

# Agenda Item 55.

**TITLE** Data available for service planning for veterans and the delivery of the armed forces covenant.

**FOR CONSIDERATION BY** Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board on 13 December 2018

**WARD** None

**DIRECTOR/ KEY OFFICER** Julie Hotchkiss Consultant in Public Health

<b>Reason for consideration by Health and Wellbeing Board</b>	Letter received from the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Mental Health, Inequalities and Suicide Prevention and Director of Health & Justice, Armed Forces and Sexual Assault Services Commissioning.
<b>Relevant Health and Wellbeing Strategy Priority</b>	Reducing social isolation and reducing the health gap.
<b>What (if any) public engagement has been carried out?</b>	None at this stage.
<b>State the financial implications of the decision</b>	No decision is required. However, the information will be useful to inform discussion.

## OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Newly published data and supporting guidance will support local partners in delivering the Armed Forces Covenant pledge, thereby promoting the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families in Wokingham Borough.

## RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That the Wellbeing Board consider the newly published data released by ONS/MoD;
- 2) That the Wellbeing Board consider the call to action from the NHS Director of Health & Justice, Armed Forces and Sexual Assault Services Commissioning and Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Mental Health, Inequalities and Suicide Prevention, specifically; that veterans should be considered in JSNA refresh; to note the recent publication of "Our Community, Our Covenant" a guide for local authorities to support the delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant and; to note the availability of the Covenant Fund

## SUMMARY OF REPORT

New Office for National Statistics and Ministry of Defence estimates suggest that there are 1,720 working- aged (aged 16-64) Armed Forces veterans living in Wokingham.

Compared with the England averages, working-aged veterans living in Wokingham Borough are estimated to have better health, are more likely to be home owners and hold higher education qualifications and are less likely to be unemployed.

The Armed Forces Covenant requires public bodies to ensure that veterans and their families face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in accessing services and that special consideration is given to those who require it such as the injured and the bereaved.

Consideration of veterans needs in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) is key to ensuring that the commitment to local veterans is fulfilled. This recent data release will support the development of future veterans' needs assessments.

## **Background**

It is important that the sacrifices and contributions to society made by Armed Forces personnel and their families are recognised.

As a consequence of their service, veterans may face physical and mental health problems. These can be exacerbated by prolonged separation from family and stresses associated with the transition to civilian life.

Having to frequently relocate, sometimes at short notice, can also affect the continuity of education of children of service personnel as well as the employment opportunities of their spouses.

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise from the nation that those who serve or have served in the armed forces, and their families, are treated fairly.

Wokingham Borough Council signed the Armed Forces Covenant in 2013 and pledged to ensure that the Armed Forces Community:

- face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.
- receive special consideration in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

## **Delivery Health and Care Services for the Armed Forces Community**

### Serving Personnel

The Ministry of Defence is responsible for primary medical care for the serving Armed Forces personnel. NHS England is responsible for commissioning hospital and community health services for members of the Armed Forces, mobilised Reservists and their families (if registered with military medical centres).

### Armed Forces Veterans and their families

The CCG is responsible for commissioning hospital and community health services required by Armed Forces' Families (where registered with NHS GP practices) and services for Veterans and Reservists when not mobilised. NHS England also commissions specialised services, including specialist limb prosthesis and rehabilitation services for Veterans.

The Borough Council has the responsibility for promoting the health and wellbeing of its residents. It also has responsibility over safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including those in service families or leaving care to join the Armed Forces.

**Table – Responsibility for delivery of healthcare services to Armed Forces personnel<sup>1</sup>**

	<b>Serving Armed Forces &amp; Reservists when mobilised</b>	<b>Serving Armed Forces families registered with DMS</b>	<b>Serving Armed Forces Families registered with NHS GP Practices</b>	<b>Veterans &amp; Reservists when not mobilised</b>
<b>Primary Care</b>	Defence Medical Services	Defence Medical Services	NHS England/ CCG	NHS England/ CCG
<b>Community Mental Health</b>	Defence Medical Services	NHS England	CCG	CCG
<b>Secondary acute &amp; community care</b>	NHS England	NHS England	CCG	CCG

### **Data on Armed Forces Veterans**

Veterans include anyone who has served for at least one day in the Armed Forces (Regular or Reserve), as well as Merchant Navy seafarers and fishermen who have served in a vessel that was operated to facilitate military operations by the Armed Forces.

While data on the number of serving personnel in each local authority is readily available, data on veterans for this geography is not available. Closest estimates come from records of those claiming Armed Forces pensions and those listed as veterans on GP registers.

Both of these methods of counting tend to severely underestimate the number of veterans in a particular area. This is because not all veterans, particularly those of working age, are claiming their Armed Forces pension and not all veterans report their veteran status to their GP.

### **Veterans in Wokingham**

Arborfield Garrison was the only Ministry of Defence (MoD) establishment within Wokingham Borough, before its closure in 2015. Though there may be some military families still living in the area according to NHS England commissioning data, in November 2018 there were no active serving personnel living Wokingham<sup>2</sup> compared with 680 in 2013/14<sup>3</sup>.

MoD sites in surrounding areas include the Territorial Army Brock Barracks, Oxford Road, Reading (Seven Rifles), the Hermitage Denison Barracks, near Chieveley in West Berkshire and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst to the South of the Borough.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Andrew Price, Veterans Lead Berkshire West CCG

<sup>2</sup> Defence personnel NHS commissioning bi-annual statistics: financial year 2017/18

<sup>3</sup> Defence personnel NHS commissioning quarterly statistics: financial year 2013/14

In March 2018, there were 920 people in Wokingham in receipt of an Armed Forces pension or other compensation, of whom 788 were veterans.<sup>4</sup> GP records in January 2018 showed 544 veterans registered with Wokingham GPs<sup>5</sup>.

### **Newly published estimates of working-aged veterans in Wokingham**

By linking electronic records of those leaving the Armed Forces (as recorded in the MoD'S Service Leavers Database) to the Census 2011, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and MoD have produced estimates of the total number of working-aged veterans living in each local authority in the UK<sup>6</sup>.

These estimates suggest that there are 1,720 Armed Forces veterans aged between 16 and 64 years of age living in Wokingham and of these 93% are male and 97% white.

Around 150 (9%) report are limited to some degree in their daily activities by a chronic health condition.

Around 395 (21%) rent properties in the Borough, of whom 100 rent from the council or housing association and 175 are private renters.

Around 100 have no academic qualifications and 50 are unemployed (excluding those who are retired early).

Compared with the England averages, veterans living in Wokingham Borough are estimated to have better health, are more likely to be home owners and hold higher education qualifications and are less likely to be unemployed.

### **Next Steps**

The UK government have made a commitment to improving the data that its departments hold on UK Armed Forces veterans and are asking that Health and Wellbeing Boards play their part by working with local government to use the available data on veterans to maximum effect.

The refreshed joint strategic needs assessment (JSNA) offer across Berkshire Public Health is currently under review. The interim JSNA products for Wokingham are soon to be published. This recent ONS/MoD data release will help inform future JSNA chapters.

<b>Partner Implications</b>
No decision required – item for discussion only

<b>Reasons for considering the report in Part 2</b>
Not applicable

<b>List of Background Papers</b>
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<sup>4</sup> [Location of armed forces pension and compensation recipients: 2018](#)

<sup>5</sup> This is compared with only 21 veterans recorded in 2015; the increase in registrations followed a successful programme run during the 2017 flu campaign to improve GP register data. Source: presentation to Berkshire West CCG Commissioning Committee, Tuesday 24 July 2018

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/census-2011-working-age-uk-armed-forces-veterans-residing-in-england-and-wales>

Slide set
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