

# **JSNA Topic Summary**

## **Military Veterans**

**October 2017**

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## 1. Key Issues & Gaps

There are significant problems with estimating the size of the veteran population as there is no single reliable data source. In October 2017, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported that whilst there is value in the administrative datasets on service leavers, it only partially meets the user need and therefore a census question on service leavers has been developed and will be recommended for inclusion in the 2021 Census; thus enabling, for the first time, the cross tabulation of veterans data with all other characteristics gathered by the 2021 Census and providing access to veterans data at small area level (e.g. wards).

The ONS 2016 Annual Population Survey (APS) defined veterans as individuals aged 16+ who reside in households in Great Britain and have previously served at least one day in the UK Armed Forces, including the cohort of men obliged to complete National Service (compulsory until 1960). Based on this definition, the 2016 APS estimated that Cumbria is home to 27,000 veterans; this equates to 5% of the county's 16+ population, which is in line with the national average of 5%.

Current estimates based on the Ministry of Defence's annual Location of Armed Forces Pension and Compensation Recipients dataset report that at March 2017 there were 3,190 veterans in Cumbria who were in receipt of one or more armed forces pension or compensation scheme, equal to a rate of 64.1 veterans per 10,000 population; slightly higher than the national average (UK 57 veterans per 10,000 population).

Of Cumbria's districts, Carlisle had the greatest number and rate of armed forces pension and compensation veterans, while all of Cumbria's districts except Allerdale had higher rates of armed forces pension and compensation veterans than the UK average.

The 2014 Veterans' Transition Review reports that the overwhelming majority of those leaving the Armed Forces are fit and healthy and remain so, going on to lead productive lives and not experiencing any disadvantage in accessing healthcare. However, the report identified the following concerns:

- **Mobility, independent living** and **social isolation** issues in veterans over 65 years old;
- **Musculoskeletal disorders** and **hearing loss** in small numbers of "post 9/11" veterans;
- **Alcohol misuse** and associated **mental health problems**, predominantly in younger male veterans – notably from lower ranks or those who left the Service early.

Mobility, independent living, social isolation, alcohol misuse and mental health problems have all been covered by previous JSNA chapters. Links to the relevant chapters are provided in later sections of this document.

## **2. Recommendations for Consideration by Commissioners**

The 2014 Veterans' Transition Review provided a series of recommendations based on findings, including a number of recommendations relating to health. Commissioners are encouraged to consider the above report and its recommendations, as well as reviewing the information provided in Cumbria's previous JSNA chapters relevant to the specific concerns raised by the Veterans' Transition Review.

## **3. Policy Context**

The Armed Forces Covenant is an agreement between the armed forces community, the nation and the government. It encapsulates the moral obligation to those who serve, have served, their families and the bereaved. The covenant's twin underlying principles are that members of the armed forces community should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services; and that special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given the most such as the injured or the bereaved. The covenant is a national responsibility involving government, businesses, local authorities, charities and the public.

The Cumbrian Armed Forces Community Covenant was signed by Cumbria County Council and other partners in September 2013. The covenant means that the Council, its partners and the wider community in Cumbria, will offer recognition, consideration, help and support to the armed forces community, addressing issues such as housing, health care, welfare, employment and help in the community.

## **4. Population Overview**

There are significant problems with estimating the size of the veteran population as there is no single reliable data source. In October 2017, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported that whilst there is value in the administrative datasets on service leavers, it only partially meets the user need and therefore a census question on service leavers has been developed and will be recommended for inclusion in the 2021 Census; thus enabling, for the first time, the cross tabulation of veterans data with all other characteristics gathered by the 2021 Census and providing access to veterans data at small area level (e.g. wards).

The 2016 Annual Population Survey (APS) administered by the ONS defined veterans as individuals aged 16+ who reside in households in Great Britain and have previously served at least one day in the UK Armed Forces and included the cohort of men obliged to complete National Service (compulsory until 1960).

Based on the above definition, the 2016 APS estimated that Cumbria is home to 27,000 veterans; this equates to 5% of the county's 16+ population, which is in line with the national average of 5%. While the APS was unable to provide county level figures relating to the age, gender and ethnicity of veterans, at a national level the APS reported that veterans were estimated to be predominantly white (98%), male (90%) and /or aged 65 and over (63%), noting that the veteran profile was heavily influenced by those who served in the Second World War and subsequent National Service.

Additionally, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) provides annual Location of Armed Forces Pension and Compensation Recipients figures which are widely used as a proxy measure for the number of veterans in each local authority area based on those in receipt of the following:

- **Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS):** A pension scheme available to members of the Regular Armed Forces who have served for a minimum of two years;
- **War Pension Scheme (WPS):** A no fault compensation scheme for all members of the regular and reserve force. It provides compensation for all injuries, ill health and death caused or made worse by service from WW1 in 1914 to 5 April 2005. Only eligible to claim once left the services; and
- **Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS):** A compensation scheme for all members of the regular and reserve forces. It provides compensation for all injuries, ill health and death attributable to service where the cause occurred on or after 6 April 2005.

As the WPS and the AFCS are paid to veterans who have been injured whilst serving in the armed forces, it is likely that these claimants have greater health and social care needs. An individual may be in receipt of an occupational pension and may have also been awarded compensation for service-attributable injury / illness. Therefore individuals may be captured under more than one of the above schemes. For this reason the total numbers of individuals within each location are presented with a separate breakdown for veterans only and subtotals for those in receipt of each scheme can't be summed. Figure 1 presents the latest armed forces pension and compensation recipient data for the UK and Cumbria.

Figure 1: Armed Forces Pension and Compensation Recipients:

		Number		Rate <sup>4</sup>	
		UK	Cumbria	UK	Cumbria
All	Total <sup>1</sup>	405,019	3,391	61.7	68.1
	Veterans <sup>1</sup>	374,023	3,190	57.0	64.1
AFPS <sup>2</sup>	Total <sup>1</sup>	307,085	2,625	46.8	52.7
WPS	Total <sup>1</sup>	113,292	1,034	17.3	20.8
	Veterans <sup>1</sup>	96,835	906	14.8	18.2
AFCS	Total <sup>1</sup>	32,599	163	5.0	3.3
	Veterans <sup>3</sup>	17,377	88	2.6	1.8

Sources: MoD Compensation & Pension System; War Pension Computer System, 31 March 2017

1. Subtotals can't be summed as individuals may be in receipt under more than one scheme.

2. Includes ex-serving personnel receiving pension. Excludes pensioners receiving AFPS 15.

3. Includes individuals awarded compensation under the AFCS after leaving Service, and in-Service recipients of compensation who had later left Service as at 31 March 2017.

4. Rate per 10,000 population based on mid-2016 ONS estimates.

Overall in Cumbria there were 3,391 recipients of one or more armed forces pension or compensation scheme. Of these recipients 3,190 were veterans, equal to a rate of 64.1 veterans per 10,000 population; slightly higher than the national average (UK 57 veterans per 10,000 population).

Looking at each scheme individually, Cumbria had 2,625 Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS) claimants, a rate of 52.7 per 10,000 population; higher than the UK average of 46.8 per 10,000 population. Pensions are paid to armed forces personnel upon leaving services, not upon reaching a certain age, so these will not necessarily be older people.

Cumbria also had 1,034 War Pensions Scheme (WPS) claimants, 906 of whom were veterans, a rate of 18.2 WPS veterans per 10,000 population; again higher than the UK average of 14.8 WPS veterans per 10,000 population.

Finally, Cumbria had 163 Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) claimants, 88 of whom were veterans, a rate of 1.8 AFCS veterans per 10,000 population; similar to the UK average of 2.6 AFCS veterans per 10,000 population.

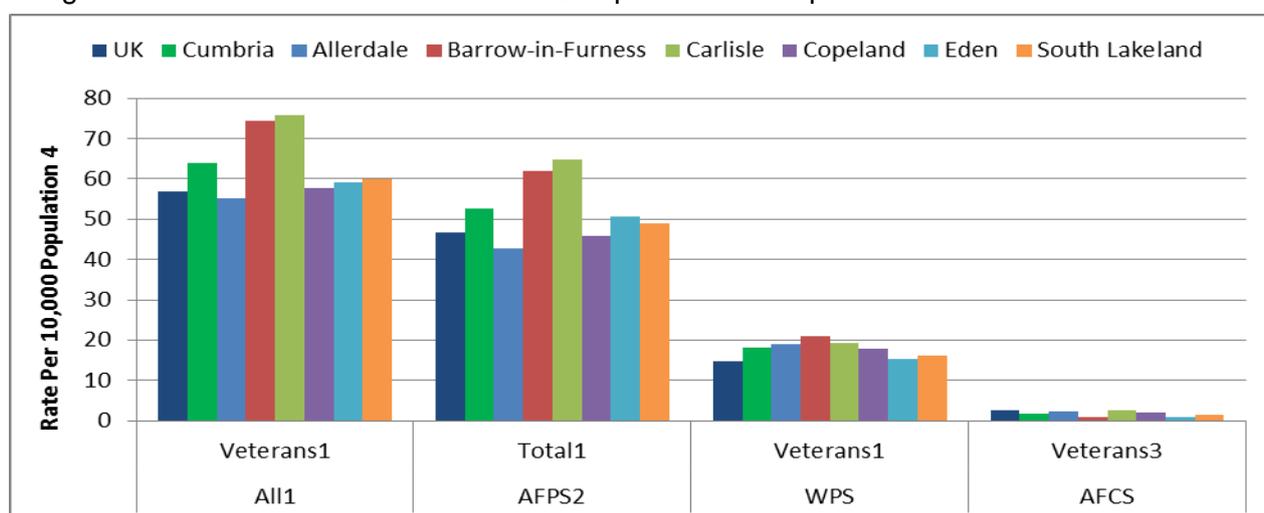
## 5. Geographical Differences

Figures 2a and 2b present the latest numbers and rates of armed forces pension and compensation recipients for each of Cumbria's districts.

Figure 2a: Armed Forces Pension and Compensation Recipients: Numbers:

		UK	Cumbria	Allerdale	Barrow- In- Furness	Carlisle	Copeland	Eden	South Lakeland
All <sup>1</sup>	Total <sup>1</sup>	405,019	3,391	576	538	873	419	327	658
	Veterans <sup>1</sup>	374,023	3,190	534	502	823	400	312	619
AFPS <sup>2</sup>	Total <sup>1</sup>	307,085	2,625	415	417	703	318	266	506
WPS	Total <sup>1</sup>	113,292	1,034	211	164	231	137	91	200
	Veterans <sup>1</sup>	96,835	906	184	141	209	124	81	167
AFCS	Total <sup>1</sup>	32,599	163	36	20	56	20	10	21
	Veterans <sup>4</sup>	17,377	88	21	6	28	14	5	14

Figure 2b: Armed Forces Pension and Compensation Recipients: Rates:



Sources: MoD Compensation & Pension System; War Pension Computer System, 31 March 2017

1. Subtotals can't be summed as individuals may be in receipt under more than one scheme.
2. Includes ex-serving personnel receiving pension. Excludes pensioners receiving AFPS 15.
3. Includes individuals awarded compensation under the AFCS after leaving Service, and in-Service recipients of compensation who had later left Service as at 31 March 2017.
4. Rate per 10,000 population based on mid-2016 ONS estimates.

Of Cumbria's districts, Carlisle had the greatest overall number of armed forces pension and compensation veterans, as well as the greatest individual number of recipients of each scheme. Carlisle also had the greatest overall rate of armed forces pension and compensation veterans, and the greatest individual rates of AFPS recipients and AFCS veterans. However, Barrow-in-Furness had the greatest individual rate of WPS veterans.

All of Cumbria's districts except Allerdale had higher overall rates of armed forces pension and compensation veterans than the UK average. Furthermore, when compared to the UK average, all of Cumbria's districts except Allerdale and Copeland had higher rates of AFPS recipients, and every district had a higher rate of WPS veterans.

## 6. Who is at Risk & Why?

The 2016 APS reported that overall, there were no differences between veterans' and non-veterans' self-reported general health, and health conditions, for example 35% of veterans and 36% of non-veterans aged 16-64, and 18% of veterans and 19% of non-veterans aged 65+ reported their general health as very good.

The above findings compliment the findings of the 2014 Veterans' Transition Review conducted by Lord Ashcroft KCMG PC; the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Veterans' Transition. Within the review Lord Ashcroft states: *"The work of the King's Centre for Military Health Research (KCMHR), which provides the majority of contemporary evidence on the health of current and former Service personnel in the UK and is the leading authority in the field, supports the view that the overwhelming majority of those leaving the Armed Forces are fit and healthy and remain so, going on to lead productive lives and not experiencing any disadvantage in accessing healthcare. Moreover, the problems of those who do struggle are seldom solely directly attributable to their time in the Forces"*.

Nonetheless, Lord Ashcroft recognised that: *"Some veterans do experience difficulties with health or quality of life. There are some very compelling individual cases of adversity, whose nature and underlying causes vary – as does the experience of individuals before, during and after their time in the Forces. A veteran's health depends on a combination of factors including genetic, childhood experiences, pre-Service lifestyle, Service life and post-Service influences and these are perhaps not always recognised or readily acknowledged. Nevertheless, those in need should be able to access appropriate care but I am conscious that access to healthcare through the NHS or from one of the many charitable endeavours varies. For the most vulnerable, identifying and gaining access to the most appropriate support and assured healthcare can be a challenge"*.

Lord Ashcroft reviewed a number of military veterans' health needs assessments completed by local authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and Public Health departments and concluded that findings indicate that veterans have similar health needs and experiences to the rest of the adult population with the same implications on resources for both health and adult social care.

However, Lord Ashcroft did identify the following concerns:

- **Mobility, independent living** and **social isolation** issues for veterans over 65 years old (the largest veteran group at 60% of the total);
- **Musculoskeletal disorders** and **hearing loss** in small numbers of “post 9/11” veterans;
- Increased risk of **alcohol misuse** and associated **mental health problems**, predominantly in younger male veterans – notably from lower ranks or those who left the Service early.

Many of the concerns identified above been covered in detail within previous JSNA Chapters which can be accessed via the following links:

- **JSNA Older People Chapter:** Covers social isolation:  
<http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/eLibrary/view.asp?ID=66694>
- **JSNA Carers Chapter:** Covers mobility issues and independent living:  
<http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/eLibrary/view.asp?ID=77983>
- **JSNA Healthy Living & Lifestyles Chapter:** Covers alcohol misuse:  
<http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/eLibrary/view.asp?ID=64387>
- **JSNA Mental Health Chapter:** Covers mental health problems:  
<http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/eLibrary/view.asp?ID=89950>

## 7. Evidence of What Works

The 2014 Veterans' Transition Review provides a series of recommendations based on findings, including a number of recommendations relating to health. These recommendations can be found via: <http://www.veteranstransition.co.uk/vtrreport.pdf>

Lord Ashcroft has followed up on the Veterans' Transition Review and work by others in this field with annual reports monitoring progress and encouraging all parties to continue to make improvements. To review these reports visit: <http://www.veteranstransition.co.uk/reports.html>

Additional evidence of what works in relation to each of the specific concerns identified in the previous section of this document can be found within the relevant JSNA chapters linked to above.

## 8. Current Services, Assets and User Views

The relevant JSNA chapters identified in the 'Who is at Risk and Why' section provide information relating to current services and assets, and user views specific to each of the concerns identified the Veterans' Transition Review.

Additionally, Brampton Community for Forces has identified the following local services and assets as providing particular support for the health and wellbeing of veterans:

**Brampton Community for Forces:** Provide a service for the local Armed Forces Community to help with issues surrounding key points of the Armed Forces Covenant. This is done by developing links with local and national organisations for specific support and by delivering information/support to the community through events, drop in sessions and outreach projects.

<https://www.facebook.com/Brampton-Community-for-Forces-114087549283846/>

*Richie Hinson, Armed Forces Support Coordinator:*

*Email: [richardh@bramptoncommunitycentre.org.uk](mailto:richardh@bramptoncommunitycentre.org.uk) Telephone: 016977 45023*

**Future 4 Heroes:** A charitable organisation designed specifically to offer support to service leavers and veterans who may find their transition to civilian life a challenge.

<https://www.f4h.org.uk/>

**First Steps:** Provides evidence-based talking therapies for those experiencing mild to moderate common mental health problems such as depression and anxiety disorders. Military veterans are prioritised for treatment if mental health difficulties are service attributable and treatment is offered for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), including Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR). First Steps have close links and referral pathways to and from other statutory and voluntary military mental health services.

<https://www.cumbriapartnership.nhs.uk/our-services/mental-health/our-mental-health-services/first-step>

**Unity:** A drug and alcohol recovery service, providing treatment and recovery support for individuals and their family members who are affected by substance misuse.

[http://www.cumbriasupportdirectory.org.uk/kb5/cumbria/asch/service.page?record=R0WmbT\\_q7Y0](http://www.cumbriasupportdirectory.org.uk/kb5/cumbria/asch/service.page?record=R0WmbT_q7Y0)

**Carlisle Carers:** Provide information on all aspects of caring to help identify services that may help carers and the person they care for. Organise social events and activities for carers such as trips, courses, and group meetings, giving quality time to the carer, providing a break from the caring role.

<https://www.carlislecarers.com/>

**Age UK West Cumbria Joining Forces:** Provides support for older ex service personnel over the age of 65 and their families in West Cumbria. They have specialist knowledge about relevant services and help access to external agencies. Provide breakfast clubs, trips, befriending services.

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/westcumbria/our-services/joiningforcesproject/>

**Veterans Breakfast Club:** Part of the national brand of Veterans Breakfast Club and provide monthly breakfast meetings in various parts of Cumbria for veterans.

*Cumbria and North Lancs VBC on Facebook*

**Cumbria Military Museum:** Provides support with veterans in the area, volunteer opportunities and community outreach projects.

<http://www.cumbriasmuseumofmilitarylife.org/>

**iCan Health and Fitness:** Recently received Armed Forces Covenant funding for supporting 10 veterans to regain health and fitness for free using their facilities.

<https://www.facebook.com/icanhealthandfitnessCIC/>

**Calderwood House:** Calderwood House Egremont is a new innovative solution to homelessness and unemployment in West Cumbria. Staff provide support around the clock for those in need of accommodation, in particular prioritising ex-military personnel.

<http://calderwoodhouse.co.uk/>

**Veterans UK Welfare Service:** 80 MOD Civil Servants across the UK to enable a full UK Footprint including RoI. Veterans UK Helpline based at Norcross. Facilitates transition from service to civilian life with involvement in the Defence Recovery Pathway, those identified as vulnerable on discharge or those ex-service personnel who request assistance. Responds to key life events that present welfare needs for all Veterans and their dependants via; a caseworker approach that offers advice and guidance at time of contact or protocol referral offering a single central coordinating role; a readily accessible team at one of 4 UK centres to co-ordinating action; a holistic assessment of needs; and continuity of support for as long as requested. Offers guidance and assistance on: War Pension Scheme (WPS) and associated Supplementary Allowances; Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS); Armed Forces Pensions; DWP Benefits entitlement; Bereavement and loss – War Widows/ers & Death in Service; Advocacy – Housing issues, LA's, DWP etc. Referrals exchange/Gateway to: in service welfare providers, Social Services, Local Authorities, CAB, ex-service organisations or other voluntary organisations.

*Norcross VWC (Covering NW England, Yorkshire & Humber, N Wales & Isle of Man). Email:*

[Veterans-uk-vws-north@mod.uk](mailto:Veterans-uk-vws-north@mod.uk) Telephone: 01253 333 494

Furthermore, Brampton Community for Forces have also identified the following national services and assets as providing local outreach to support the health and wellbeing of veterans in Cumbria:

- **Project Nova:** <https://www.rfea.org.uk/our-programmes-partnerships/project-nova/>
- **Help for Heroes:** <https://helpforheroes.org.uk/>
- **Blind Veterans UK:** <https://www.blindveterans.org.uk/>
- **Royal British Legion:** <http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/>
- **Combat Stress:** <https://www.combatstress.org.uk/>
- **SSFA:** <https://www.ssafa.org.uk/>
- **The Veterans Charity:** <http://www.veteranscharity.org.uk/>

## 9. Key Contacts

**David Stephens:** Strategic Policy & Scrutiny Adviser, Corporate Governance, Cumbria County Council.

*Email:* [david.stephens@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:david.stephens@cumbria.gov.uk)

**Rebecca Fowler:** Senior Analyst, Transformation - Performance and Risk, Cumbria County Council.

*Email:* [rebecca.fowler@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:rebecca.fowler@cumbria.gov.uk)

## 10. Related Documents

- Armed Forces Covenant:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/armed-forces-covenant>
- Cumbrian Armed Forces Community Covenant:  
<http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/armedforces/>
- The Veterans' Transition Review and follow up reports:  
<http://www.veteranstransition.co.uk/>
- British Legion recent research and reports:  
<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/campaign/public-policy-and-research/research-and-reports/>
- Annual Population Survey: UK armed forces veterans residing in Great Britain 2016:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/annual-population-survey-uk-armed-forces-veterans-residing-in-great-britain-2016>
- North West Military Veterans Mental Health Mapping Project:  
[https://www.vsnw.org.uk/files/MVreport\(6\)pg2012.pdf](https://www.vsnw.org.uk/files/MVreport(6)pg2012.pdf)
- Cumbria JSNA:  
<https://www.cumbriaobservatory.org.uk/jsna/>
- Cumbria JSNA Older People Chapter:  
<http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/eLibrary/view.asp?ID=66694>
- Cumbria JSNA Carers Chapter:  
<http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/eLibrary/view.asp?ID=77983>
- Cumbria JSNA Healthy Living & Lifestyles Chapter:  
<http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/eLibrary/view.asp?ID=64387>
- Cumbria JSNA Mental Health Chapter:  
<http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/eLibrary/view.asp?ID=89950>

## 11. Links to Data Sources

- Annual Population Survey: UK armed forces veterans residing in Great Britain 2016:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/annual-population-survey-uk-armed-forces-veterans-residing-in-great-britain-2016>
- MoD Location of Armed Forces Pension and Compensation Recipients:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/location-of-armed-forces-pension-and-compensation-recipients>