampton who was killed in Afghanistan said the Poppy Appeal means her son will never be forgotten.

Marine Jason Mackie, of 3rd Armoured Support Group, Royal Marines, died aged 21 when his vehicle struck an explosive device in 2009.

His mother Lee urged people to buy a poppy and remember fallen soldiers on Remembrance Sunday.

She said: "For any parent who loses a child, it's the most devastating thing ever.

"But one thing about Remembrance Sunday is you know they will be forever remembered.

"Not all parents have that privilege or opportunity to come together and be with other people and remember them."

She added: "It (Remembrance Sunday) is an event that has great relevance and good on people who give their support and put



SADNESS: Lee Mackie at Bampton's war memorial, which bears the name of her son Jason, *inset*, who died in Afghanistan in 2009 Main picture: Antony Moore

their penny in the bucket." Ms Mackie, of Moonraker Lane, came up with the idea of creating a memorial bell to toll to mark repatriation ceremonies at the memorial garden in Monahan Way

on the edge of Carterton.

This weekend she will be joined at Bampton's war memorial by some of the Royal Marines her son served alongside.

She said: "I'm lucky, because I

have Jason's friends from the Armoured Support Group, who will come up and hold my hand.

"They have done that every year for five years, which has meant a lot for me.

"I might have lost my son but I have gained a lot of surrogate sons, who are always there to support me, which is great."

But she added: "It's always hard. I don't think there's any statute of limitations with mourning. I have found it harder in the past two years than in the first three. I suppose I was in denial."

She said the poppy was a "strong symbol", adding: "You can not look at a poppy without remembering the battlefields in Europe, without linking it to the Royal British Legion, who do an awesome job."

● Bampton will mark Remembrance Sunday with a ceremony at the village war memorial at 10.45am and a service at St Mary's Church.

‘Now prove our loved ones didn’t sacrifice lives in vain’



Lee Mackie, whose son Jason died. Picture: OX70849 Richard Cave

First published 08:00 Tuesday 28 October 2014 in Witney by Dan Robinson,
Reporter covering Witney and West Oxfordshire. Call me on 01865 425483

FAMILIES of Oxfordshire soldiers killed in the Afghanistan conflict fear their loved ones may have died in vain. As British troops were finally withdrawn from its base at Camp Bastion, relatives of some of the county’s war heroes called on the Government to prove their sacrifices were for something worthwhile. Heather Wood, whose husband Warrant Officer Class 2 Charlie Wood was killed in an explosion in December 2010, said she is yet to see evidence of Afghan lives being improved as a result of British intervention.



Charlie Wood and his wife, Heather.

The Bicester resident, 34, said: “I’m relieved that no other families are going to have to go through what I had to and also for those who are injured over there. “But when I look at the news I think ‘what difference did it make?’ You never see any good stories like schools opened or roads improved, but perhaps that’s because there’s been no benefits to lives. As a wife who’s lost a husband out there, there’s nothing for

me to look at and think ‘well actually, Charlie helped with that’. “If the Government believed we did make a difference then they need to prove that because all we’ve seen is a disaster and heartache.” The British Armed Forces, which first entered Afghanistan 13 years ago following the 9/11 terrorist attacks, have been based at Camp Bastion since 2006 but left the base on Sunday. Some 453 servicemen and women have died in the conflict, including 12 from Oxfordshire regiments all killed in explosions. Corporal Andrew Roberts, 32, and Private Ratu Silibaravi, 32, from the now disbanded Bicester-based 23 Pioneer Regiment, were killed in an explosion in May 2012.



Cpl Andrew Roberts with his wife Paula Ewers and son Josh Easterbrook.

Cpl Roberts’ partner of almost three years, Bicester resident Paula Ewers, 33, said: “The Government needs to show what it has really achieved out there because I don’t really see anything other than the loss of life. “The pain doesn’t go away — it stays forever and it feels like it was all for nothing.”

But Bampton resident Lee Mackie, 59, whose 21-year-old son Royal Marine Jason Mackie died in May 2009, said: “As a mother, nothing is ever worth losing your son for but I understand there are circumstances where we have to get involved to eradicate extremism. “I respect Jason’s wish to serve in the Armed Forces and when I spoke to him about it he was proud of what he was doing and he felt they were making a difference to the normal Afghan people who just want to live their lives and educate their children.



Jason Mackie

“It’s something I cling on to that my son was doing something worthwhile.”

Prime Minister and Witney MP David Cameron said: “Their tragic deaths remind us of the continued commitment and sacrifice of our Armed Forces and of their families and our deepest sympathies will always be with them.”

Appeal to fill in foster care gap

Luke Sproule
lsproule@nqo.com

MORE foster parents are needed in Oxfordshire to prevent a “mounting crisis” after the number of children in care rose to more than 600.

Lee Mackie, from Bampton, whose son Jason was killed in Afghanistan in 2009 while serving with the Royal Marines, said fostering three babies in the past three years was the best thing she had ever done and urged others to do the same.

She is backing an appeal by Oxfordshire County Council, which wants more people to foster so more children can be placed in loving homes close to where they are originally from.

In 2011, there were 427 children in care and last year there were 527, but the figure had risen to 609 by March this year.

The county has 343 foster carers – up from 315 on last year – but this means 113 children are placed with foster carers from

outside agencies while another 186 have no foster placement.

Mrs Mackie, 60, said: “It makes me really sad to think there are more children in care. We need people out there who have a caring nature to come forward.

“It is the best thing that I have ever done in my life.

“To see these little broken-winged children coming into care and moving on to better things is so amazing.”

Ms Mackie said she felt the spirit of her late son Jason – who died aged 21 when the vehicle he was travelling in was hit by an explosive device in Helmand Province – had guided her and added she had also been supported by her other sons, Richard and Alistair.

She said: “I still feel very strongly that the whole thing was under the guidance of Jason. He has had a hand in the children that have been placed with me.

“My other sons were worried at the beginning that I might be the mad woman on the corner with

40 kids. But I know my limitations and I know there are wonderful people out there who need to adopt children.

“It has done my confidence a lot of good because the first two babies I fostered have moved on to amazing adoptive families.”

County council cabinet member for children, education and families, Melinda Tilley, said: “We need to increase the number of Oxfordshire foster carers so we can provide greater choice of placement for vulnerable children within the county and enable more of our children to stay closer to home.

“Anyone can potentially become a foster carer – you just need a big heart and a safe and loving home to offer.

“There are huge rewards in being able to make a difference to a young person’s life.

“The council also offers excellent training and support, as well as financial allowances.”

To find out more about fostering see oxfordshire.gov.uk/fostering or call 0800 7835724.



Lee Mackie has fostered three babies since 2013 and is urging other people to become fosterers. Mrs Mackie, whose son was killed in Afghanistan, said it had been the “best thing she has done in her life”

Bereaved mother says fostering is the best thing she's ever done

When Lee Mackie lost her son Jason in the Afghanistan War, she knew the pain of such a loss would stay with her forever. But becoming a foster mum has helped her recovery. **ANDREW FFRENCH reports**



Marine Jason Mackie of Armoured Support Group Royal Marines

LEE Mackie's world was torn apart in May 2009, when her son Jason died in Afghanistan.

The 21-year-old Marine was killed instantly when the vehicle he was travelling in was struck by an explosive device.

A keen cricketer, Jason was serving as a Viking All Terrain Vehicle Operator in 3rd Armoured Support Group Royal Marines in the Basharan area of central Helmand when he died.

The village of Bampton in West Oxfordshire, where Ms Mackie lives, was immediately plunged into mourning and she has been coming to terms with the loss ever since.

To help her cope, she has been a staunch supporter of the Poppy Appeal in Oxfordshire and also came up with the idea of a memorial bell to toll, to mark repatriation ceremonies in Carterton.

Last year, mum-of-three Ms Mackie, 59, arrived at a new turning point in her life when she found out about the possibility of fostering.

"It's one of the most gratifying things I have ever done - it's awesome," she said.

"And I am happy to be an ambassador for fostering."

In June 2013, after hearing a feature about fostering on the radio, Ms Mackie decided she wanted to find out more and called in at the



Lee Mackie at Bampton war memorial

West Oxfordshire District Council offices to pick up a leaflet.

She then signed up with Oxfordshire County Council and a rigorous vetting procedure got under way before she was accepted for short-term fostering.

In January last year, a baby boy came to stay and left to be rehomed with new parents shortly before his first birthday.

Ms Mackie, who is divorced, felt she was too old to be a long-term fosterer but looking after babies and toddlers has proved the perfect fit.

She was a teacher in travel and tourism at a college in Swindon when Jason was killed but did not return to work.

Ms Mackie added: "I don't do anything half-heartedly, but I really didn't feel I had the mojo after losing Jason to go back into teaching.

"The vetting procedure for fostering was very rigorous but there's a good reason for that - it's about safeguarding the children, and making sure you are the right person for the job.

"It was a very cathartic process for me - they go back through your family life, your married life, your education - and it opened up a lot of doors I had not looked through for a long time.

"It was almost like a form of therapy for me and made me feel a lot better.

"I had a very strong feeling that Jason wanted me to do this - when I got my first child, I really felt that Jason had sent him to me so that I could take care of him.

"It was great to be needed by this little thing - it was such a joy."

Ms Mackie said she was happy to look after babies because at her age she might find it difficult to "lug older children around".

"The mind is willing but the body is not quite as fit as it used to be," she added.

"The boy was a little miracle and responded so well to fostering and



Lee Mackie has taken up short-term fostering Picture: Damian Halliwell

has gone on to a really great family.

"Of course I felt a bit blue when he left but on the other hand he has gone on to an amazing family and I knew I would be too old to keep him."

Ms Mackie is now looking after a baby girl.

"She has responded really, really well, and will go forward for the adoption process.

"Looking after a girl has been so special - she's a little princess.

"Fostering has totally given me a new lease of life - I'm almost back to normal - back to my old self for the first time since losing Jason and I do feel this is a path Jason has led me down."

Ms Mackie's sons, Richard Mackie, 32, a Captain in the Royal Ma-

rines, and Alastair Mackie, 29, who works in private banking, have also noticed the difference.

"They totally support what I am doing - they think it is amazing - and I have an amazing support network of friends," she said.

"Wherever I go I talk about this and I would recommend that people consider foster care because there is always a shortage - hopefully I can inspire people to come forward."

● The drive to recruit more foster parents in Oxfordshire is under way as part of Foster Carer Fortnight.

In April, it emerged that Oxfordshire County Council is to invest an additional £180,000 to recruit more foster parents.

The council has been organising events to encourage people con-

sidering becoming foster carers to find out more about what the role involves.

The local authority is particularly seeking people willing to take on the care of brothers and sisters together, teenagers and children who have special needs.

Foster carers provide a range of placements from emergency and short-term to long-term and specialist placements, and to become a foster carer, you have to be over 18.

Foster Carer Fortnight started on June 1.

There will be an information event tomorrow at Witney Hub, Witan Way, from noon to 2.30pm.

The council offers training, support, and allowances to foster carers.

August 9th 2017

ASSISTANCE: Plea for support worker to come out to house to help fill in forms

Mother's crusade to give voice to those in need of housing

Georgina Campbell

gcampbell@nqo.com

THE mother of a Marine killed in Afghanistan has launched a campaign to help hundreds of vulnerable residents in desperate need of housing.

Foster mum of five years and community champion Lee Mackie is determined to improve the housing system, after she said residents are left waiting months for a suitable home.

Mrs Mackie, who lost thousands of pounds in savings after being targeted by a con-man six years ago, has been inspired to embark on the campaign after suffering a fall at her Bampton home of 15 years in which she shattered her leg.

The mother-of-three, whose son Jason was killed by a roadside bomb in 2009, said: "We gave our son for this country and it feels like I have been completely let down.

"I need to be in a house that will help me get better, so I can start fostering again and contributing to the community.

"But I have just been passed from pillar to post."

After leaving the John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, in January, she has been trapped in one room of her house, unable to access her upstairs or toilet and shower during her slow and painful recovery.

Mrs Mackie has had to give up foster caring, which says has brought her happiness again after 21-year-old Jason was killed in Afghanistan while serving with the Royal Marines.

Since returning from hospital Mrs Mackie has been pleading with West Oxfordshire District Council to help find her a bungalow, to aid



CAMPAINING: Ali Brown and Lee Mackie

her recovery and eventually see her return to foster caring.

Mrs Mackie is one of 1,893 registered applicants able to bid for properties on the council's housing list.

She added: "They say that you need to apply online, I'm not from an era where I'm good with computer and technology.

"They ask you to send copies of all your doctors' reports and letters to decide which band, which level of severity you are in needing a new home.

"I asked to have a support worker come out to my house to help fill in all the forms for me but no one came.

"If it wasn't for my carer helping me fill everything out I do not know where I would be."

Mrs Mackie has now been offered a bungalow in Chip-

ping Norton but has to wait until the middle of August to view the property.

She added: "But what about the people who do not have the support system I had, that were telling me every day to ring the council and find out what is happening.

"I want to give a voice to those people, who like me, have an illness or disability and need suitable housing in order for them to get better quicker.

"It is such a confusing system, they really do not make it easy or accessible."

Her friend and Bampton resident Ali Brown, who Mrs Mackie is helping to support, has had MS for the last 15 years and needs to move out of her current home by the end of the month because her landlord wants to sell it.

She has tried but with no avail to find somewhere else

in time. She added: "It is just so confusing I never know what I need to be filling out and how to bid online.

"I phoned up the council to ask if I could have someone come out and help me but they told me they could not send anyone because they were too busy."

Spokesman for West Oxfordshire District Council, Andrew Smith, said: "More than 90 per cent of applications are handled successfully online. But if a client is having difficulties, we follow a process where the individual is invited into the office to be assisted with their application.

"Alternatively, a client support officer can visit them to offer individual guidance.

"A delay may occasionally be caused by the number of assessments and verifications carried out every day."

Roll of Honour

OXFORDSHIRE Armed Forces members who died in Afghanistan:

Marine Dale Gostick, 22, of Royal Marines 3 Troop Armoured Support Company, died on May 25, 2008

Warrant Officer Class 2 Gary O'Donnell, 40, of the Royal Logistic Corps, based at Vauxhall Barracks in Didcot died on September 10, 2008

Marine Jason Mackie, 21, from Bampton, of the Royal Marines Armoured Support Group, died on May 14, 2009

Lieutenant Colonel Rupert Thorneloe, 39, commanding officer of the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards, died on July 1, 2009

Captain Dan Shepherd, 28, of the Royal Logistic Corps' 11 Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Regiment, based in Didcot, died on July 20, 2009

Staff Sergeant Olaf Schmid, 30, of the 11 EOD Regiment, died on October 31, 2009

Captain Daniel Read, 31, of the 11 EOD Regiment, died on January 11, 2010

Staff Sergeant Brett Linley, 29, of the 11 EOD Regiment, died on July 17, 2010

Warrant Officer Class 2 Charlie Wood, 34, of the 23 Pioneer Regiment, died on December 28, 2010

Captain Lisa Head, 29, of the 11 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Regiment, died on April 19, 2011

Corporal Andrew Roberts, 32, of 23 Pioneer Regiment, died on May 4, 2012

Private Ratu Silibaravi, 32, of 23 Pioneer Regiment, died on May 4, 2012.

img536 - Lee Mackie, mother of Marine Jason Mackie who was killed in Afghanistan in 2009, gets comfort on Remembrance Sunday from Marines to Bampton to support her.

img154 - Lee Mackie, mother of Jason Mackie who was killed in Afghanistan, has been tricked out of £4,500.

img253 - Witney Gazette April 2nd 2014. Conman Gary Sheehy conned Lea Mackie out of £4,350, part of the £150,000 she received from the life insurance of her son Jason who was killed in Afghanistan. Sheehy was punished by given community service. He had previously got £10,000, then £3,550 and a further £850 before the final amount.

1a. The war memorial - A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. It had very recently been cleaned and the lettering repainted after the death of Jason Mackie in Afghanistan.

1n. Afghanistan - A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. The men listed in alphabetical order for Afghanistan. Jason Mackie. It was not called a war because it was to try and change a regime, not a fight against the people of Afghanistan.

1s. A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. The name of Jason Mackie being added to the memorial. Jason was killed by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan in 2009.

1u. A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. The name of Jason Mackie was being added to the memorial. Jason was killed by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan in 2009. These are the tools being used to add the name.

1v. Craftsman's tools - A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. The name of Jason Mackie was being added to the memorial. Jason was killed by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan in 2009. These are the tools being used to add the name.

1w. Lee Mackie's flowers - A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. Jason Mackie's mother put the flowers and card by his newly added name. 2009.

1x. All the names and 1y and 1z - A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. After the memorial had been cleaned and Jason Mackie's name added, the lettering all round was repainted.

2a. Whole memorial - A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. The whole memorial now cleaned, Jason Mackie's name added and all the lettering newly painted.

2b. Poppy wreaths - A picture of Bampton War Memorial taken October 26th 2009. The whole memorial now cleaned, Jason Mackie's name added and all the lettering newly painted. Poppy wreaths being laid on Remembrance Sunday 2009. Not very sharp picture because it's a still from a film.

img179 - Witney Gazette on line, October 28th 2014. This item recalls all the Oxfordshire soldiers and airmen and women from Oxfordshire who have lost their lives in the eleven-year campaign in Afghanistan. A quote from the article about Bampton's Jason Mackie reads:- "But Bampton resident Lee Mackie, 59, whose 21-year-old son Royal Marine Jason Mackie died in May 2009, said: "As a mother, nothing is ever worth losing your son for but I understand there are circumstances where we have to get involved to eradicate

extremism. I respect Jason's wish to serve in the Armed Forces and when I spoke to him about it he was proud of what he was doing and he felt they were making a difference to the normal Afghan people who just want to live their lives and educate their children. It's something I cling on to that my son was doing something worthwhile." Prime Minister and Witney MP David Cameron said: "Their tragic deaths remind us of the continued commitment and sacrifice of our Armed Forces and of their families and our deepest sympathies will always be with them."

Lea Mackie fostering - Witney Gazette June 10th 2015. Lee is now fostering children up to the age of 2 years old and for the first time since her son Marine Jason Mackie was killed in Afghanistan in May 2009 she feels life is good again.