

Needs Assessment for Norfolk's Armed Forces Community

December 2022

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1 Key findings

The Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant Board commissioned this Needs Assessment to establish an evidence base to support decision making relating to local public service provision and partnership working by improving understanding of the Armed Forces community within Norfolk.

Due to challenges around gathering limited data at the local level, it is acknowledged that this report will not include everything about Norfolk's Armed Forces personnel, veterans and their families, but it does contain key information to present a contextual picture for Norfolk and nationally.

Veterans

- The Ministry of Defence defines a UK Veteran as anyone who has served for at least one day in Her Majesty's Armed Forces (Regular or Reserve) or Merchant Mariners who have seen duty on legally defined military operations.
- The most recent published data from the Census 2021 shows that on Census Day (21 March 2021), there were 40,094 people resident in Norfolk aged 16 and over who have previously served in the UK Armed Forces. The highest numbers are living in Breckland, King's Lynn & West Norfolk and Broadland.
- Census 2021 shows that overall, Norfolk has a higher rate of veterans in the population (5.2%) than England and Wales (3.8%).
- Census 2021 shows that in Norfolk, there are around 37,600 households with one or more veterans, which is around 9.3% of all Norfolk households, compared with 7.0% for England and Wales.
- According to the Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA), as of 2020 there were around 2.4 million veterans in Great Britain.
- Census 2021 shows around 1.85 million people in England and Wales reported that they had previously served in the UK Armed Forces.
- The Ministry of Defence (MOD) predicts that the number of veterans is likely to decrease year on year to approximately 1.6 million by the year 2028.
- While the MOD project a gradual decline in the number of veterans in Great Britain, the number of working age veterans is predicted to increase. As of 2016, the proportion of working age veterans stood at approximately 37%. By 2028, this is thought to increase to around 44%.
- For March 2021, Norfolk has 8,275 people in receipt of an occupational pension or compensation under the Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS), War Pensions Scheme (WPS), or the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS).
- Breckland has around one in four (25.8%) of all veterans in receipt of AFPS, WPS or AFCS; King's Lynn & West Norfolk has around one in five (20.6%).
- For March 2021, Norfolk has 60 people in receipt of a Guaranteed Income Payment (GIP) under the AFCS (which provide a reasonable estimate of those who may require additional support in the community), with Breckland and King's Lynn & West Norfolk having the higher numbers compared with other Norfolk districts.
- Exit from the military and relocations have been cited as common causes of isolation and loneliness in the Armed Forces Community and may indicate why some veterans may wish to remain near social networks established during service.

- In April 2022, around £500,000 was reportedly distributed to charities and research institutions to support research into the experiences of female veterans, veterans from ethnic minorities and non-UK ex-service personnel.
- The Northern Hub for Veterans and Families Research at Northumbria University has developed a series of reports to map veterans' and their families' welfare needs across the whole of the UK. Their analysis concludes that financial hardship and housing issues are the most prevalent topics affecting veterans that seek assistance from the main charities in the sector.
- The Northumbria University analysis suggests that the presence of military pension and compensation recipients is a good starting point when seeking to identify areas with veterans who are experiencing financial hardship.
- For 2017, the Northumbria University analysis shows hotspots of Armed Forces Pension and Compensation recipients in Norfolk being around Norwich, Dereham and further south of Dereham, and King's Lynn and further south and southwest of King's Lynn.
- For 2020/21, of the UK Regular Armed Forces population, around 1,120 medical discharges occurred, representing approximately three personnel medically discharged each day. This type of data is not published at the local level.
- According to the Veterans and Families Research Hub, the main causes of medical discharges between 2015 and 2020 were musculoskeletal disorders and injuries. These disorders and injuries reportedly led to 48% of Naval Service, 51% of Army and 39% of RAF medical discharges.
- Across England there are approximately 1,300 GP practices accredited by the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) as being "Veteran Friendly". As of November 2022, 26 Practices were showing as registered in Norfolk.
- For 2020/21, of the UK Regular Armed Forces personnel who left the service, approximately 7 in 10 (69%) in employment reported that they were employed in one of the following four most common occupations, six months after leaving service: Skilled Trade occupations (19% compared with 9% for the general UK population); Associate Professional and Technical occupations (18% compared with 16% for the general UK population); Professional occupations (16% compared with 23% for the general UK population); and Elementary occupations (16% compared with 9% for the general UK population). This type of data is not published at the local level.
- According to the Warwick Institute of Employment Research, 45% of veterans believed that resettlement support was helpful in securing employment in the short term. However, only around 25% felt that it was helpful in the long term.
- There are high rates of gambling and potential problematic gambling among veterans. Veterans sampled as part of research conducted by Swansea University were more than ten times more likely than non-veterans to experience gambling harms and to gamble as a way of coping with distress.

Serving Personnel

- According to the MOD UK Armed Forces biannual diversity statistics, as of October 2021 women represented 11.4% of the UK Regular forces – an increase of 0.2% from the year before. Women were also reported to make up 15.4% of the Future Reserves, this reflects an increase of 0.4% from the year prior.

- As of October 2021, 9.4% of the UK Regular Forces were of minority ethnic groups. This is reportedly an increase of 0.3% from the previous year. As for the Future Reserves, around 5.8% of personnel were of minority ethnic groups.
- For April 2021, the strength of Regular Forces for Norfolk stands at a total of 1,890 with 1,200 being RAF personnel, 380 being Army and 300 being Royal Navy/Royal Marines. This relates to stationed location, which is not necessarily where personnel live.
- The majority of Norfolk's Regular Forces personnel are stationed at RAF Marham in King's Lynn & West Norfolk, with 1,480 personnel; Breckland has 370 Regular Forces personnel stationed at Robertson Barracks; North Norfolk has 30 Regular Forces personnel and Norwich has ten. RRH Neatishead and the Norwich Armed Forces Recruitment Centre also contribute towards numbers of personnel in the county. Broadland, Great Yarmouth and South Norfolk have no Regular Forces personnel stationed.
- For October 2021, Norfolk had 2,050 Armed Forces personnel Defence Medical Services (DMS) registrations. Peak numbers are in the 20 to 24 and the 25 to 29-year age groups, with decreasing numbers in the older age groups.
- For 2020/21, around 1 in 10 UK Armed Forces personnel were seen by military healthcare services for a mental health related reason. This type of data is not published at the local level, but based on UK rates, for Norfolk this equates to potentially around an estimated 200 personnel.
- Most personnel seeking military mental health care go to their GP in the first instance. For 2020/21, around 1 in 10 of UK Armed Forces personnel were seen by their GP. This type of data is not published at the local level, but based on UK rates, for Norfolk this equates to potentially around an estimated 200 personnel.
- Most patients who seek mental health care are managed by their GP, however some with more complex needs will receive treatment from specialist mental care providers. For 2020/21, around 1 in 50 UK Armed Forces personnel required specialist mental health services. This type of data is not published at the local level, but based on UK rates, for Norfolk this equates to potentially around an estimated 40 personnel.
- For 2016/17, around 6 in 10 of UK Armed Forces personnel were assessed indicating that they may potentially be at increasing risk or above of alcohol related harm. This type of data is not published at the local level, but based on UK rates, for Norfolk this equates to potentially around an estimated 1,150 personnel.
- For 2016/17, around 1 in 50 of UK Armed Forces personnel were assessed indicating that they may potentially be at increasing or higher risk of alcohol related harm and should be advised to see their GP. This type of data is not published at the local level, but based on UK rates, for Norfolk this equates to potentially around an estimated 40 personnel.

Reserves

- 1 Company of the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Anglian Regiment are stationed in Norwich. The County also has connections to 161 Medical Squadron (Norwich detachment), 254 Medical Regiment (pre-hospital emergency care medical unit), 2620 Squadron, Royal Air Force Auxiliary Regiment (force protection unit), 677

Squadron AAC (Norwich Flight), 6 Army Air Corps (ground crew teams providing arming and refuelling support services to deployed helicopters).

- The most cited reasons for joining the Reserves were: to serve my country (66%); for the challenge (63%); personal development (62%); to make a difference/do something worthwhile (59%); and for the excitement and adventure (56%).
- In terms of motivation to remain in the Reserves, to serve my country (60%); the people, friends and camaraderie (55%); personal development (55%); for the challenge (52%); and to make a difference/do something worthwhile (51%) were identified as the most common responses.
- Around 77% of respondents to the MOD's Reserves Continuous Attitude Survey agreed that they were satisfied with life in the Reserves, 93% agreed that they were proud to serve and 87% would recommend joining.
- It is estimated that 46% of Reservists are married or in a civil partnership, and a further 24% are in a long term or established relationship (but not married or in a civil partnership).
- It was also estimated that over half (56%) of Reservists do not have any financially dependent children.
- Of the 4% of Reservist respondents that intended to leave the Reserves within the next year, around a third (33%) reported poor management and leadership, 29% reported they will have reached the Reserves retirement age, and 28% reported they did not feel valued by the Service.

Armed Forces Families

- According to the Tri-Service Families Continuous Attitude Survey, in 2022 approximately 59,000 Regular trained Service personnel are married or in a civil partnership, with most Service spouses living in England (82%).
- Around 28% of Service spouses were reported as married to Officers, while 72% were married to Other Ranks.
- Around 78% of Service families have children, with around a third having at least one child under the age of five.
- Over half (54%) of Service families were found to have at least one child of school age and seven in ten (71%) families with a child aged under five required early years (0-4) childcare.
- Around a fifth (22%) of Service families moved for Service reasons in the past year and two in five families (41%) have moved at least twice for Service reasons in the past five years.
- A higher proportion of Other Rank spouses have not moved (36%) compared to Officer spouses (29%).
- Latest Department for Education data for academic year 2021/22 shows that there are 1,588 children registered for Service Pupil Premium (SPP) in Norfolk schools, with 943 attending primary school and 645 attending secondary school.
- According to the Service Children's Progression Alliance, Norfolk is currently ranked in the 8th decile for number of Service children, indicating a high number of service children situated in the county.

2 Introduction

2.1 Context

The Armed Forces Act¹ further enshrines the Armed Forces Covenant in law to help prevent service personnel, veterans and their families being disadvantaged when accessing essential services like healthcare, education and housing.

This means that organisations such as Local Authorities and other public bodies must have due regard to the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant:

- the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces.
- the principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for service people from membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.
- the principle that special provision for service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.

The focus of the duty of due regard will be on public service provision, covering those aspects of public housing, statutory education and healthcare that are among the most likely to affect serving and former members of the Armed Forces and their families. In relation to all three covenant policy areas, it is recognised that no single organisation holds overall responsibility for delivery and therefore a partnership approach will be required, similar to that under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

To support delivery of the duty of due regard, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) has advised Local Authorities to develop an evidence base to underpin their understanding of the Armed Forces community within their local area.

The Ministry of Defence defines a UK Veteran as anyone who has served for at least one day in Her Majesty's Armed Forces (Regular or Reserve) or Merchant Mariners who have seen duty on legally defined military operations.²

The Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant Board commissioned this Needs Assessment to establish an evidence base to support decision making relating to local public service provision and partnership working by improving understanding of the Armed Forces community within Norfolk.

2.2 Statement on data

Data contained in this report comes from a range of national and local sources and are the most recent figures available. Due to challenges around gathering limited data at the local level, it is acknowledged that this report will not include everything about Norfolk's Armed Forces personnel, veterans and their families, but it does contain key information to present a contextual picture for Norfolk and nationally.

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/35/contents/enacted>

² Ministry of Defence – Veterans: Key Facts - <https://www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Veterans-Key-Facts.pdf>

Data used in this report is at various geographical levels, depending on what level the data is published or available at. To provide more context, local and national comparator data has been included where possible. Sources and dates of data have been acknowledged throughout the report.

First publications of univariate Census 2021 data about the veteran population who have previously served in the UK armed forces were published in mid-November 2022. This includes population and household data and are included in this report.³

Further publications of multivariate Census 2021 data are expected to be released during 2023. These publications are expected to cover demographics of the veteran population, housing and accommodation, household and family structure, and health and wellbeing. Proposed publications for 2024 and beyond are expected to focus on employment trends of the veteran population, financial situation, and characteristics associated with the criminal justice system.⁴ These publications from Census 2021 will provide a more detailed understanding of Norfolk's Armed Forces community and will be incorporated into future iterations of this evidence base.

The expectation is that as more organisations recognise their duty of due regard, then more relevant data will be published, and future iterations of this evidence base will be enhanced.

³ Office for National Statistics – Census 2021 - UK armed forces veterans data, England and Wales: Census 2021, November 2022 - <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/armedforcescommunity/articles/ukarmedforcesveteransdataenglandandwales/census2021>

⁴ Office for National Statistics – Census 2021 – UK armed forces veterans analysis plans, July 2022 - <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/aboutcensus/censusproducts/analysis/ukarmedforcesveteransanalysisplans>

3 Veterans

It is acknowledged that the following paragraphs will not include everything about Norfolk's Armed Forces veterans, but it does contain key information that is currently available, to present a contextual picture for Norfolk and nationally.

The Ministry of Defence defines a UK Veteran as anyone who has served for at least one day in Her Majesty's Armed Forces (Regular or Reserve) or Merchant Mariners who have seen duty on legally defined military operations.⁵

Most recent data about the veteran population who have previously served in the UK Armed Forces are from the Census 2021, published in mid-November 2022. On Census Day (21 March 2021), there were 40,094 people resident in Norfolk aged 16 and over who have previously served in the UK Armed Forces. This includes those who have served for at least one day in Armed Forces, either regular or reserves, or Merchant Mariners who have seen duty on legally defined military operations.⁶

According to the Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA)⁷, as of 2020 there were around 2.4 million veterans in Great Britain. Of these, approximately 40% were aged between 16 and 64 years of age, meaning around 60% were aged 65 and over. Most recent data from the England and Wales Census 2021 shows around 1.85 million people in England and Wales reported that they had previously served in the UK Armed Forces (3.8% of usual residents aged 16 years and over).⁸

In terms of the employment status of veterans, it was also reported by the OVA that around 79% of working age veterans were employed. It should be noted that when contrasted with their civilian counterparts, veterans are just as likely to be employed as non-veterans. Furthermore, of Service Leavers who used the Careers Transition Partnership in 2018/19, 86% were employed within six months of leaving the Armed Forces and 9% were either in full-time education, in training, or not actively looking for employment. As for education, approximately 92% of veterans in Great Britain were reported to have a qualification and were as likely to have a qualification as non-veterans. Regarding physical health, 75% of veterans in Great Britain were reported to be healthy, 17% were said to be in fair health and 8% in bad health. Furthermore, approximately 76% of veterans in Great Britain were reported to own a house or have a mortgage and were just as likely as non-veterans to have purchased their own home.

In terms of how the number of veterans in Great Britain is likely to change in the future, The Ministry of Defence (MOD) predict that the number of veterans is likely to decrease

⁵ Ministry of Defence – Veterans: Key Facts - <https://www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Veterans-Key-Facts.pdf>

⁶ Office for National Statistics – Census 2021 - UK armed forces veterans data, England and Wales: Census 2021, November 2022 - <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/armedforcescommunity/articles/ukarmedforcesveteransdataenglandandwales/census2021>

⁷ Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA), Veterans Factsheet 2020

⁸ ONS Census 2021

year on year to approximately 1.6 million by the year 2028⁹. According to the MOD, in 2016 the veteran population represented around 5% of household residents aged over 16, this is projected to decrease to between 2-3% by 2028.

However, while the MOD project a gradual decline in the number of veterans in Great Britain, the number of working age veterans is predicted to increase. As of 2016, the proportion of working age veterans stood at approximately 37%. By 2028, this is thought to increase to around 44%. On a similar note, the number of female veterans is also projected to increase. In 2016, women represented around 10% of veterans in Great Britain. It is anticipated that by 2028 the proportion of female veterans will stand at approximately 13%.

Given the projected increase in female veterans, a more holistic understanding of the health, wellbeing and experiences of female veterans is needed. Research conducted by the Veterans and Families Institute for Military Social Research highlights a range of issues experienced by women during and after their service such as difficulties integrating into the military, a lack of unit cohesion, sexual harassment and assault, and difficulties balancing a family life and military career simultaneously. It was also noted that female personnel were more likely to leave the military early – most commonly for family reasons¹⁰.

It should also be acknowledged that the UK Government has committed itself to gaining a better understanding of the needs and experiences of LGBTQ+ veterans¹¹. This review was commissioned in order to assess the impact of the prohibition of LGBTQ+ personnel from serving in the British Armed Forces prior to its repeal in 2000. Findings from this review have currently not been published.

Locally speaking, latest MOD data for 2017 shows there are an estimated 47,100 veterans living in Norfolk. Veterans are estimated to make up around 6.5% of Norfolk household residents aged 16+, compared with around 4.7% for England as a whole.¹²

The Government has set out an Action Plan¹³ to support the delivery of the 2018 Strategy for Veterans¹⁴. The three areas of action detailed in the Action Plan are:

1. Understanding our veteran community – work on data and research to ensure policy across government is rooted in robust evidence.
2. Transforming services for veterans - improving services to make sure veterans and families have the support they need.

⁹ Ministry of Defence (MOD), Population Projections: UK Armed Forces Veterans Residing in Great Britain 2016 to 2028

¹⁰ Veterans and Families Institute for Military Social Research – The Health and Wellbeing of Female Veterans in the UK (May 2021)

¹¹ UK Government - Government launches review into treatment of LGBT veterans (January 2022)

¹² Ministry of Defence - Annual population survey: UK armed forces veterans residing in Great Britain 2017 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/annual-population-survey-uk-armed-forces-veterans-residing-in-great-britain-2017>

¹³ Office for Veterans' Affairs – Veterans' Strategy Action Plan 2022-2024 (January 2022) - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/veterans-strategy-action-plan-2022-to-2024>

¹⁴ Ministry of Defence – The Strategy for our Veterans (November 2018) - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategy-for-our-veterans>

3. Recognising our veterans' contribution to society - fully recognising all veterans' contributions to society, including those who may not historically have felt their service was recognised, and challenging negative stereotypes.

3.1 Data from the Census 2021

First publications of univariate Census 2021 data about the veteran population who have previously served in the UK Armed Forces were published in mid-November 2022, including population and household data.¹⁵

Further publications of multivariate Census 2021 data are expected to be released during 2023. These publications are expected to cover demographics of the veteran population, housing and accommodation, household and family structure, and health and wellbeing. Proposed publications for 2024 and beyond are expected to focus on employment trends of the veteran population, financial situation, and characteristics associated with the criminal justice system.¹⁶

The most recent published data from the Census 2021 shows that on Census Day (21 March 2021), there were 40,094 people resident in Norfolk aged 16 and over who have previously served in the UK Armed Forces. This includes those who have served for at least one day in Armed Forces, either regular or reserves, or Merchant Mariners who have seen duty on legally defined military operations.

Table 3.1 details this population split by district and shows Breckland has the highest number of people (aged 16 and over) who previously served in the UK Armed Forces (7,510 people), followed by King's Lynn & West Norfolk (7,281) and Broadland (6,188). At 6.4%, Breckland and North Norfolk have the highest percentage of veterans in their population (aged 16 and over). Those districts with below Norfolk average (5.2%) of veterans are Great Yarmouth (4.8%), South Norfolk (4.8%) and Norwich (3.1%). Overall, Norfolk has a higher rate of veterans in the population (5.2%) than England and Wales (3.8%).

¹⁵ Office for National Statistics – Census 2021 - UK armed forces veterans data, England and Wales: Census 2021, November 2022 - <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/armedforcescommunity/articles/ukarmedforcesveteransdataenglandandwales/census2021>

¹⁶ Office for National Statistics – Census 2021 – UK armed forces veterans analysis plans, July 2022 - <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/aboutcensus/censusproducts/analysis/ukarmedforcesveteransanalysisplans>

Table 3.1: Numbers and % of Norfolk population aged 16 years and over who had previously served in the UK Armed Forces, by district, 2021

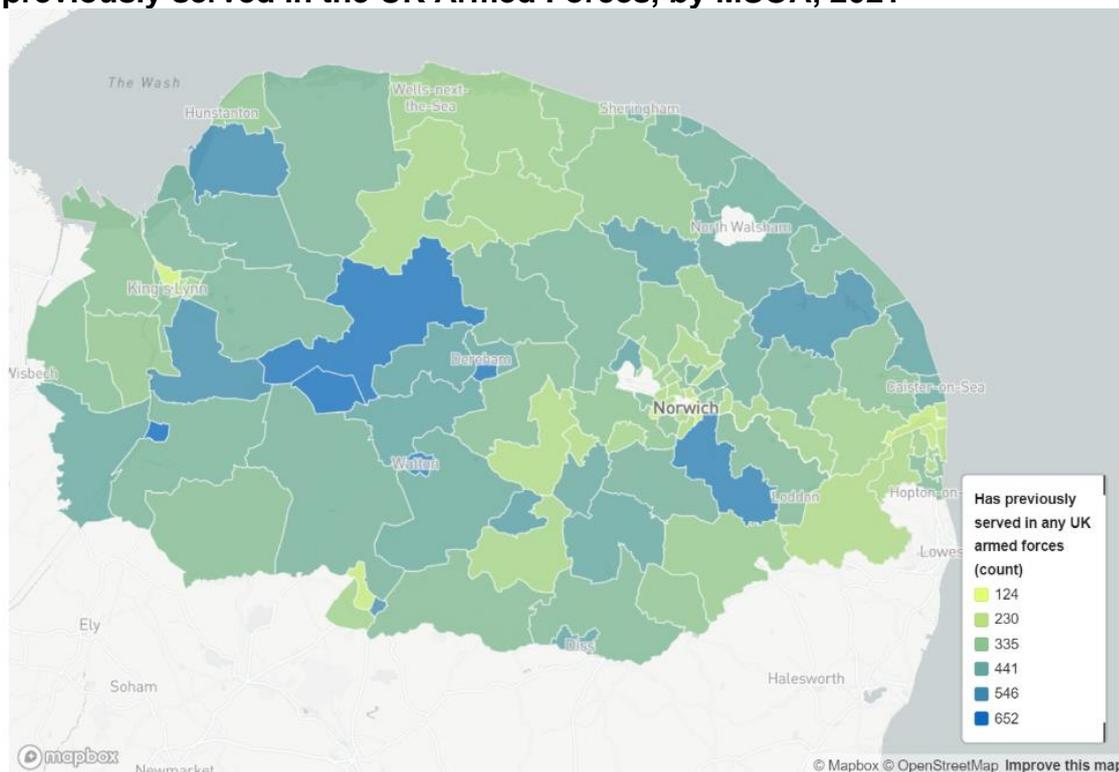
Area name	Previously served in regular UK Armed Forces	Previously served in reserve UK Armed Forces	Previously served in both regular and reserve UK Armed Forces	Has previously served in any UK Armed Forces
Breckland	6,173 (5.2%)	1,014 (0.9%)	323 (0.3%)	7,510 (6.4%)
Broadland	5,049 (4.6%)	922 (0.8%)	217 (0.2%)	6,188 (5.6%)
Great Yarmouth	3,275 (4.0%)	589 (0.7%)	145 (0.2%)	4,009 (4.8%)
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	5,889 (4.6%)	1,060 (0.8%)	332 (0.3%)	7,281 (5.6%)
North Norfolk	4,627 (5.2%)	822 (0.9%)	249 (0.3%)	5,698 (6.4%)
Norwich	2,884 (2.4%)	734 (0.6%)	124 (0.1%)	3,742 (3.1%)
South Norfolk	4,534 (3.9%)	903 (0.8%)	227 (0.2%)	5,664 (4.8%)
Norfolk	32,431 (4.2%)	6,044 (0.8%)	1,619 (0.2%)	40,094 (5.2%)
England and Wales	(2.9%)	(0.7%)	(0.2%)	(3.8%)

Source: Office for National Statistics – Census 2021

Figure 3.1 shows a map indicating the count of veterans, by MSOA.¹⁷ The map does not show any pattern of where veterans live in Norfolk but does show how Norfolk's veteran population is dispersed around the county at the MSOA level. To add to this data, **Table 3.2** gives the counts by MSOA for those ten areas with more than 500 veterans recorded in the Census, with the top two MSOA areas being Downham Market in King's Lynn & West Norfolk (652 veterans recorded) and Swaffham in Breckland (634 veterans recorded).

¹⁷ Middle layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs) are made up of groups of Lower layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs), usually four or five. They comprise between 2,000 and 6,000 households and have a usually resident population between 5,000 and 15,000 persons.

Figure 3.1: Map of the population aged 16 years and over (count) who had previously served in the UK Armed Forces, by MSOA, 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Census 2021

Note: Norfolk MSOA areas on the map shown in white, have no published data.

Table 3.2: Numbers of population aged 16 years and over (count of more than 500) who had previously served in the UK Armed Forces, by MSOA, 2021

MSOA recognisable name	District	Has previously served in any UK Armed Forces (count)
Downham Market	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	652
Swaffham	Breckland	634
Whissonsett, Litcham & Narborough	Breckland	618
Dereham Central & Toftwood	Breckland	615
Watton	Breckland	585
Trowse, Poringland & Stoke Holy Cross	South Norfolk	573
Heacham & Snettisham	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	541
West Winch, Marham & Shouldham	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	524
Hoveton, Horning & Potter Heigham	North Norfolk	518
Thetford Central & East	Breckland	517

Source: Office for National Statistics – Census 2021

Census 2021 data has also been published about veterans and households. In Norfolk, there are around 37,600 households with one or more persons who has served in the UK Armed Forces, which is around 9.3% of all Norfolk households, compared with a lower rate of 7.0% for England and Wales.

3.2 Location of pension and compensation recipients

The MOD has published official statistics about the number of people in receipt of an occupational pension or compensation under the Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS), War Pensions Scheme (WPS), or the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS).¹⁸ **Table 3.3** shows the number of Norfolk veterans in receipt of one or more of these pension or compensation schemes, by district, for March 2021, with the total for Norfolk being 8,275 recipients.

Breckland has around one in four (25.8%) of all veterans in receipt of AFPS, WPS or AFCS; King's Lynn & West Norfolk has around one in five (20.6%); Broadland has around one in six (15.8%); and Norwich and Great Yarmouth have the fewest at fewer than one in ten.

Table 3.3: Number of Norfolk veterans in receipt of one or more of AFPS, WPS or AFCS, by district, 2021

Area	Number of veterans in receipt of AFPS, WPS or AFCS	%
Breckland	2,136	25.8
Broadland	1,308	15.8
Great Yarmouth	569	6.9
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	1,701	20.6
North Norfolk	1,132	13.7
Norwich	521	6.3
South Norfolk	908	11.0
Norfolk Total	8,275	

Source: Ministry of Defence - Location of armed forces pension and compensation recipients (March 2021) (Table 3)

Although an individual may be in receipt of compensation it does not necessarily mean they have a disability. These MOD statistics show the number of veterans in the local area with a Guaranteed Income Payment (GIP) under the AFCS,¹⁹ which provide a reasonable estimate of those who may require additional support in the community. **Table 3.4** shows relatively low numbers of recipients of the GIP for Norfolk (60 in total), with Breckland and King's Lynn & West Norfolk having the higher numbers compared with other Norfolk districts.

¹⁸ Ministry of Defence - Location of armed forces pension and compensation recipients: 2021 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/location-of-armed-forces-pension-and-compensation-recipients-2021>

¹⁹ A monthly payment for life when discharged due to a serious illness or injury.

Table 3.4: Number of Norfolk veterans in receipt of Guaranteed Income Payment, by district, 2021

Area	Number of veterans in receipt of Guaranteed Income Payment
Breckland	24
Broadland	4
Great Yarmouth	3
King's Lynn & West Norfolk	14
North Norfolk	5
Norwich	5
South Norfolk	5
Norfolk Total	60

Source: Ministry of Defence - Location of armed forces pension and compensation recipients (March 2021) (Table 3)

The location of the highest number of veterans in the two tables above may indicate that Norfolk is likely to follow a national trend of members of the armed forces deciding to settle near to military installations after leaving service.

Furthermore, wanting to remain close to 'military life' may explain why concentrations in Norfolk are where they are. For instance, in 2018 the Royal British Legion conducted research into social isolation and loneliness within the Armed Forces community in Great Britain and reported that a quarter of respondents indicated that they always/often experience feelings of isolation and loneliness²⁰. Respondents attributed such feelings to a variety of causes including leaving the Armed Forces, relocating to a new area, and bereavement. Citing exit from the military and relocations as common causes of isolation and loneliness may indicate why some veterans may wish to remain near social networks established during their service.

In order to garner a greater understanding of the needs of veterans in the UK, the government has also commissioned further research. In April 2022, around £500,000 was reportedly distributed to charities and research institutions to support research into the experiences of female veterans, veterans from ethnic minorities and non-UK ex-service personnel²¹.

²⁰ [Royal British Legion, Loneliness and Isolation in the Armed Forces Community \(2018\)](#)

²¹ [UK Government, Press Release \(April 2022\)](#)

3.3 Mapping veterans' welfare need - Northumbria University

The Northern Hub for Veterans and Families Research²² at Northumbria University used funding from Covenant Fund to develop a series of reports to map veterans' and their families' welfare needs across the whole of the UK. This is based on data from public sources, statistics, health data and data directly from Armed Forces charities, and is called the Map of Need.²³

Map of Need analysis concludes that financial hardship and housing issues are the most prevalent topics affecting veterans that seek assistance from the main charities in the sector. The analysis goes on that data shows most of those that seek assistance for financial hardship are older veterans (aged 50 years and older). Also, the veteran population seeking financial assistance is spatially differentiated based on the military branch that they served in. UK-wide, a similar pattern in all the data analysed suggests that benevolence payments to the veteran community cannot be explained by deprivation in a given area, and that payments were better associated with the presence of military pension and compensation recipients, rather than overall or income deprivation. This would suggest that the presence of military pension and compensation recipients is a good starting point when seeking to identify areas with veterans who are experiencing financial hardship.

Armed Forces Pension and Compensation recipients

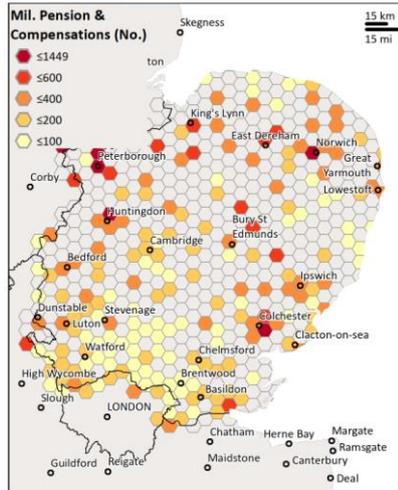
Figure 3.2 shows Northumbria University analysis of UK location of Armed Forces Pension and Compensation recipients data²⁴ for the number of recipients of those types of payment by postcode area for 2017, with Norfolk showing a similar overall distribution pattern to the rest of the East of England. **Figure 3.3** shows hotspots of people receiving those types of payments in Norfolk being around Norwich, Dereham and further south of Dereham, and King's Lynn and further south and southwest of King's Lynn.

²² The Northern Hub for Veterans and Military Families Research is a collective of academics, service providers and service users with an interest in improving the health and social wellbeing of veterans and their families across the lifespan.

²³ Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust - <https://covenantfund.org.uk/the-map-of-need/>

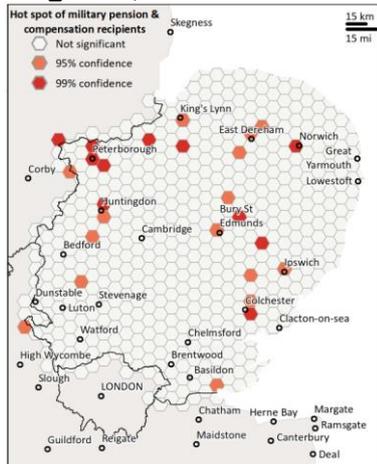
²⁴ Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – UK location of Armed Forces Pension and Compensation recipients data

Figure 3.2: Numbers of military pensions and compensations for East of England, 2017



Source: Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – UK location of Armed Forces Pension and Compensation recipients data
 Note: Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence

Figure 3.3: Hotspots of military pensions and compensations for East of England, 2017

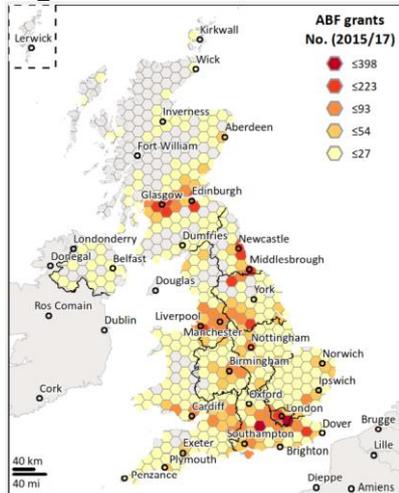


Source: Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – UK location of Armed Forces Pension and Compensation recipients data
 Note: Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence

Army Benevolent Fund

Figure 3.4 shows Northumbria University analysis of Army Benevolent Fund (ABF) The Soldiers' Charity data²⁵ for the number of ABF grants by postcode area for 2015/17, with Norfolk not standing out as receiving higher numbers of ABF grants compared with some areas of the UK. **Figure 3.5** shows hotspots of ABF recipients in Norfolk being around Norwich, Great Yarmouth, Dereham and King's Lynn.

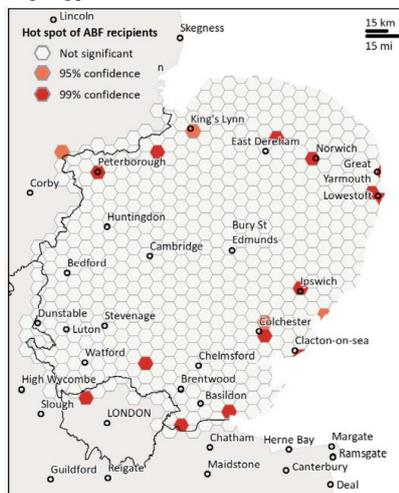
Figure 3.4: Numbers of Army Benevolent Fund grants for areas of UK, 2015/17



Source: Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – ABF The Soldiers' Charity data

Note: Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence

Figure 3.5: Hotspots of Army Benevolent Fund recipients for East of England, 2015/17



Source: Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – ABF The Soldiers' Charity data

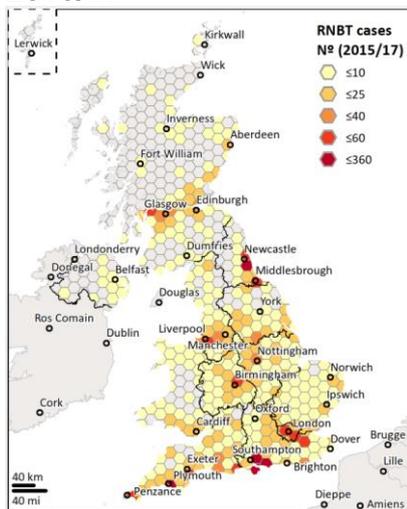
Note: Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence

²⁵ Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – ABF The Soldiers' Charity data

Royal Navy Benevolent Trust

Figure 3.6 shows Northumbria University analysis of the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust data²⁶ for the number of people receiving assistance by postcode area for 2015/17, with Norfolk not standing out as having higher numbers of people receiving assistance compared with some areas of the UK. **Figure 3.7** shows hotspots of people receiving assistance in Norfolk being around Norwich and further north of Norwich, King's Lynn and Great Yarmouth.

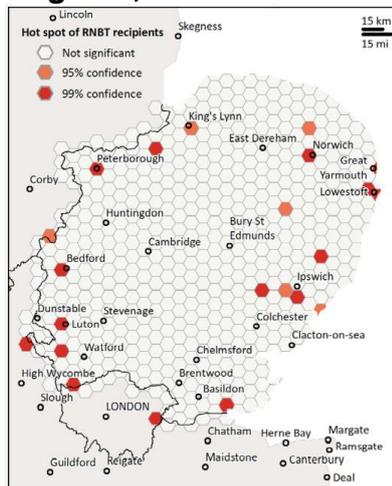
Figure 3.6: Numbers of Royal Naval Benevolent Trust recipients for areas of UK, 2015/17



Source: Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – Royal Naval Benevolent Trust data

Note: Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence

Figure 3.7: Hotspots of Royal Naval Benevolent Trust recipients for East of England, 2015/17



Source: Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – Royal Naval Benevolent Trust data

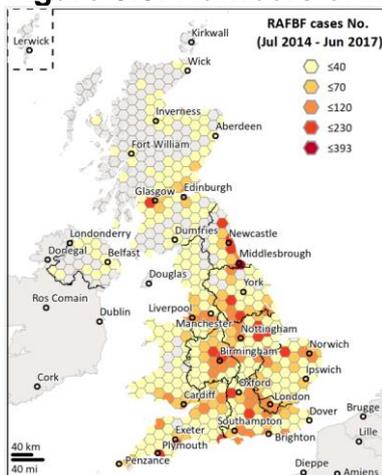
Note: Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence

²⁶ Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – Royal Naval Benevolent Trust data

RAF Benevolent Fund

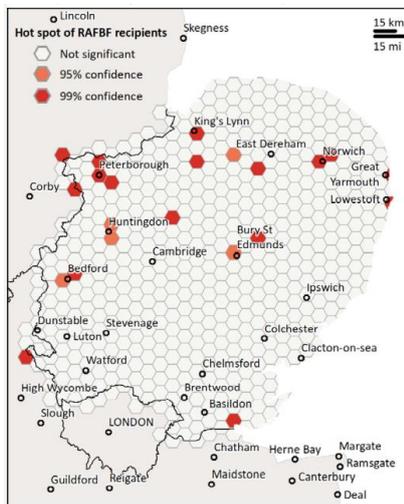
Figure 3.8 shows Northumbria University analysis of the RAF Benevolent Fund data²⁷ for the number of people receiving regular financial assistance by postcode area for 2014/17, with Norfolk not standing out as having higher numbers of people receiving regular financial assistance compared with some areas of the UK. **Figure 3.9** shows hotspots of people receiving regular financial assistance in Norfolk being around Norwich, west and southwest of Dereham, King's Lynn and further south of King's Lynn, and Great Yarmouth.

Figure 3.8: Numbers of RAF Benevolent Fund recipients for areas of UK, 2014/17



Source: Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – RAF Benevolent Fund data
 Note: Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence

Figure 3.9: Hotspots of RAF Benevolent Fund recipients for East of England, 2014/17



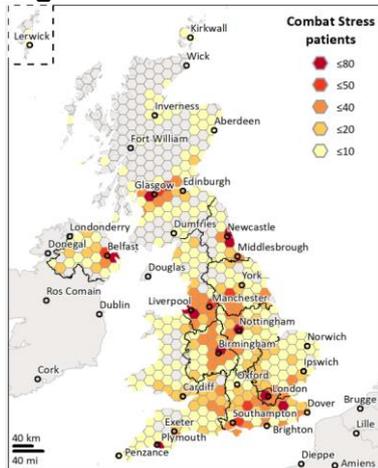
Source: Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – RAF Benevolent Fund data
 Note: Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence

²⁷ Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – RAF Benevolent Fund data

Combat Stress service users

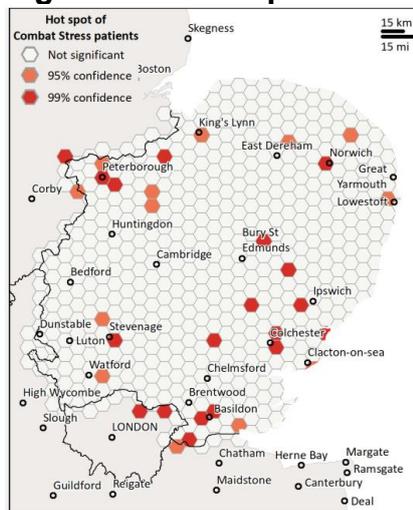
Figure 3.10 shows Northumbria University analysis of Combat Stress service users data²⁸ for the number of Combat Stress patients by postcode area for 2017/18, with Norfolk not standing out as having higher numbers of Combat Stress patients compared with some areas of the UK. **Figure 3.11** shows hotspots of Combat Stress patients in Norfolk being around Norwich and further northeast of Norwich, Dereham and King's Lynn.

Figure 3.10: Numbers of Combat Stress patients for areas of UK, 2017/18



Source: Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – Combat Stress patient data
 Note: Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence

Figure 3.11: Hotspots of Combat Stress patients for East of England, 2017/18



Source: Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – Combat Stress patient data
 Note: Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence

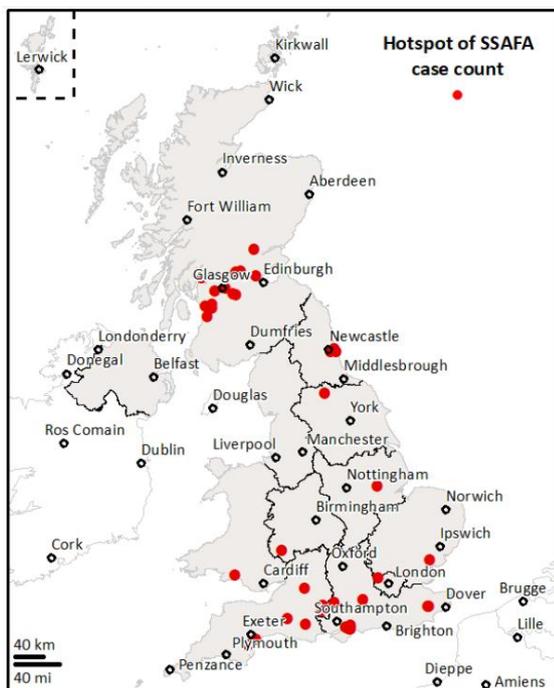
²⁸ Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – Combat Stress patient data

SSAFA – The Armed Forces Charity (rebranded)

Figure 3.12 shows Northumbria University analysis of the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA) data for hotspots of people receiving financial assistance for 2014 to 2019.²⁹ Several hotspots for SSAFA financial assistance can be found across the UK, with none identified in Norfolk. The analysis does not include more localised maps and does not mention Norfolk as an area of specific concern for SSAFA financial assistance.

Northumbria University analysis of the SSAFA data shows that for the period 2014 to 2019, all regions and home nations registered an annual average increase in the number of financial assistance cases. The increase ranged from 9% in the East of England (lowest percentage increase) up to 59% in Northern Ireland, with the UK annual average increase being 15%.

Figure 3.12: Hotspots of SSAFA financial assistance recipients for areas of UK, 2014 to 2019



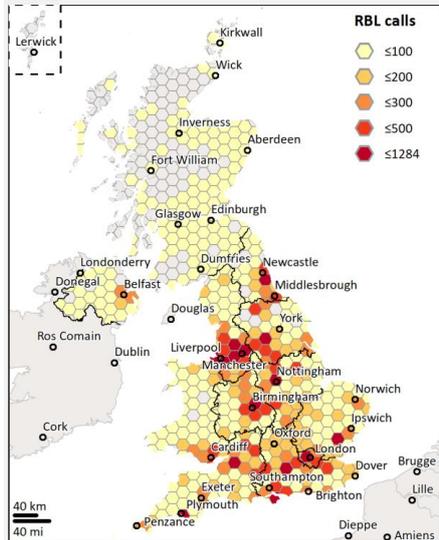
Source: Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – SSAFA data
Note: Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence

²⁹ Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – SSAFA data

Royal British Legion

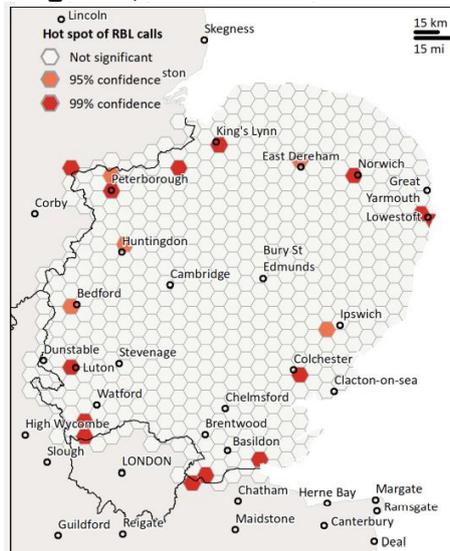
Figure 3.13 shows Northumbria University analysis of the Royal British Legion data³⁰ for the number of call centre contacts received by postcode area for 2014/17, with Norfolk not standing out as having higher numbers of people contacting the call centre compared with some areas of the UK. **Figure 3.14** shows hotspots of people contacting the call centre in Norfolk being around Norwich, Dereham and King's Lynn.

Figure 3.13: Numbers of Royal British Legion call centre contacts for areas of UK, 2014/17



Source: Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – Royal British Legion data
 Note: Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence

Figure 3.14: Hotspots of Royal British Legion call centre contacts for East of England, 2014/17



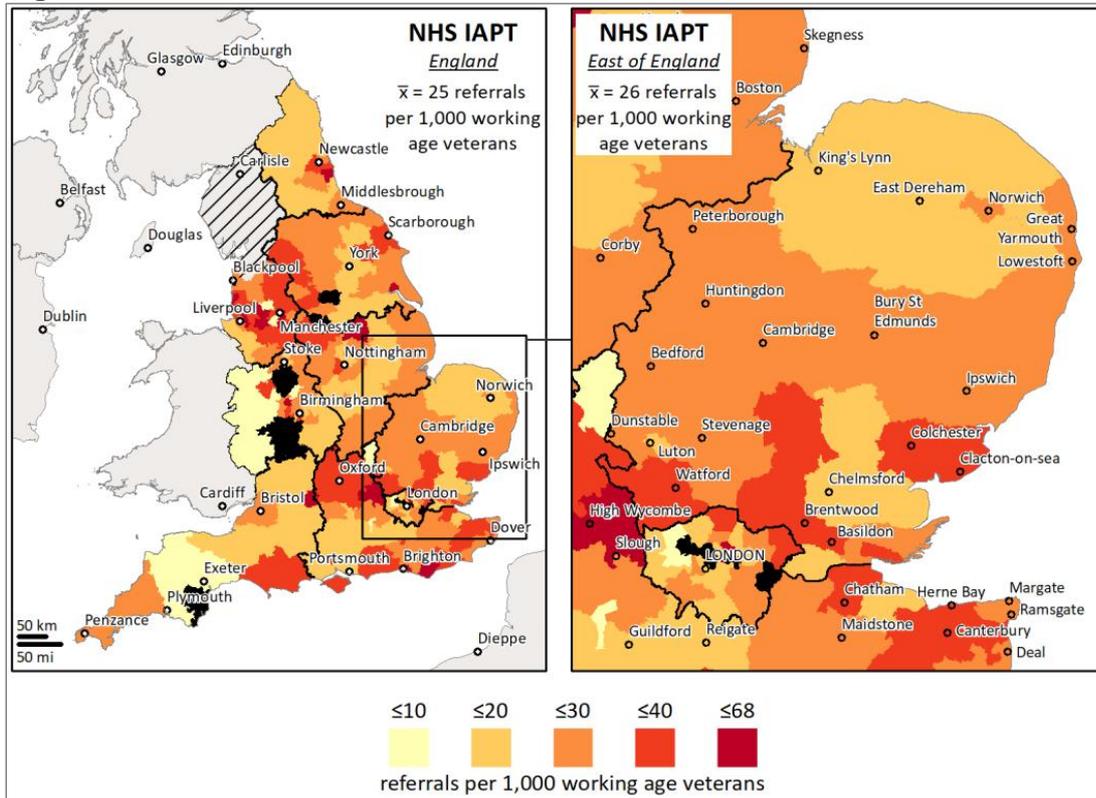
Source: Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – Royal British Legion data
 Note: Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence

³⁰ Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – Royal British Legion data

NHS Psychological Therapies (IAPT)

Figure 3.15 shows Northumbria University analysis of NHS Psychological Therapies (IAPT) data³¹ for veterans' rates of access to mental health treatment by area for 2017/18. Generally, areas of Norfolk have lower rates (lighter colours on the map) of veterans accessing mental health treatment compared with the England average, although the areas of Norwich and Great Yarmouth have rates closer to the England average.

Figure 3.15: Veterans' rates of access to mental health treatment, 2017/18



Source: Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – NHS Psychological Therapies (IAPT) data

Note: Contains National Statistics data

³¹ Northumbria University – The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust – NHS Psychological Therapies (IAPT) data

3.4 Medical Discharges

The MOD published official statistics on the number and rate of medical discharges among UK Regular Service personnel. When a medical condition or fitness issue affects a member of the UK Armed Forces, their ability to perform their duties is assessed. If they are unable to perform their duties and alternative employment within the Armed Forces is not available, personnel can then be medically discharged.³² Personnel can be medically discharged for a range of reasons, and often for multiple reasons, and may require additional and ongoing medical support, and other types of support, in the community.

For 2020/21, of the UK Regular Armed Forces population, a total of 1,124 medical discharges occurred, representing approximately three personnel medically discharged each day. For Royal Navy/Royal Marines, a rate of 10 per 1,000 personnel were medically discharged, which is not significantly different to the previous year. For Army personnel, a rate of 8 per 1,000 personnel were medically discharged, which is significantly lower than the previous year. For RAF personnel, a rate of 4 per 1,000 personnel were medically discharged, which is significantly lower than the previous year.

This type of data is not published at the local level. Due to the relatively low numbers and rates involved nationally, it is arguably not appropriate to attempt an estimate of personnel medically discharged at the local level. Without specific data to the contrary, it is reasonable to suggest that Norfolk would reflect the key findings that the UK Regular Armed Forces demographic groups significantly more likely to medical discharge in 2020/21 were:

- Other Ranks in each of the three services.³³
- Females in the Army and the RAF.
- Royal Navy/Royal Marines aged 30-34 years; Army personnel aged 20-24 years; RAF personnel aged 50 years and over.
- Royal Marines compared to the Royal Navy.
- Untrained personnel in the Army and Royal Marines.
- For all three services, the two most common principal causes of medical discharge were Musculoskeletal Disorders and Injuries and Mental and Behavioural Disorders.

The demographic groups with higher rates of discharge were broadly consistent with the results from previous reports. The annual MOD Health and Safety Statistics historically has found Other Ranks and untrained personnel had higher rates of injury and ill health related incidents. The Women in Ground Close Combat Roles review also found that female personnel had a higher rate of injuries than males.

According to the Veterans and Families Research Hub, the main causes of medical discharges between 2015 and 2020 were musculoskeletal disorders and injuries. These disorders and injuries reportedly led to 48% of Naval Service, 51% of Army and

³² Ministry of Defence - UK service personnel medical discharges: financial year 2020/21 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-service-personnel-medical-discharges-financial-year-202021>

³³ Other Ranks describes anyone other than Officer.

39% of RAF medical discharges³⁴. Therefore, it may be argued that there may be a significant number of veterans experiencing pain.

In terms of how well the needs of such veterans may be met, across England there are approximately 1,300 GP practices accredited by the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) as being “Veteran Friendly” and have been provided with support and information to help increase GP practices’ understanding of the health needs of veterans, and the services available to them³⁵. While accreditation is currently only available to GP practices in England, the RCGP is looking to expand this scheme to other countries in the UK. The RCPG have also produced an interactive [map](#) of these accredited practices. As of November 2022, 26 Practices were showing as registered in Norfolk.

3.5 Employment Outcomes for Service Leavers

The MOD publishes official statistics on the estimated employment outcomes for ex-service personnel, six months after leaving service, for UK Regular and Gurkha service personnel, who used the services provided by Career Transition Partnership (CTP). The CTP supports service leavers in their transition from military to civilian life through a range of career and employment support services. For 2020/21 UK Regular Service leavers who used a CTP service and reported their employment outcomes six months later, 83% were employed, 6% were unemployed and 12% were economically inactive.³⁶

Table 3.5 shows the occupation outcomes for UK Regular Service leavers for 2020/21, six months after leaving service, compared with the general UK population. This type of data is not published at the local level, and it is reasonable to suggest that the picture for Norfolk service leavers would not be dissimilar to the UK picture.

Approximately seven in ten (69%) of the employed 2020/21 service leavers reported that they were employed in one of the following four most common occupations, six months after leaving service:³⁷

- Skilled Trade occupations (19% compared with 9% for the general UK population) – includes occupations that require manual dexterity and other practical skills including agricultural and construction occupations. Most positions require a level of practical training including work-based training and apprenticeships.
- Associate Professional and Technical occupations (18% compared with 16% for the general UK population) – Includes occupations that provide technical support to professionals and to managers, directors and senior officials. Most occupations will have an associated high-level vocational qualification.
- Professional occupations (16% compared with 23% for the general UK population) – Includes occupations whose main tasks require a high level of knowledge and

³⁴ [Veterans and Families Research Hub, Snap-shot Physical Health \(July 2021\)](#)

³⁵ [Royal College of General Practitioners, Veteran’s Healthcare Toolkit](#)

³⁶ Ministry of Defence - Career Transition Partnership: Ex-Service Personnel Employment Outcomes: financial year 2020/21 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/career-transition-partnership-ex-service-personnel-employment-outcomes-financial-year-202021>

³⁷ Ministry of Defence – Career Transition Partnership Annual Statistics: UK Regular Service Personnel Employment April 2020 to March 2021 (January 2022)

experience in fields such as engineering, biological and natural sciences. Most occupations will require a degree or equivalent qualification.

- Elementary occupations (16% compared with 9% for the general UK population) – Includes occupations that generally require a minimal level of general education and may incorporate short periods of work-related training. Occupations in this category include bar tenders, labourers, cleaners and factory/warehouse workers.

The four most commonly reported occupations by male service leavers match those for all service leavers. However, males were more likely to report employment in Elementary occupations (17%) than Professional occupations (15%). Females however were more likely to report employment in Caring, Leisure and other Service occupations (19%) and Administrative and Secretarial occupations (11%) than Skilled Trade occupations (4%) and Elementary occupations (10%).

All age groups of service leavers reported three of the four most commonly reported occupations the same as those for all service leavers. However, service leavers aged under 30 were more likely to report employment in Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (12%) than Professional Occupations (8%) and service leavers aged 30 to 39 and 40 and over were more likely to report employment in Managers, Directors and Senior Officials occupations (10% and 13% respectively) than Elementary occupations (7% and 4% respectively).

2020/21 saw a significant decrease in service leavers entering Associate Professional and Technical occupations and a significant increase in those entering Elementary occupations. This is likely to be driven by an increase in early service leavers and the impact of COVID-19 on certain industries. For example, many financial and professional recruitment programmes were paused until around Q3 2021. Trade occupations continued to recruit due to industry shortages, and government programmes (such as Kickstart Scheme and Skills Bootcamps) made certain occupations more appealing. Additionally, 2020/21 had a higher proportion of early service leavers using the CTP service, which may explain the increased uptake of Elementary occupations due to the qualification status of the demographic.³⁸ These observations may also go some way to explain any differences between occupation rates for service leavers compared with the general UK population.

³⁸ Ministry of Defence – Career Transition Partnership Annual Statistics: UK Regular Service Personnel Employment April 2020 to March 2021 (January 2022).

Table 3.5: Occupation outcomes (%) for UK Regular Service leavers using CTP service, six months after leaving, compared with UK population, 2020/21

Occupation	Service Leavers (%)	UK Population (%)
Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	7	11
<i>Of which; Corporate Managers and Directors</i>	54	73
<i>Other Managers and Proprietors</i>	46	27
Professional Occupations	16	23
<i>Of which; Science, Research, Engineering and Technology Professionals</i>	51	29
<i>Health Professionals</i>	12	20
<i>Teaching and Educational</i>	6	23
<i>Business, Media and Public Service Professionals</i>	31	28
Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	18	16
<i>Of which; Science, Engineering and Technology Associate Professionals</i>	25	13
<i>Health and Social Care Associate Professionals</i>	4	11
<i>Protective Service Occupations</i>	24	7
<i>Culture, Media and Sports Occupations</i>	7	16
<i>Business and Public Service Associate Professionals</i>	39	54
Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	4	10
<i>Of which; Administrative Occupations</i>	94	81
<i>Secretarial and Related Occupations</i>	6	19
Skilled Trade Occupations	19	9
<i>Of which; Skilled Agricultural and Related Trades</i>	10	11
<i>Skilled Metal, Electrical and Electronic Trades</i>	56	37
<i>Skilled Construction and Building Trades</i>	28	32
<i>Textiles, Printing and Other Skilled Trades</i>	6	20
Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations	4	9
<i>Of which; Caring Personal Service Occupations</i>	84	80
<i>Leisure, Travel and Related Personal Service Occupations</i>	[c]	20
<i>Community and Civil Enforcement Occupations</i>	[c]	0
Sales and Customer Service Occupations	5	7
<i>Of which; Sales Occupations</i>	77	71
<i>Customer Service Occupations</i>	23	29
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	11	6
<i>Of which; Process, Plant and Machine Operatives</i>	37	40
<i>Transport and Mobile Machine Drivers and Operatives</i>	63	60
Elementary Occupations	16	9
<i>Of which; Elementary Trades and Related Occupations</i>	33	16
<i>Elementary Administration and Service Occupations</i>	67	84

Source: Ministry of Defence - Career Transition Partnership: Ex-Service Personnel Employment Outcomes: financial year 2020/21 (Table 5g)

Notes: Contains data from Joint Personnel Administration (JPA), Right Management and the Office for National Statistics Nomis; c denotes that figure has been suppressed in line with JSP 200 (October 2017); Percentages for employment outcomes have been weighted to account for non-responder bias; Occupation groups are presented as a proportion of the major occupational group to which they belong.

Under the Veterans' Strategy Action Plan, new programmes are being launched in order to make better use of the skills and experience of veterans. The plan reportedly has more than 60 commitments, totalling more than £70 million from across government, to increase employment, improve health and wellbeing services and improve understanding of the veteran community³⁹. It should also be noted that from April 2022, employers would not have to pay National Insurance contributions for veterans that are in their first year of civilian employment after having left the Armed Forces. Businesses would also be able to claim this relief for any qualifying employees who joined their company in the last 12 months.

Regarding longer term employment outcomes for veterans, research from QinetiQ and the Warwick Institute for Employment Research⁴⁰ indicates that longer term employment outcomes for veterans was impacted by time spent in service and support provided during re-settlement. Whether this impact was positive or negative was attributed to four factors: individual characteristics, actions taken, personal circumstances, and support on leaving. It was also reported that around 45% of respondents believed that resettlement support was helpful in securing employment in the short term. However, only around 25% felt that it was helpful in the long term. Most ex-Service personnel reportedly maintain employment over time - even if this involved numerous jobs and/or periods of unemployment. However, less than half (44.5%) felt that they have found the 'right job' for them in the longer-term, whilst 42.5% stated that their current job has not met their expectations in terms of maximising their potential or providing opportunity for career progression (42.4%).

In terms of perceived barriers to obtaining successful and sustainable employment in the long term, a lack of relevant qualifications/experience, problems translating skills, negative employer perceptions, a lack of support (from the Armed Forces and employers), physical and mental health challenges, and poor cultural fit in a civilian organisation were all cited. Conversely, individual traits such as confidence and self-reliance; having relevant skills, qualifications and experience; support from family and friends and networks were cited as facilitators to successful and sustainable employment.

³⁹ [UK Government - New plans to boost veterans employment launched \(2022\)](#)

⁴⁰ [QinetiQ/Warwick Institute of Employment Research - Longer-Term Employment Outcomes of Ex-Service Personnel \(2021\)](#)

3.6 Gambling

According to research conducted by Swansea University⁴¹, there are high rates of gambling participation and potential problematic gambling among veterans. Veterans sampled as part of this study were more than ten times more likely than non-veterans to experience gambling harms and to gamble as a way of coping with distress. Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) status was also found to be closely associated with problem gambling risk. Veterans surveyed were also four times more likely to have gambled in the past year and to have gambled on more activities than their non-veteran counterparts – this was reportedly motivated by an escape from or avoidance of distress.

All veterans surveyed were reported to have experienced some symptoms of depression, anxiety, risky alcohol use, nicotine dependence at higher levels, and increased indications of PTSD and complex PTSD (C-PTSD) diagnoses compared to non-veterans.

⁴¹ [Swansea University - The United Kingdom Armed Forces Veterans' Health and Gambling Study](#)

4 Serving Personnel

It is acknowledged that the following paragraphs will not include everything about Norfolk's Armed Forces personnel, but it does contain key information that is currently available, to present a contextual picture for Norfolk and nationally.

As of April 2021, the strength of Regular Forces for Norfolk stood at a total of 1,890 with 1,200 being RAF personnel, 380 being Army and 300 being Royal Navy/Royal Marines.⁴²

4.1 Location of Serving Personnel

The MOD publishes official statistics on the stationed location (which is not necessarily where personnel live) of UK Regular Service personnel by local authority area, as well as global locations. Data are presented for each service by Officer and Other Ranks⁴³ breakdown, and the latest published annual data is for April 2021.⁴⁴ Figures are for UK Regular Forces (including both Trained and Untrained personnel), and therefore exclude Gurkhas, Full Time Reserve Service personnel and mobilised reservists. Royal Navy/Royal Marines personnel on sea service are included against the local authority containing the home port of their ship. RAF Other Ranks serving in the South Atlantic are shown against the location containing their home base.

UK data

As of April 2021, the strength of Regular Forces in the UK stood at 143,380, which is an increase of 4,130 compared with April 2020. **Figure 4.1** shows the distribution of UK Regular Forces personnel by region. The majority of Regular Forces personnel are located in the South-East and South-West of the UK with 39,530 and 38,590 personnel, respectively. The fewest personnel are located in the North-East with 1,050 personnel.⁴⁵

According to the MOD UK Armed Forces biannual diversity statistics⁴⁶, as of October 2021 women represented 11.4% of the UK Regular forces – an increase of 0.2% from the year before. Women were also reported to make up 15.4% of the Future Reserves, this reflects an increase of 0.4% from the year prior.

It was also reported that as of October 2021, 9.4% of the UK Regular Forces were of minority ethnic groups. This is reportedly an increase of 0.3% from the previous year. As for the Future Reserves, around 5.8% of personnel were of minority ethnic groups.

⁴² Ministry of Defence - Location of UK regular service and civilian personnel annual statistics: 2021 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/location-of-uk-regular-service-and-civilian-personnel-annual-statistics-2021>

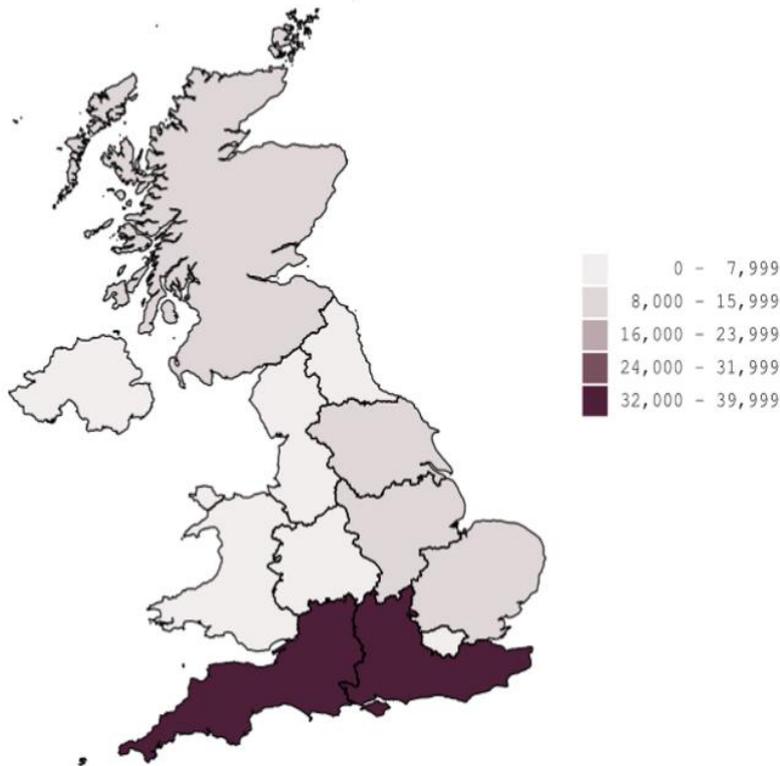
⁴³ Other Ranks describes anyone other than Officer.

⁴⁴ Ministry of Defence - Location of UK regular service and civilian personnel annual statistics: 2021 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/location-of-uk-regular-service-and-civilian-personnel-annual-statistics-2021>

⁴⁵ Ministry of Defence – Annual Location Statistics (April 2021) - https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/99767/2/ALS_-_April_2021.pdf

⁴⁶ [Ministry of Defence - UK Armed Forces Biannual Diversity Statistics \(October 2021\)](#)

Figure 4.1: Distribution of UK Regular Forces personnel by region, April 2021



Source: Ministry of Defence – Annual Location Statistics (April 2021)

Norfolk data

Table 4.1 shows that for April 2021, the strength of Regular Forces for Norfolk stood at a total of 1,890 with 1,200 being RAF personnel, 380 being Army and 300 being Royal Navy/Royal Marines.

Table 4.1: Strength of Regular Forces by Rank, Norfolk, 2017 to 2021

	Apr-17	Apr-18	Apr-19	Apr-20	Apr-21
RN/RM Total	20	70	180	250	300
RN/RM Officers	10	10	20	30	30
RN/RM Other Ranks	20	60	160	210	270
Army Total	400	380	370	380	380
Army Officers	50	40	40	40	40
Army Other Ranks	350	340	330	340	340
RAF Total	2,030	1,880	1,500	1,160	1,200
RAF Officers	220	210	180	140	150
RAF Other Ranks	1,810	1,670	1,320	1,020	1,050
Norfolk Total	2,460	2,330	2,050	1,780	1,890

Source: Ministry of Defence – Annual Location Statistics (April 2021)

Note: Not all figures will equal, due to rounding - when rounding to the nearest 10, numbers ending in 5 have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias.

Note: Other Ranks describes anyone other than Officer.

Table 4.2 shows the geographical split of the strength of Regular Forces for Norfolk for April 2021, by district. Broadland, Great Yarmouth and South Norfolk have no Regular Forces personnel stationed. The majority of Norfolk's Regular Forces personnel are stationed at RAF Marham in King's Lynn & West Norfolk; that is 1,480 personnel, with 1,170 of those being RAF personnel, 300 being Royal Navy/Royal Marines, and 10 being Army. Breckland had 370 Regular Forces personnel stationed at Robertson Barracks, all of which are Army personnel. North Norfolk had 30 RAF personnel stationed and Norwich has ten RAF personnel stationed.

Table 4.2: Strength of Regular Forces by Rank, Norfolk districts, 2021

	Breckland	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	North Norfolk	Norwich	Total
RN/RM Total	0	300	0	0	300
RN/RM Officers	0	30	0	0	30
RN/RM Other Ranks	0	270	0	0	270
Army Total	370	10	0	~	380
Army Officers	40	~	0	0	40
Army Other Ranks	330	10	0	~	340
RAF Total	0	1,170	30	10	1,200
RAF Officers	0	150	0	~	150
RAF Other Ranks	0	1,020	30	~	1,050
Total for District	370	1,480	30	10	1,890

Source: Ministry of Defence – Annual Location Statistics (April 2021)

Notes: ~ denotes five or fewer; Not all figures will equal, due to rounding - when rounding to the nearest 10, numbers ending in 5 have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias.

Note: Other Ranks describes anyone other than Officer.

4.2 Defence Medical Services (DMS) Registration

The MOD publishes official statistics on the number of serving UK Armed Forces personnel with a Defence Medical Services (DMS) registration, as of October 2021. When someone has a DMS registration, it means that their primary medical care is provided by the MOD. This information is used by the MOD, NHS, Public Health England (PHE) and local authorities to make informed decisions regarding the commissioning of clinical services in different parts of the country, depending on the size and composition of the UK Armed Forces populations requiring access to care.⁴⁷

UK data

As of October 2021, 169,885 UK Armed Forces personnel and entitled civilians had a DMS registration, which is a decrease of less than one per cent since April 2021. Around 92% of personnel with a DMS registration were located in the UK, which is an increase of less than one per cent since April 2021.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Ministry of Defence - Defence personnel NHS commissioning bi-annual statistics: financial year 2021/22 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/defence-personnel-nhs-commissioning-bi-annual-statistics-financial-year-202122>

⁴⁸ Ministry of Defence - Bi-annual NHS Commissioning Population Statistics 1 October 2021 (December 2021)

Norfolk data

As of October 2021, for Norfolk, there were 2,640 Armed Forces personnel and entitled civilian DMS registrations.⁴⁹ **Table 4.3** shows that 2,050 of these were for Armed Forces personnel, with the majority of those registrations for RAF personnel.

For the civilian registrations (590), 34% are male and 66% are female. For the Armed Forces personnel (2,050), 90% are male and 10% are female.

Table 4.3: Numbers of Armed Forces and entitled civilian DMS registrations, Norfolk, October 2021

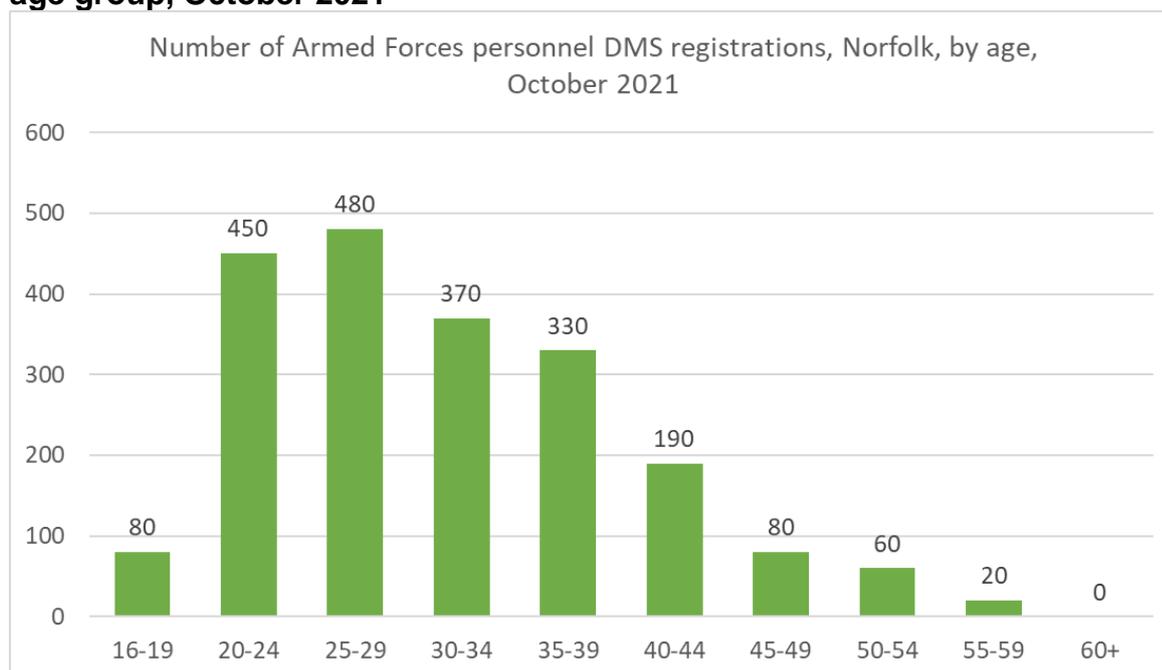
	All Persons	Civilian	All Armed Forces	Royal Navy/Royal Marines	Army	RAF
Norfolk	2,640	590	2,050	320	390	1,340

Source: Ministry of Defence - Defence personnel NHS commissioning bi-annual statistics: financial year 2021/22 (December 2021) (Table B2.1)

Note: Entitled civilians are army civil servants and locally employed civilians.

Knowing the age of a population is often useful in planning services, especially in terms of health services. **Figure 4.2** shows the distribution of those 2,050 Armed Forces personnel registered for DMS within Norfolk, by age group. Peak numbers are in the 20 to 24 and the 25 to 29-year age groups, with decreasing numbers in the older age groups.

Figure 4.2: Numbers of Armed Forces personnel DMS registrations, Norfolk, by age group, October 2021



Source: Ministry of Defence - Defence personnel NHS commissioning bi-annual statistics: financial year 2021/22 (December 2021) (Table B2.3)

⁴⁹ Entitled civilians are army civil servants and locally employed civilians.

4.3 Mental Health

Mental health care can be provided to UK Armed Forces personnel in the primary care setting by the patient's own Medical Officer, similar to a General Practitioner (GP), or by specialist mental health clinicians at MOD Specialist Mental Health Services; this includes community mental health services at MOD Departments of Community Mental Health (DCMH) for outpatient care or admissions to hospital as an in-patient.⁵⁰

UK data

In 2020/21, the rate of UK Armed Forces personnel seen by military mental healthcare services fell compared to 2019/20. It is possible a reduction in some routine and training activity during periods of COVID-19 national lockdown restrictions may potentially have removed some of the stressors of military life and contributed to this fall. The key findings from the latest annual report are:

- 1 in 10 (10.5%) UK Armed Forces personnel were seen by military healthcare services for a mental health related reason in 2020/21.
- Rates of mental disorders seen in military healthcare services have fallen since 2019/20.
- Most personnel seeking military mental health care go to their GP in the first instance. 1 in 10 (10.0%) of personnel were seen by their GP in the latest year.
- The majority of patients who seek mental health care are managed by their GP, however some with more complex needs will receive treatment from specialist mental care providers. UK Armed Forces rates of those requiring specialist mental health services also fell to 1 in 50 (2.0%).
- The overall rate of mental health in the UK Armed Forces was previously broadly comparable to that seen in the UK general population.
- However, data for 2020/21 shows the rate of mental health for those needing specialist mental health treatment was lower in the UK Armed Forces than that seen in the UK general population.
- There were some conditions that were more likely to be managed by GP's such as sleep disorders, stress and low mood. Other conditions such as PTSD, depression and adjustment disorders were more likely to be treated by specialist mental health clinicians.
- Personnel from all age groups accessed military mental healthcare and females sought help more than males, as seen in the UK general population.

Norfolk data

This type of data is not published at the local level. Using the mental health care rates identified for 2020/21 UK Armed Forces personnel, it is possible to provide an estimate of potential mental health care numbers for the 1,890 Regular Forces stationed in Norfolk:

- 1 in 10 (10.5%) UK Armed Forces personnel were seen by military healthcare services for a mental health related reason in 2020/21. For Norfolk this equates to potentially around an estimated 200 personnel.

⁵⁰ Ministry of Defence - UK Armed Forces Mental Health: Annual Summary & Trends Over Time, 2007/08 to 2020/21 (June 2021) - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-armed-forces-mental-health-annual-statistics-financial-year-202021>

- Most personnel seeking military mental health care go to their GP in the first instance. 1 in 10 (10.0%) of UK personnel were seen by their GP in the latest year. For Norfolk this equates to potentially around an estimated 200 personnel.
- The majority of patients who seek mental health care are managed by their GP, however some with more complex needs will receive treatment from specialist mental care providers. UK Armed Forces rates of those requiring specialist mental health services fell to 1 in 50 (2.0%). For Norfolk this equates to potentially around an estimated 40 personnel.

4.4 Alcohol Related Harm

Previous evidence published in academic literature indicates that alcohol misuse within the UK Armed Forces population is higher than in the UK general population. Recent research conducted by the University of Liverpool and King's College London may provide insight into the motivations behind drinking behaviours among serving and former Armed Forces personnel⁵¹. Following interviews with current and former Armed Forces personnel, reasons for drinking were categorised as either drinking to cope (i.e. escapism from troubles or distancing self from the past) or drinking because of social pressure (i.e. to fit in/to be sociable). Findings indicated that those who met the criteria for depression, anxiety and PTSD were more likely to drink to cope rather than as a result of social pressure. This suggests that harmful alcohol consumption may occur in response to mental health struggles. Military personnel who reported drinking to cope were more likely to meet the criteria for alcohol misuse and binge drinking, as were personnel who drink at home and/or alone. However, it should be noted that the sample of Armed Forces personnel interviewed for the purpose of this study had reported a stress or mental health problem in the last three years. Therefore, while these findings can provide some insight into the motivations behind drinking in the military, these findings may not necessarily be applicable to the entire Armed Forces community.

An Institute of Employment Studies report on Alcohol in the Armed Forces identified a requirement to introduce interventions to reduce the impact of excessive alcohol consumption in Armed Forces personnel. In accordance with NICE guidelines, UK Armed Forces personnel should attend a dental inspection at a frequency of between 6 and 24 months, based on an individual's assessed oral disease risk. Therefore, dental teams are in a unique position to implement an alcohol screening tool and provide brief advice and support. The role of dentists to deliver this type of intervention has been recommended by Public Health England and the Department of Health, and this initiative was implemented by MOD in June 2016.

The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test-Consumption (AUDIT-C) was developed as a three-question tool intended for rapid use in a clinical environment to help identify patients whose alcohol use may potentially place them at increased risk. There are limitations with this approach, such as: it does not give a measure of absolute or relative risk; it is a brief screen; personnel with high scores may not have experienced

⁵¹[Irizar et al - Drinking motivations in UK serving and ex-serving military personnel \(2020\)](#)

actual harm or ill health from their drinking behaviour; and the screening tool involves self-report and may not always be accurate or truthful.⁵²

UK data

For the period June 2016 to May 2017, of those Regular UK Armed Forces personnel subject to the alcohol screening initiative, the key findings are:

- 37% of UK personnel who completed the AUDIT-C scored less than 5, indicating that they were potentially at lower risk of alcohol related harm.
- 61% of UK personnel who completed the AUDIT-C scored 5+ indicating that they may potentially be at increasing risk or above of alcohol related harm.
- 2% of UK personnel who completed the AUDIT-C scored 10-12 indicating that they may potentially be at increasing or higher risk and should be advised to see their GP.

Norfolk data

This type of data is not published at the local level. Using the AUDIT-C scores identified for 2016/17 UK Armed Forces personnel, it is possible to provide an estimate of potential risk of alcohol related harm numbers for the 1,890 Regular Forces stationed in Norfolk:

- 37% of UK personnel who completed the AUDIT-C scored less than 5, indicating that they were potentially at lower risk of alcohol related harm. For Norfolk this equates to potentially around an estimated 700 personnel.
- 61% of UK personnel who completed the AUDIT-C scored 5+ indicating that they may potentially be at increasing risk or above of alcohol related harm. For Norfolk this equates to potentially around an estimated 1,150 personnel.
- 2% of UK personnel who completed the AUDIT-C scored 10-12 indicating that they may potentially be at increasing or higher risk and should be advised to see their GP. For Norfolk this equates to potentially around an estimated 40 personnel.

4.5 Deliberate Self-Harm

The MOD published official statistics on the number and rate of UK Armed Forces personnel who had at least one episode of deliberate self-harm (DSH) recorded between 2010/11 and 2016/17 on MOD held systems.⁵³

The overall rate of DSH among UK Armed Forces personnel remains low at 3.1 per 1,000 personnel (0.3% of all UK military personnel) in 2017/18, rising from a rate of 2.2 per 1,000 in 2010/11. This equates to an increase of one person per 1,000 personnel over the eight-year period. It is not known if this is a true rise in DSH or improved reporting. However, this increase is in line with that seen in mental health referrals for

⁵² Ministry of Defence - Alcohol Usage in the UK Armed Forces 1 June 2016 – 31 May 2017 (July 2017) - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/alcohol-usage-in-the-uk-armed-forces-1-june-2016-to-31-may-2017>

⁵³ Ministry of Defence - Deliberate self-harm in the UK armed forces: 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2018 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/deliberate-self-harm-in-the-uk-armed-forces-1-april-2010-to-31-march-2018>

UK Armed Forces personnel to a specialist clinician at a MOD Department of Community Mental Health (DCMH).

This type of data is not published at the local level. Due to the relatively low numbers and rates involved nationally, it is arguably not appropriate to attempt an estimate of DSH at the local level. Without specific data to the contrary, it is reasonable to suggest that Norfolk would reflect the key findings that the UK Armed Forces population at highest risk of DSH between 2010/11 and 2017/18 were:

- Army personnel
- Females
- Other ranks⁵⁴
- Personnel aged under 25
- Untrained personnel (in seven of the eight years presented)⁵⁵

The risk groups for DSH in the UK Armed Forces were similar to the general population, where females and younger age groups were found to be at greatest risk of presentation at a hospital with a self-harm episode.

⁵⁴ Other Ranks describes anyone other than Officer.

⁵⁵ Untrained personnel or 'trainees' are those classified as under training or artificer candidate for Naval Service and Phase 1 and 2 training for Army and RAF. Trained personnel are defined as those who have completed both Phase 1 and 2 training.

5 Reserves

It is acknowledged that the following paragraphs will not include everything about Norfolk's Armed Forces Reserves, but it does contain key information that is currently available, to present a contextual picture for Norfolk and nationally.

1 Company of the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Anglian Regiment are stationed in Norwich.

The County also has connections to 161 Medical Squadron (Norwich detachment), 254 Medical Regiment (pre-hospital emergency care medical unit), 2620 Squadron, Royal Air Force Auxiliary Regiment (force protection unit), 677 Squadron AAC (Norwich Flight), 6 Army Air Corps (ground crew teams providing arming and refuelling support services to deployed helicopters).

The MOD's Reserves Continuous Attitude Survey (2021)⁵⁶ captures demographic and attitudinal data surrounding Reservists and life in the Reserves and is reportedly used to inform the development of policy and measure the impact of decisions affecting Reservists.

According to the 2021 edition of the Survey, the most commonly cited reasons for joining the Reserves were: to serve my country (66%), for the challenge (63%), personal development (62%), to make a difference/do something worthwhile (59%) and for the excitement and adventure (56%). In terms of motivation to remain in the Reserves, to serve my country (60%), the people, friends and camaraderie (55%), personal development (55%), for the challenge (52%), to make a difference/do something worthwhile (51%) were identified as the most common responses.

The 2021 survey results highlighted that the majority of Reservists are satisfied with life in the Reserve in general, are proud to serve, and would recommend joining. For instance, 77% of respondents agreed that they were satisfied with life in the Reserves, 93% agreed that they were proud to serve and 87% would recommend joining.

In terms of Reservists' attitudes towards their civilian job and employer and how these have changed over time, 61% of respondents agreed that their main civilian employer values their Reserve service. This is an increase of 11% since the 2015 baseline survey. Over half agreed that being a Reservist is good for their civilian career (up 10% from 2015 baseline). Similarly, over three quarters agreed that their employer supports their Reserve service (and increase of around 8% since 2015 baseline). For context, it is estimated that 69% of Reservists are in civilian employment either full-time, part-time, or self-employed. Furthermore, of the Reservists that are in civilian employment, 46% work in the private sector, 36% work in the public sector, and 12% are self-employed. It should be noted that the proportion of Reservists that are employed in the private sector has decreased from 50% in 2015 to 46% in 2021.

Regarding the attitudes of Reservists' families, 90% believed that their family supports their Reserve service (up 4% since 2015) and 83% their Reserve Service was valued

⁵⁶ [Ministry of Defence - Reserves Continuous Attitude Survey Results \(2021\)](#)

by their family (up 3% since 2015). For further context, it is estimated that 46% of Reservists are married or in a civil partnership, and a further 24% are in a long term or established relationship (but not married or in a civil partnership). It was also estimated that over half (56%) of reservists do not have any financially dependent children.

In terms of motivation to leave the Reserves, of the 4% of Reservist respondents that intended to leave the Reserves within the next year, around a third (33%) reported poor management and leadership, 29% reported they will have reached the Reserves retirement age, and 28% reported they did not feel valued by the Service.

6 Armed Forces Families

It is acknowledged that the following paragraphs will not include everything about Norfolk's Armed Forces families, but it does contain key information that is currently available, to present a contextual picture for Norfolk and nationally.

6.1 National context

According to the Duty and Care Armed Forces Family Mobility and Health Care Report⁵⁷, the UK Armed Forces are comprised of a highly mobile workforce, frequently posted to locations throughout England, across the borders of the devolved nations and overseas. While dispersed living (defined in some documents as living more than 10 miles from the place of work) is an increasingly attractive option for some, the majority of military families make the choice to live accompanied with their serving partner; in 2021, more than three-quarters (77%) of military spouses reported living with their partners during the working week. For those military families who choose to accompany their serving partners, that decision brings with it a commitment to also be mobile in response to Service requirements. Each year a significant proportion of military families are required to relocate. Approximately one-fifth of military families (21%) reported moving for Service reasons in the past year. Army families are the most mobile; 24% of Army families moved for Service reasons in the past 12 months compared with 22% of RAF families and 11% of RN/RM families. The relatively short duration of military postings also results in some military families having to move frequently. Again, there are variations between the Services but approximately one-half (49%) of Army families and four in ten (42%) of all Service families have moved twice or more in the past five years. Despite a significant proportion of families choosing to remain together, the frequency of relocation has an effect on the way military spouses feel about military life; one third (32%) cite the number of house-moves as a negative aspect of Service life.

The health care needs of Service personnel are provided through the Defence Medical Services (DMS) and include primary health care, dental care, community mental health care, specialist medical care as well as rehabilitation and occupational medicine. In contrast, health care provision for the majority of military families is reliant on NHS services.

According to the Tri-Service Families Continuous Attitude Survey⁵⁸ in 2022 approximately 59,000 Regular trained Service personnel are married or in a civil partnership, with the majority of Service spouses living in England (82%). Ten per cent were reported as living in the UK other than England and 8% reported as living outside of the UK. Around 28% of Service spouses were reported as married to Officers, while 72% were married to Other Ranks.⁵⁹

It was also found that 78% of Service families have children, with around a third of Service families have at least one child under the age of five. Over half (54%) of

⁵⁷ [RAF Families Federation, Tri-Service Families Federations launch Duty and Care: Armed Forces Family Mobility and Health Care Report \(February 2022\)](#)

⁵⁸ [Ministry of Defence, Tri-service families continuous attitude survey \(July 2022\)](#)

⁵⁹ Other Ranks describes anyone other than Officer.

Service families were found to have at least one child of school age and seven in ten (71%) families with a child aged under five required early years (0-4) childcare. Of those who require early years childcare, nine in ten were able to access it. The majority of families were satisfied with the quality, access and opening hours of early years childcare, but less so with cost (44% satisfied, 20% neutral and 36% dissatisfied).

As previously stated, over half (54%) of all Service families were found to have at least one child of school age. Of these families, nearly half (47%) required childcare such as breakfast and after school clubs in the last 12 months. Around four in ten families who required childcare for school age children are dissatisfied with the cost of their local childcare (39%), However, a comparable proportion were satisfied with the cost (40%), leaving around a fifth with neutral feelings on the matter.

It was also reported that around a fifth (22%) of Service families moved for Service reasons in the past year and two in five families (41%) have moved at least twice for Service reasons in the past five years. This reportedly differs by Service ranging from 23% for Royal Navy/Royal Marines families to 49% for Army families. Just over a third of families have not moved at all over the past five years.

In terms of how this differs by personnel rank, a higher proportion of Other Rank⁶⁰ spouses have not moved (36%) compared to Officer spouses (29%). It should also be acknowledged that the proportion of families experiencing no separation has reportedly fallen this year, following an increase last year. Under Covid-19 restrictions, the proportion of families experiencing no separation rose to almost a third in 2021. Although the proportion has decreased this year, it remains above pre-2021 levels.

In January 2022 the MOD published the UK Armed Forces Families Strategy 2022-32⁶¹. This followed on from findings with the 'Living In Our Shoes'⁶² report which sought to create better understanding of the needs of UK Armed Forces Families. The Strategy acknowledged the range of family relationships and situations that exist in the armed forces community, across both the regular and reserve forces and emphasised that the needs and experiences of the families of all serving personnel should be considered in the development and application of policies which affect them. Particular emphasis was also placed upon supporting and preparing Armed Forces Families with issues relating to deployment, mobility and separation.

According to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, in 2013 the Secretary of State issued statutory guidance encouraging local authorities to include a residency requirement of at least two years as part of their qualification criteria for social housing. However, there are exemptions to residency qualification such as:

- Those who are currently serving in the Regular Armed Forces or who were serving in the Regular Forces at any time in the five years preceding their application for an allocation of social housing.
- Bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the Regular Forces where the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease, to be entitled to

⁶⁰ Other Ranks describes anyone other than Officer.

⁶¹ [UK Government, UK Armed Forces Families Strategy 2022 to 2032 \(January 2022\)](#)

⁶² [UK Government, Living in Our Shoes: Understanding the Needs of UK Armed Forces Families: Government Response \(2021\)](#)

reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their Service spouse or civil partner, and the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service.

- Serving or former members of the Reserve Armed Forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service.

It should also be noted that spouses and civil partners who are required to leave accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following a breakdown of their relationship with their Service spouse/partner may also be exempt from residency requirements.

6.2 Service Pupil Premium

The Department for Education (DfE) introduced the Service Pupil Premium (SPP) in April 2011 in recognition of the specific challenges children from service families face and as part of the commitment to delivering the Armed Forces covenant. State schools, academies and free schools in England, which have children of service families in school years reception to year 11, can receive the SPP funding. It is designed to assist the school in providing the additional support that these children may need.

Although not all families identify to their school that they are military families, and therefore not all service pupils are claimed for, this data does give an informative picture of the ages of service pupils across the county.

Norfolk data

Latest DfE data for academic year 2021/22 shows that there are 1,588 children registered for SPP in Norfolk schools (**Table 6.1**), with 943 attending primary school and 645 attending secondary school.⁶³ The data shows variation over the five academic years from 2017/18 to 2021/22 for the specific age groups (**Figure 6.1**). Overall, numbers of SPP registered primary school children have decreased by 13.6% over the five-year period and numbers of SPP registered secondary school children have increased by 9.5%, meaning that over the five-year period there has been an overall decrease of numbers registered for SPP of 5.5%.

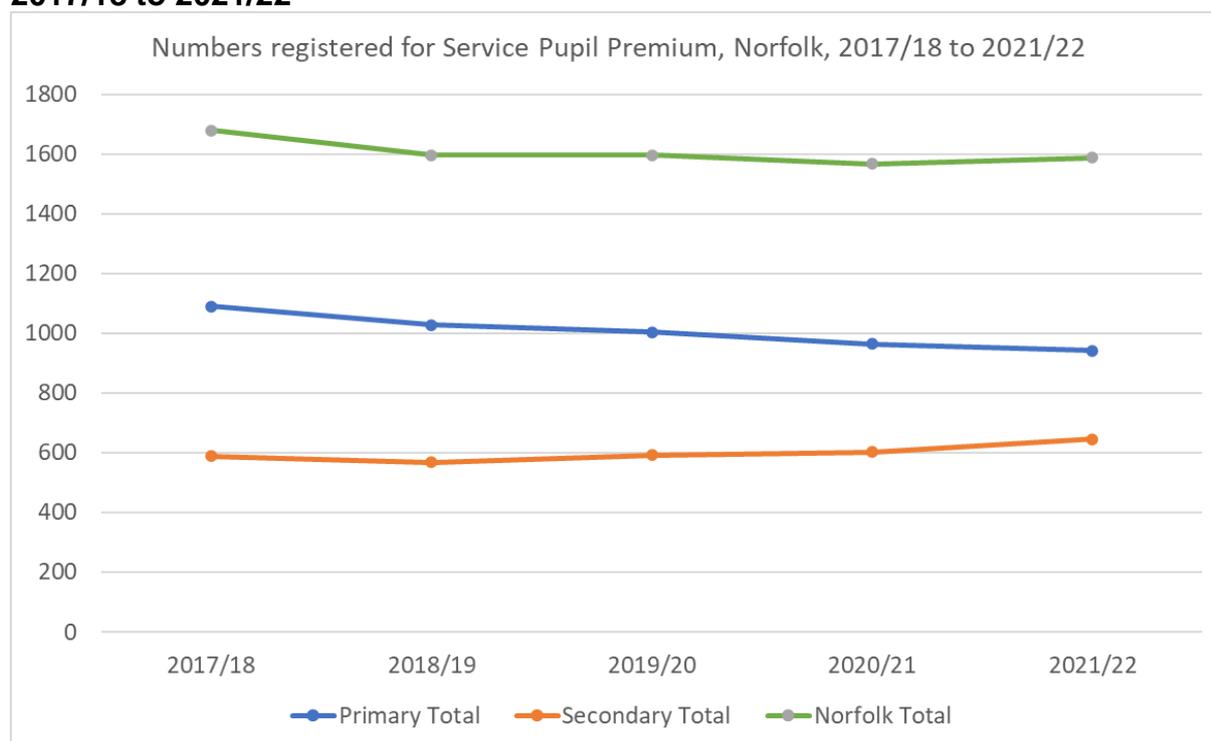
⁶³ Norfolk Education systems and reporting team - Service Pupil Premium data received from DfE

Table 6.1: Number of Norfolk children registered for Service Pupil Premium 2017/18 to 2021/22

	Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Primary school pupils	R	187	133	154	135	114
	1	161	168	124	146	134
	2	142	162	160	116	146
	3	159	142	147	148	121
	4	146	153	135	147	149
	5	150	136	158	130	150
	6	146	134	126	142	129
Primary Total		1,091	1,028	1,004	964	943
Secondary school pupils	7	124	147	132	125	147
	8	126	113	139	131	128
	9	107	116	106	131	136
	10	103	96	120	100	135
	11	129	97	96	116	99
Secondary Total		589	569	593	603	645
Norfolk Total		1,680	1,597	1,597	1,567	1,588

Source: Norfolk Education systems and reporting team - Service Pupil Premium data received from DfE

Figure 6.1: Number of Norfolk children registered for Service Pupil Premium 2017/18 to 2021/22



Source: Norfolk Education systems and reporting team - Service Pupil Premium data received from DfE

According to the Service Children's Progression Alliance, Norfolk is currently ranked in the 8th decile for number of Service children, indicating a high number of service children situated in the county. To provide further context, the Alliance has produced an interactive [Map](#) highlighting areas of England with a high proportion of Service children.

The aforementioned Armed Forces Families Strategy also reported that children from Armed Forces families were present in just over half of state schools in England. However, around half of schools with children from Armed Forces Families had only one or two registered – this may arguably challenge the pre-conception that all children from Service families will go to the same schools.

6.3 Further information

In February 2022, the Naval, Army and RAF Families Federations produced the 'Duty and Care: Armed Forces Family Mobility and Health Care' report⁶⁴, providing recommendations to address disadvantages and improve health outcomes for families required to move frequently due to Service need. Key recommendations from this report include:

- Gaining confidence of families – that the Service will support them, but the Service needs to be kept informed about any health factors that might affect postings.
- Building on existing frameworks – to support postings, ensuring that information is captured effectively.
- Encourage families to identify current and potential needs to primary care.
- Expand the education and training of all NHS staff to understand the needs of mobile military families.
- Provide more information to military families on the variable nature of the NHS, particularly when moving across devolved national borders.
- Improving transfer of information – the transfer of health care records between primary care organisations.
- Continuity of care - using remote access.
- Creating single points of contact for Armed Forces families to seek advice.
- Dentistry – look for ways to support Service families seeking dental care.

There are a number of charities dedicated to the Armed Forces. The Directory of Social Change 2018 report⁶⁵ suggests there are 121 charities (10% of the overall Armed Forces charity sector) providing support for the physical health needs of the Armed Forces population. This support encompasses 'services which promote the recovery, fitness and general good health of the Armed Forces community' and includes clinical provision as well as wellbeing and support. The same report found that at least 250,000 individuals accessed charitable healthcare services in 2016- 2017, which the report suggests indicates a 'substantial demand for physical health provision spread over a relatively small number of charities'.

⁶⁴ [RAF Families Federation, Tri-Service Families Federations launch Duty and Care: Armed Forces Family Mobility and Health Care Report \(February 2022\)](#)

⁶⁵ [Veterans and Families Research Hub](#)

7 Concluding remarks

Norfolk's Armed Forces Covenant Board recognises that this document marks an important first step in understanding the changing needs of our Armed Forces community.

The Board would like to thank all of those who have been involved in its development and commit to ensuring it is refreshed and built upon to provide insight for those responsible for delivering services into the future.

The following are some of the key things that developing this needs assessment has identified:

- The Armed Forces community is widely spread across the whole county, meaning that all services will benefit from an awareness of how to support them.
- The Census 2021 shows that overall, Norfolk has a higher rate of veterans in the population (5.2%) than England and Wales (3.8%). In March 2021, 8,275 people were in receipt of an occupational pension or compensation under the Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS), War Pensions Scheme (WPS), or the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS), the majority of these live in Breckland and King's Lynn & West Norfolk.
- Our Veteran population is likely to change in-line with the rest of the UK. They will be more likely to be of working age and representative of a more diverse population in terms of sex and ethnicity. Financial hardship and housing are key issues for Veterans seeking support from Charities.
- In 2020/21, around 1 in 10 UK Armed Forces personnel were seen by military healthcare services for a mental health related reason. For Norfolk this equates to potentially around an estimated 200 personnel.
- It is estimated that 46% of Reservists are married or in a civil partnership, and a further 24% are in a long term or established relationship (but not married or in a civil partnership). It was also estimated that over half (56%) of Reservists do not have any financially dependent children.
- Department for Education data for academic year 2021/22 shows that there are 1,588 children registered for Service Pupil Premium (SPP) in Norfolk schools, with 943 attending primary school and 645 attending secondary school. For Norfolk, the cohort accessing secondary education is growing.
- According to the Service Children's Progression Alliance, Norfolk is currently ranked in the 8th decile for number of Service children, indicating a high number of service children situated in the county.



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