



Office for
Veterans' Affairs

STRATEGY FOR OUR VETERANS

6 MONTHLY REPORT AUGUST 2023

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INTRODUCTION FROM THE MINISTER FOR VETERANS' AFFAIRS

We owe our brave servicemen and women a debt of gratitude for their commitment to this country, which is why this government has pledged to make the UK the best place in the world to be a veteran. As this latest update report shows, we continue to make real progress towards that goal.

It highlights a number of steps the Office for Veterans' Affairs has taken with partners across government and beyond over the last six months to improve the lives of veterans across the country. That includes:

- Securing an **additional £33 million in the Spring Budget 2023** to increase support to former service members across the country.
- Making massive strides towards ending veteran rough sleeping and homelessness through the launch of **Op FORTITUDE**, including an additional £8.55 million of funding for services in more than 900 veteran-supported housing units across the UK.

I would also like to thank Lord Etherton and his team for their work on the **historic review into the impact of the ban on LGBT personnel serving in the military before 2000**. I was proud to be in the House of Commons alongside a number of veterans when the Prime Minister offered an apology on behalf of the British state for those historic wrongs. It was an important moment of justice, and offered an opportunity to look to the future and how we can continue to support all of our veterans in the coming months and years.

Looking ahead, our upcoming **HM Armed Forces Veteran Card** will deliver meaningful change for veterans across the UK – giving them both the recognition they deserve and transforming their access to a range of services. The publication of the **UK's first women veterans' strategy in 2024** will help us address the specific challenges this cohort faces after leaving the Armed Forces. Finally, the **UK government remains fully committed to delivering better outcomes for those most affected by the Troubles**, including our veterans, while helping society to move forwards.

We still have a lot of work to do. But this report shows we are on the right path and making a tangible difference to the lives of veterans all over the UK with each step we take.



Rt Hon Johnny Mercer MP

Rt Hon Johnny Mercer MP was appointed Minister for Veterans' Affairs at the Cabinet Office on 25 October 2022.



BACKGROUND

The Strategy for our Veterans (2018)

The Strategy for our Veterans sets out the Government’s 10 year vision for veterans and their families to transition into civilian life and contribute fully to a society that understands and values what they have to offer. While it is a UK-wide document, delivery looks different in each of the devolved nations and as such, information on progress being made in **Scotland, Wales** and **Northern Ireland** can be found via their respective websites.

For England, the OVA has committed to publishing a series of action plans to support progress against the 2028 objectives, alongside being responsive to emerging issues and opportunities.



The **Veterans' Strategy Action Plan 2022 to 2024** focuses on three main areas:

1 Transforming services for veterans:
improving services to make sure veterans and families have the support they need.



2 Understanding our veteran community:
using data and research to ensure policy across government is rooted in robust evidence.

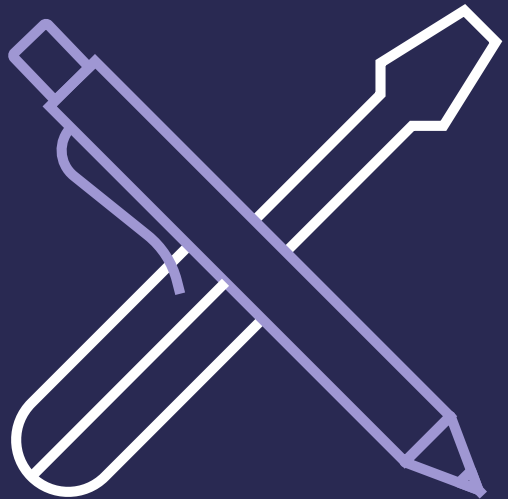


3 Recognising our veterans' contribution to society:
fully recognising all veterans' contributions to society, including those who may not historically have felt their service was recognised, and challenging negative stereotypes.



This report outlines how the OVA is working with departments across government, as well as the NHS, local authorities, other public bodies, universities and the charitable sector, to deliver positive change for veterans.

TRANSFORMING SERVICES AND SUPPORT FOR VETERANS



HEALTH AND WELLBEING



In England we continue to promote the creation of bespoke NHS services and pathways for veterans. Our aim is to offer healthcare that can better respond to veteran experiences and signpost other support effectively to ensure veterans can access the care they need as quickly as possible.

- **Op COURAGE:** in April 2023, the NHS consolidated three existing services providing mental health support for veterans, service leavers, reservists, families and carers, to ensure care is more effective. From roll out of the first service in 2017 until consolidation these services received **29,162 referrals**. Since April 2023, they have received **511 referrals**.
- **Op RESTORE:** the NHS Veterans' Trauma Network has been relaunched under a new name with the ambition to further improve access to treatment that supports veterans with service-related physical injuries. By May 2023, **662 referrals** had been received.
- NHS England operates a **Veterans' Prosthetic Panel** for funding of high-quality prosthetic limbs for veterans who lost a limb during or as a result of military service. Disablement service centres can apply to the panel to have cases considered.

- NHS England commissions the Royal College of General Practitioners accreditation scheme and the Veterans' Covenant Healthcare Alliance accreditation programme.

As of June 2023,

2,149

practices in England were accredited as 'veteran friendly'.

This is almost 40% of all practices

71%

of primary care networks had at least one practice accredited

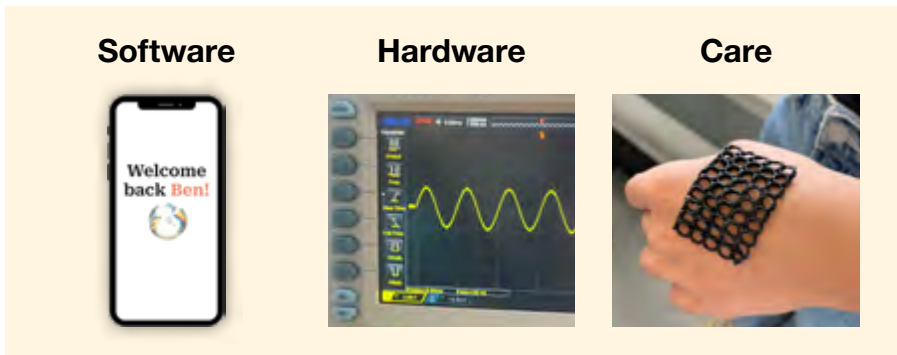
75%

of NHS trusts in England were accredited as 'veteran aware'

Further information on these services, including equivalents in the devolved administrations, can be found **on the NHS England website**.

Since January 2023

- In February 2023, the OVA awarded £5 million to 22 projects as part of the **Health Innovation Fund**. This investment demonstrates the Government's commitment to delivering the most innovative and effective approaches in veterans' physical and mental healthcare. **Core areas of focus include digital, surgery and rehabilitation, pain management and impairments, and women veterans' health.** These grants have funded innovative research, including e-plasters, orthopaedic implants to treat pain and ulceration, and the UK's first digital app to support ex-servicewomen with common mental health issues.



NuTissu's e-plaster is a patient centric digital health technology that aims to shift the healthcare infrastructure from hospital to home.

- NHS England’s pilots of Op COMMUNITY on **social prescribing** and **family single points of contact** are underway in six areas across England, with evaluations expected to report in spring 2024.

- **Social prescribing:** an approach that connects people to activities, groups, and services in their community to meet the practical, social and emotional needs that affect their health and wellbeing.

Looking ahead

- **Veterans’ Mobility Fund:** in partnership with the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, we announced plans to invest £3 million in a charitable project that helps veterans with physical disabilities to access mobility equipment that meets their needs. The project will also evaluate the success of the scheme to inform future healthcare provision.

The government remains committed to building 40 new hospitals by 2030, which includes the **National Rehabilitation Centre** (NRC). Construction of the NRC started earlier this year as part of the New Hospital Programme. It will bring together patient care, research, training and education under one roof. The programme is being led by the Nottingham University Hospitals Trust.

The National Rehabilitation Centre will be located on the Stanford Hall rehabilitation estate between Nottingham and Loughborough, 400 metres away from the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre. The NRC will work with partners, including the DMRC, to share best practice. Eligible civilians who are referred to the centre by a clinician, including veterans, will be able to access it.



MAKING A HOME IN CIVILIAN SOCIETY

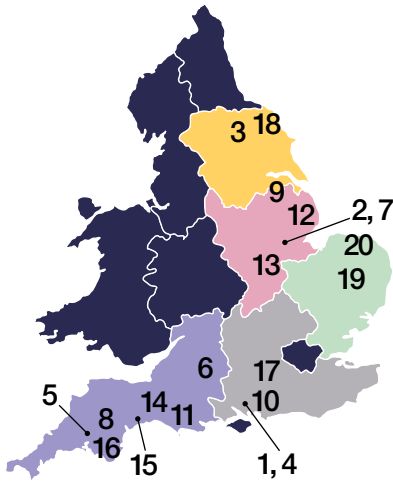


For the first time, the Census 2021 in England and Wales asked whether respondents have served in the UK armed forces. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has started publishing this analysis, providing rich insights into veteran demographics that have never been available before. As well as age, sex, sexual orientation, general health and passport data, the ONS published the **veteran population by region**, which service providers are already using to match need and resource.

This data, including into **what types of accommodation veterans reside in** will be instrumental in developing initiatives to tackle veteran homelessness and rough sleeping. It will ensure that those who have served in our armed forces have the right support in place to avoid those circumstances.



Top 20 Local Authorities in England and Wales by proportion of veterans¹



- East Midlands
- East of England
- South East
- South West
- Yorkshire and the Humber

Rank	Area	Has previously served in any UK armed forces (%)
1	Gosport	12.5%
2	North Kesteven	10.2%
3	Richmondshire	9.5%
4	Fareham	9.3%
5	Plymouth	8.4%
6	Wiltshire	7.5%
7	South Kesteven	7.4%
8	West Devon	7.3%
9	West Lindsey	7.3%
10	Havant	7.2%
11	Dorset	7.1%
12	East Lindsey	7.0%
13	Rutland	6.9%
14	South Somerset	6.9%
15	East Devon	6.7%
16	South Hams	6.7%
17	Rushmoor	6.7%
18	Hambleton	6.5%
19	Breckland	6.4%
20	North Norfolk	6.4%

1 Office for National Statistics, 2023, UK armed forces veterans, England and Wales: Census 2021, August 2023, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/ukarmedforcesveteranscensus2021inenglandandwales>

Since January 2023

- £8.55 million has been invested in establishing specialist help to more than **1,300 veterans across over 900 supported housing units**. This includes wraparound support for employment, education and healthcare services.
- In July we launched a **user-driven housing pathway guide** for organisations that provide housing and homelessness services to the armed forces community.

Op FORTITUDE is a UK-wide referral pathway to support homeless veterans or veterans at risk of homelessness into housing. Riverside, a housing association, works in partnership with charities, housing providers, local authorities and other organisations to support veterans into housing. In its first week, Op FORTITUDE received **120 referrals** and provided **temporary accommodation to 23 veterans**, taking them off the streets.

Looking ahead

- Over the next three years, we will deliver a £20 million Capital Housing Fund to provide extra housing for veterans through developing new builds and refurbishing existing social and charitable housing.

EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND SKILLS



The majority of veterans find employment after leaving service, with recent statistics from the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) **Career Transition Partnership** indicating that **87% of veterans were in employment within six months of leaving service.**

However, it is important that support is available to those who face challenges and that the value of their skills are recognised.

47%
of the veteran population in England and Wales is of 'working age' (aged between 16 and 64)²

Public sector support and veterans' employment schemes

- a network of 50 armed forces champions and 11 group leads within Jobcentre Plus to support veterans in finding work.
- National Insurance relief is available for up to 12 months for those employing veterans in their first civilian role after leaving service.

2 Office for National Statistics, 2023, UK armed forces veterans, England and Wales: Census 2021, August 2023, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/ukarmedforcesveteranscensus2021inenglandandwales>

- The UK's Civil Service and many public sector partners are taking steps to recruit veterans and their families directly into their organisations:
 - **Great Place to Work** – this Civil Service scheme has made over 840 job offers to veterans since 2020.
 - **Going Forward into Employment** – this Civil Service scheme has recruited over 100 veterans since 2017.
 - **Advance into Justice** – the Ministry of Justice's scheme recruited 15 veterans through its pilot in 2022. It has since expanded its eligibility criteria to include spouses and legal partners.
 - **Step into Health** – this NHS scheme has recruited over 1,700 veterans since 2018 and offers opportunities for the Armed Forces from transition and into civilian life.
 - **The Department for Education** supports veterans into teaching through support services and bursaries. Tailored information is available via teacher training advisers, **websites**, a **case study blog**, **Civvy street publications**, **The Times**, webinars, and presence at regional employer fairs with the **Career Transition Partnership** and **British Forces Resettlement Service**.

Advance into Justice – Luke Whitehead, 29, formerly of the King’s Royal Hussars



Luke Whitehead applied to join the prison service through last year’s Advance into Justice pilot.

“My Dad served for 30 years in the Army before joining the prison service seven years ago, so I knew it would be an interesting job.

He told me about the ‘Advance into Justice’ scheme and following a one-day assessment, I joined the team at HMP Winchester alongside him.”

“Being in the Army is a lot like being a prison officer with the similar rank structure and camaraderie – I feel like I’ve fitted in instantly and I’ve really enjoyed it.

“You need to be able to talk to people and listen to what they have to say. Sometimes prisoners can be having a bad day, and being able to chat to them after an issue has arisen can be really important. My advice to people in the armed forces who are thinking about becoming a prison officer would be to go for it. It’s something different every day and you feel like you are making a real difference to prisoners’ lives.”

Since January 2023

- A YouGov report into employer and public perceptions of veterans was published earlier in 2023. Following dedicated engagement sessions held with charities and across government, the findings are leading to change in the way we engage with employers and how we shape our communications strategy.

Findings include:

66%

of employers are interested in having more veterans in their organisation³

Employers associate the following behavioural traits with veterans:

**STRONG
WORK ETHIC**

PROBLEM SOLVING

LEADERSHIP

**COMMUNICATION
SKILLS**

DEDICATION

ANALYTICAL SKILLS

3 Office for National Statistics, 2023, UK armed forces veterans, England and Wales: Census 2021, August 2023, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/ukarmedforcesveteranscensus2021inenglandandwales>

- In June 2023, the **Civil Service Armed Forces Network** launched, supporting and championing the talents of veterans and reservists working across the Civil Service. This network will also support families and spouses of those who serve to ensure the Civil Service remains a superb career choice for the whole armed forces community.
- The Department for Work and Pensions has worked with the MOD to create a **Service Leavers Adjustments Passport**. The passport is available for use by all service leavers and veterans on a voluntary basis to communicate their required workplace adjustments to civilian employers.



Civil Servants attend the launch of the Civil Service Armed Forces Network, alongside the Director for the Office for Veterans' Affairs, Jessie Owen (pictured centre).

Looking ahead

- An **employers guide to hiring veterans** will launch in autumn 2023. The guide will assist employers with recruiting veterans and members of the armed forces community into their organisation, as well as developing their talent and supporting progression over the course of their careers.



Department for Work and Pensions Armed Forces Champions, alongside partner organisations, in Falmouth, as part of Armed Forces day events, 23 June 2023.

VETERANS AND THE LAW



The Census 2021 indicated that **veterans made up 4.86% of the prison, approved bail and probation population in England and Wales**. Recent living arrangements analysis from the ONS has indicated that veterans are slightly more likely than non-veterans to be on these premises. We want to make sure that the right support is in place for veterans who come into contact with the criminal justice system.

Veterans in Custody Support Officers

The Creating Future Opportunities (CFO) Discovery Wing at HMP Risley and the CFO Activity Hub at HMP Holme House received the Special Recognition Award at the Veterans In Custody Support Officers Awards Ceremony in July 2023. Their work allows veterans in custody to engage in positive activities such as peer support, cooking, access to an allotment and veteran specific courses on mental health and wellbeing, with many participants securing employment as a result.



Op NOVA, commissioned by NHS England, launched in April 2023 and delivers pre- and post-custody support to veterans in contact with the criminal justice system. This includes practical and emotional support, as well as enabling them to secure housing and employment.

Op NOVA builds on the success of Project NOVA, established in 2014, which has supported over 5,000 veterans across five regions in England.

Since January 2023

- A revamped **veterans' support map** has been live since January 2023 and includes refreshed content and signposting to services across the UK.
- The OVA collaborated with the ONS, Ministry of Justice and HM Prison and Probation Service to ensure veteran prisoners across the UK were able to participate in the **Veterans' Survey**.

Approximately

23%

of the known veteran prison population participated in the **Veterans' Survey**

Looking ahead

- The OVA will use the findings of the Veterans' Survey, and work with Op NOVA and stakeholders across the sector, to **improve targeted support available for veterans** in contact with the criminal justice system.

FINANCE AND DEBT



Transitioning out of the armed forces begins a significant period of change for service leavers. Finding new housing, securing employment and navigating life post-service can be challenging and place significant pressure on veterans' finances, especially for those who have been injured.

Ensuring veterans can access the full range of statutory entitlements, including benefits, pensions and compensation, is a priority for the OVA, as is **ensuring that all service leavers have the skills needed to be financially resilient.** Through maximising their income, veterans and their families can lead more fulfilling and independent lives.

Since January 2023

- The Government has published the **Independent Review of UK Government Welfare Services for Veterans**, jointly commissioned by the OVA and the MOD. The review examined the role, scope and breadth of support services for veterans and makes recommendations on the roles, governance and delivery of these services by Government.
- The second **Armed Forces Compensation Scheme Quinquennial Review** has been published with recommendations to ensure the compensation scheme remains fit for purpose, providing appropriate recognition and financial support to those who have been injured, become ill or died as a result of service since 6 April 2005.

Looking ahead

- The MOD and the OVA are working together to launch an **updated service leavers guide**. This will ensure that more service leavers are better prepared for life as a veteran by providing information on key life skills, such as financial planning, as well as various statutory and third sector support services. Through proactive early intervention, we aim to reduce instances of financial difficulty and ensure more veterans thrive post-service.
- The OVA is working with the MOD and the Forces Pension Society to **reunite more veterans with unclaimed, deferred pension benefits**.
- The **Veterans' Gateway**, which has already supported over a million veterans and which provides information on financial matters such as pensions and compensation, in addition to other areas, will be transferred to the OVA in 2024. The OVA will continue to engage with veterans and their families to improve the Gateway's services.

COMMUNITY AND RELATIONSHIPS



Both the Government's 2018 Strategy for our Veterans and the **loneliness strategy** recognise **the importance of meaningful social relationships to people's lives.**

As the circumstances of military life can create additional challenges for establishing and maintaining social connections, the OVA is committed to making progress in this area.

In addition, it is important to address specific historical issues that have prevented integration and appropriate recognition of veterans, their families and wider communities.

Since January 2023

- In June 2023, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs convened a **loneliness roundtable** with the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust and stakeholders from the armed forces charity sector to discuss how to tackle loneliness and identify best practice.
- The OVA provided over £170,000 funding to Big Ideas, LABRATS and the Nuclear Community Charity Fund **to support nuclear test veterans' wellbeing needs, educate school children on the nuclear testing programme, and bring veterans together.**

Looking ahead

- The **Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy & Reconciliation) Bill** will establish the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery to conduct reviews into Troubles-related deaths and serious injury, with the primary objective of providing information to families, and victims and survivors. This legislation seeks to deliver better outcomes for all those affected by the Troubles, including those who served in the armed forces, while helping Northern Ireland to focus on its present and future.
- Results from the **Veterans' Survey** conducted by the OVA and the ONS are expected to be published later this year, including data on veteran loneliness and social isolation across the UK.



Students from St John's Catholic Comprehensive in Gravesend met with veteran John Folkes to film for the Remember Together project, funded as part of the Nuclear Test Veteran Community Fund.

UNDERSTANDING OUR VETERAN COMMUNITY



Much of the analysis presented in this report has only been possible due to the Census 2021, which asked for the first time whether respondents had previously served in the UK armed forces. **Initial findings from the census** were made available in November 2022, with subsequent regular releases providing more detail on the veteran population in England and Wales than ever before.

The OVA continues to make progress, working with partners across government, the public sector, universities and charities to implement the **Data and Research Framework**, which was published in November 2022. This will ensure better alignment and coordination across the sector and strengthen evidence-informed policy making.



Veterans invited to attend the King’s coronation meet with the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, Rt Hon Johnny Mercer MP.

Since January 2023

- The OVA launched its **veterans' data dashboard** in February 2023. The dashboard consolidates government data on the veteran community, including health and wellbeing, employment and housing, and contains a feedback tool to ensure we keep it updated based on user need.
- The OVA has delivered the **10 Things to know about a veteran** publication to better enable service providers to work with veterans and their families. The **OVA has partnered with Citizens Advice** to pilot this resource and identify veterans seeking support from the charity. Data from this pilot will aid understanding of the current scale and type of need within the veteran community and whether this is being sufficiently met.
- The OVA has funded a **review of veterans' user journeys and relevant content on GOV.UK** to improve veterans' access to services and information. Work is underway to implement the review's recommendations.

Looking ahead

- The OVA has funded research into the **lived experience of women veterans, veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds and non-UK veterans**, along with two reports examining **how to improve access to service charities for women veterans**. Findings will be published by late 2023.
- The OVA has funded a £250,000 project with the University of South Wales, University of Liverpool and National Life Stories at the British Library to conduct **research with British nuclear test veterans** to understand their experiences and generate wider public recognition of their service.



The Royal Gurkha Rifles taking part in an Armed Forces Day parade, 24 July 2023.



Veterans' Survey

The Veterans Survey is the biggest ever survey of its kind. Analysis of the results is underway and the first results are expected before the end of the year. Like the England and Wales Census the results will be phased and released as soon as they are ready. From the survey we plan to deliver insights, including the following:

- Service rank
- Service length
- Reason for discharge/leaving service
- Housing situation
- Whether veterans were worried about money in the last month
- Whether veterans felt they had taken a job with lower experience or lower skill level than that of their military role
- Levels of NHS GP and Dentist registration
- Long-term mental & physical health condition
- Loneliness measures

RECOGNISING OUR VETERANS' CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY



RECOGNISING THE CONTRIBUTION ALL VETERANS HAVE MADE



This year has seen significant progress in recognising the contributions of veterans, particularly those who may have historically felt excluded. The OVA continues to work with partners across government and beyond to **address historic challenges and ensure the contribution of all veterans and their families, especially those from marginalised groups, is recognised and celebrated.**



Veterans pictured holding copies of the LGBT Veterans Independent Review, following the Prime Minister’s apology on behalf of the British State for the treatment of LGBT veterans impacted by the pre-2000 ban on homosexuality.

Since January 2023

- The **LGBT Veterans Independent Review** has made a series of important recommendations. The review is the result of months of hard work and was made possible by the collective sharing of often difficult and traumatic experiences. On 19 July 2023, the Prime Minister and Defence Secretary apologised to LGBT personnel and veterans impacted by the historic ban. The government has accepted the majority of the 49 recommendations in principle, and as an immediate response, the Office for Veterans' Affairs is awarding £250,000 to LGBT organisations to provide support services for impacted veterans.
- The extension to the **disregards and pardons scheme** has come into force, enabling individuals to apply for a disregard for their caution(s) or conviction(s) for same sex sexual activity under any repealed or abolished offence.

27 July 2023 marked the **70th anniversary** of the signing of the **Korean War Armistice Agreement**. 81,000 British service personnel served in the conflict, including more than 1,000 who were killed in action. Government continues to support commemorative activities to recognise the contribution of veterans.



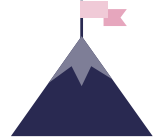
Images taken at the Royal British Legion national memorial service on Horse Guards Parade, 27 July 2023.

Looking ahead

- The OVA will publish a **women veterans' strategy** in 2024, which will examine the specific needs and challenges faced by more than 235,000 women veterans, as well as celebrating their successes. The strategy will encompass all areas of veteran policy, including mental and physical health and wellbeing and employment. The OVA has established formal governance arrangements, and will engage with women veterans and the sector to ensure we get the best possible input.
- Within the next few months, eligible veterans, civilian staff and next of kin will be able to receive the **new Nuclear Test Medal**, which honours the significant contribution of those from the UK and across the Commonwealth, who participated in Britain's nuclear testing programme.



PROMOTING A POSITIVE PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF VETERANS



Veterans have extensive personal and technical skills gained during service. This means they make a unique and lasting contribution to life in the UK, through employment, innovation and community involvement. Despite this, research shows that many people believe serving in the armed forces leaves people in a worse mental, physical or emotional position than when they started serving. **The OVA is committed to improving perceptions of veterans and demonstrating the positive impact they can have on civilian life.**



Ben Roberts at the Veteran Games in Tel Aviv, Israel, May 2023. Ben joined the British Army in 2000 and served on tours of Afghanistan and Iraq with the 1st Battalion the Royal Anglian Regiment. He attended the games as a Veteran Ambassador.

Since January 2023

- We have delivered **communications to demonstrate the achievements, capabilities and contributions of a wide range of veterans**. This included coverage of the Veteran Games in Israel in May 2023, recognition of veterans on the King's Birthday Honours List in June 2023 and the members of the veteran community who received Points of Light awards during Armed Forces week. Points of Light awards recognise the positive societal impact made by individuals. Recipients were:
 - Hari Budha Magar, who served with the Royal Gurkha Rifles and since losing his legs in Afghanistan has completed multiple record-breaking mountaineering challenges and is working to raise £884,900 for Armed Forces charities over the coming years.



- Darren Edwards, a former Army Reservist. Since becoming permanently paralysed after a climbing accident in 2016, Darren has raised over £200,000 for the Armed Forces Para-Snowsport Team by completing a number of gruelling challenges.



Looking ahead

- We will ensure we share the stories and achievements of a wide range of veterans with diverse backgrounds and experiences of service and civilian life. This will include **showcasing organisations that drive veteran opportunities and their success stories**, and delivering communications focused on women veterans, LGBT veterans and those veterans from ethnic minority backgrounds, or groups with unique stories such as the nuclear test veterans.

VETERANS' STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

2022 TO 2024 UPDATE

The Veterans' Strategy Action Plan contains **over 60 cross-government commitments** which the OVA tracks as 84 measurable tasks.

As of July 2023,

63%

of tasks have been **completed** (up from 25% in August 2022)

29%

of tasks were **in progress**

8%

of tasks were subject to **some delay**

Commitment with some delay

Commentary

Provide direct placement opportunities for jobs in the Civil Service for veterans and military spouses/partners who face challenges finding employment through the Going Forward into Employment scheme, with a target of 50 for 2022/23 and 100 for 2023/24

Whilst good progress was made against the March 2023 target, we were 4 placements short of meeting the published target. Work continues to deliver against the target of 100 placements by the end of March 2024.

Commitment with some delay

Commentary

Share the Service Leavers Data (SLD) with the Scottish Government to support their evidence base on veterans living in Scotland.

We are now confident this commitment will be delivered by Autumn 2023.

Roll out Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance accreditation further across Trusts with all trusts being accredited by March 2023

As of July 2023 75% of NHS trusts in England had been accredited as 'veteran aware'. This is an exceptional achievement against the context of NHS England and its partners needing to re-prioritise projects during and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Work continues at pace to deliver this commitment.

Commission and publish new qualitative research specifically looking at the experiences and support needs of:

- Ethnic minority veterans
- Non-UK veterans

Challenges in recruiting participants resulted in a short delay. Publication of both reports is expected by late 2023.

Commitment with some delay

Commentary

Commission and publish new qualitative research seeking to understand how female veterans access support, and any barriers to female veterans feeling they can seek help

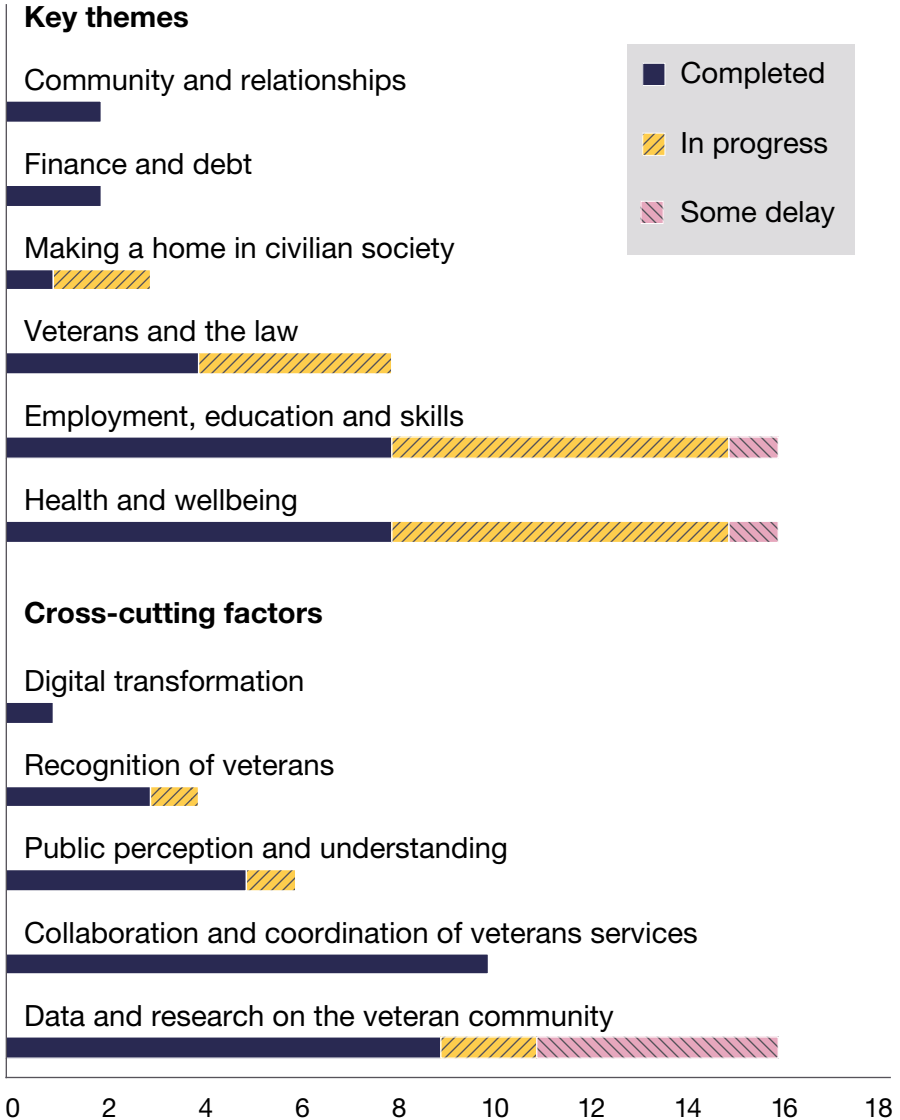
We have received the first draft of this report and expect to publish it by late 2023.

Develop a single set of veterans' KPIs and metrics, to measure UK Government progress made against the 2028 Strategy for our Veterans outcomes

Following extensive engagement with stakeholders including the Veterans' Advisory Board, we expect to deliver this commitment by late 2023.

We will provide a further update on delivery of the action plan's commitments in the Armed Forces Covenant and Veterans annual report, due to be published later this year.

Commitments align to one or more of the Strategy for our Veterans' key themes or cross-cutting factors. For the purposes of the graphic, each one has been aligned to a single theme or cross-cutting factor.





For more information about the OVA
and recent news stories, please see our:

 Gov.uk page: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-for-veterans-affairs>

 Facebook: **VeteransGovUK**

 LinkedIn: **office-for-veterans-affairs**

 YouTube: **@OfficeforVeteransAffairs**

 Twitter: **@VeteransGovUk**