

**E-VAPC meeting (via MS Teams) 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

<b>Attendees:</b>	<b>Apologies:</b>
Stewart Blackburn (Chair)	Esme Cole
Malcolm Johnston (Vice Chair)	Philip Wilson
Andrew Catton	Sean Costello
Barrie Griffiths	
Jim Wright	
Kath Hutton	
Robert Catton	
Stephen Heard	

**Agenda**

1. Introduction from Chair
  - a. Strategy working group
2. County updates – 2 mins per county
  - a. Suffolk – Kath Hutton
  - b. Norfolk – Stewart Blackburn
  - c. Hertfordshire – Barrie Griffiths
  - d. Cambridgeshire & Peterborough – Barrie Griffiths
  - e. Bedfordshire – Jim Wright
  - f. Essex – Esmé Cole
3. Functional updates – 2 mins per function
  - a. Education – TBA - volunteers required
  - b. Employment – Barrie Griffiths
  - c. Finance – Sean Howlett
  - d. Health – Stephen Heard
  - e. Housing – Andrew Catton
  - f. Veterans & the law - Rob Catton
  - g. Welfare – Kath Hutton
4. Personnel issues - Chair

## Eastern VAPC meeting

- a. Recruitment
  - b. Succession planning
5. AOB
  6. DONM – 7<sup>th</sup> December – F2F Cambridge

## Chair's Notes

- Situation re change of SofS for Defence, Party Conference, Ukraine & Israel/Palestine
- Consequence: Delays and diary mayhem:
- Recruitment (can only add personal apologies for the inadequacies of the system).
- TORs
- Strategy
- Governance
- Travel & Subsistence restrictions - all requirements to be approved in advance please and only essential events will be approved (generally been told overnight stays unlikely to be approved). We had pre-arranged the meeting in December, so that will go ahead as planned as a F2F.
- Attended 2 NCVC meetings since our last meeting. In all, 4 meetings with MOD have had to be re-arranged/cancelled because of ministerial delays/outer office errors/T&S restrictions.
- 3 Vets UK Performance Management Meetings.
- Now looks probable we will meet with Min DPV&SF (The Rt Hon Dr Andrew Murrison MP) on 8 November 23 and it is hoped we will get some clarity at that meeting - new TORs needed as a minimum.
- We then need to examine our strategy and governance to update as necessary. This is planned to be done in workshop format but T&S restrictions may limit what we can achieve so I am considering how we could develop a teams approach and just have a final F2F meeting to consider the recommendations flowing from the Teams meetings.

## County Reports

VAPC Eastern England – County update for Norfolk

Date: 19/OCT/2023

Submitted by: Stewart Blackburn

### County Update:

- AFCB - Workshop held and priorities for new 5 year plan discussed.
- AF Commissioner retires from post this year and recruitment underway for replacement.

## Eastern VAPC meeting

- Veterans Norfolk Workshop died as County AFCB wanted to do their own thing, so money went back to the VPP Programme co-ordinator.
- Veterans Norfolk plans to draw down its activities as the bulk of its original role is now fulfilled by the AFCB, any national links needed can be dealt with by VAPC in whatever form it takes, leaving just the co-ordination of ceremonial events within the county, which has yet to be resolved. Hopefully the charity will formally close next Spring.
- Attended two QEH AF Network Meetings since the last meeting.

### VAPC Eastern England – County update for Essex

Date: 19/OCT/2023

Submitted by: Malcolm Johnston

#### County Update:

- Attended Armed Forces Local Authority officers' meeting on behalf of Stewart (see next slide)
- Attended Essex CMPB in place of Esmé and with Philip Wilson
  - New AFC officer in Essex

#### Key activities for next period:

- Veteran UK magazine????

### Report on the Local Authority Armed Forces Covenant Leads Meeting 19th September.

Funding rounds for posts – short term and rely on oomph from individuals

Armed Forces Advocates in most Districts/ Counties – training available E-Learning package by University of Chester for LAs (2 hrs 6 modules)

Hospital version of Veteran Aware, Veteran Aware now open to hospices and care homes

There is also an informal AFC hospital leads network (JJ part of this)

Need to make sure we all know the four 'Ops' (Courage, Fortitude, Nova, Restore (Op Community in London))

MKUH has an Armed Forces Staff Network that aims to support all NHS staff at the Trust with any connection with Armed Forces – informal support network

Step Into Health – jobs in the NHS

DMWS Welfare Officer Posts within a Trust – potential to embed a DMWS officer into an NHS Trust

This level of support within an NHS Trust has been proven to accelerate 'healing' and freeing up a bed quicker

MK CC has an Armed Forces Support Directory that can guide people to the right agencies for support

Eastern VAPC meeting

Funding ends Spring 2024

VAPC Eastern England – County update for Cambs and Herts

Date: 19/OCT/2023

Submitted by: Barrie Griffiths

County Update:

This brief covers the meetings that I have attended in my capacity solely as a VAPC member, and no other roles that I fulfil in support of the Armed Forces Community. It does also not include the considerable amount of written/oral correspondence in support of these groups/events.

Herts Armed Forces Covenant Board.

28 Sep 23 - Herts Covenant Board (6 monthly) – (in person)

16 May 23, 11 Jul 23, 22 Aug 23, 10 Oct 23 - Health Sub Gp – (Online - Teams)

28 Sep 23 - In brief new Covenant Board Chair (in person)

28 Sep 23 - In brief new Housing Sub Gp Chair – (in person)

Cambs Armed Forces Covenant Board

17 May 23 - Cambs Covenant Board (6 monthly)

14 Sep 23 - Cambs Covenant Board (6 monthly) – clashed with Armed Forces Covenant in the Community Conference (Newcastle). (Online - Teams)

Broader VAPC Representation at Armed Forces Community Events

Attendance

12 May 23 - International Nurse Conference 2023 (Surrey and Borders, and Surrey and Sussex NHS Trusts) (Online - Teams) – covered Mental Wellbeing issues, particularly Veterans.

24 May 23 - East of England Armed Forces Community conference; Integrated Personalised Care 4 the Armed Forces Community, 24 May 2023 – Newmarket Racecourse (Online - Teams).

12 Jun 23 - Buckinghamshire Council's Armed Forces Conference – Aylesbury

21 Jun 23 - Global Veterans and Family Network – (Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust (Online - Teams)

26 Jun 23 - VPPP Webinar Exploring the peer support, safe spaces, and essential collaboration at the heart of the Veterans' Places, Pathways and People Programme (Online - Teams) hosted Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust Team and was one of a series of webinars.

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<https://covenantfund.org.uk/resources/veterans-places-pathways-people-vppp-programme-webinar/>

11 Jul 23 – MOD Covenant Team Brief on Covenant Duty (Online - Teams). Attended with Stewart.

19 Sep 23 – Milton Keynes City Council Armed Forces Covenant Project hosted LGA Armed Forces Covenant Leads Meeting - coordinated by JJ, attended with Malcolm. (Online - Teams)

20 Sep 23 - Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance National Best Practice Conference - Newcastle (Teams):

<https://veteranaware.nhs.uk/the-healthcare-offer-for-the-armed-forces-community-continues-to-improve/>

11 Oct 23 One Is Too Many Suicide Prevention Conference (Online - Teams):

<https://covenantfund.org.uk/2023/10/16/conversation-collaboration-and-inspiration-at-the-one-is-too-many-suicide-prevention-conference/>

Key activities for next period:

- 19 Oct 23 - LGA Armed Forces Covenant Leads Meeting - coordinated by JJ (Online - Teams)
- 31 Oct 23 South East Armed Forces Networks Together we can make a Difference – Amex Stadium Brighton (In person): <https://www.armedforcesnetwork.org/events/together-we-can-make-a-difference-2023>
- 7 Dec 23 – Eastern VAPC Meeting
- tbd - Herts Covenant Board (6 monthly) – (in person)
- tbd - Herts Health Sub Gp (Online/Teams)
- tbd - Cambs Covenant Board (6 monthly) – (Online Teams/In Person)
- Jan 24, May 24, and Sep 24 - MK hosted LGA Armed Forces Covenant Leads Meeting.

VAPC Eastern England – County update for Suffolk

Date: 17 OCT 2023

Submitted by: Kath Hutton

County Update:

- Tue 22 Aug – Veterans Gambling Project Intro brief. Research being conducted under Anglia Ruskin university. Lead is a Clinical Nurse Specialist with the NSFT. This is a 24-month study to better understand problem gambling in the veteran community and whether specialist veteran provision is needed. There is concern that it is used as a coping strategy to avoid

## Eastern VAPC meeting

dealing with PTSD and there is no specific provision for the treatment of problem gambling in the Op Courage model. Can provide further info or email introduction.

- 28 Sep – VPPP East meeting.
  - Brief from Fighting with Pride, who now have 13 veterans Community Workers. Aware of Op Sterling in partnership with Age UK for support to older LGBT+ veterans affected by the ban. <https://www.fightingwithpride.org.uk/get-support/ageuk-veteran-support/> and <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/our-impact/programmes/how-we-deliver-advice/operation-sterling/>
- 14 Oct – RBL Suffolk County Information Day:
  - Speakers included the Armed Forces Team for Suffolk Carers and a contribution from the RCGP Veteran Friendly Accreditation and other NHS initiatives.
- Other Info:
  - Have taken over as County Sec for RBL Suffolk with a hope to influence interest in wider veterans initiatives.
  - Linked up with the Suffolk & Norfolk RAF BF Community Engagement Team

### Key activities for next period:

- 30 Oct – Community Voices in Health Research – invitation to join a webinar.
  - Funded by Suffolk and Essex Community Foundations and the SNEE ICB, looking for Champions to represent communities who are disadvantaged because of where they live or are under-represented for views of health care services.
- 14 Nov – Suffolk AF Covenant Board meeting.
- 15 Nov – Veterans Awareness/Information event at the James Paget Hospital, Great Yarmouth.
  - Run by Armed Forces Advocate and attended by various veterans welfare organisations.

## Functional Reports

### VAPC Eastern England – Functional update for Health and Welfare

Date: 19/OCT/2023

Submitted by: Stephen Heard

(Update provided in context of my three roles which all crossover into the veteran's arena: VAPC Committee member, Patient Safety Partner for Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust (NCH&C) and EoE Reginal Lead for RCGP/NHSE Veteran Friendly accreditation programme)

### VETERAN FRIENDLY ACCREDITATION PROGRAMME

NHSE target changed from 100% of all GP practices to be accredited to 100% of all Primary Care Networks to have at least one accredited practice. EoE currently at 77% covering 46% of all known veterans with 41% of all GP practices accredited as below.

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ICB	GP	PCN	Vet
Norfolk and Waveney	60%	100%	63.08%
Mid and South Essex	46%	96%	54.97%
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	41%	68%	41.18%
Bedfordshire Luton and Milton Keynes	35%	65%	42.39%
Suffolk and North East Essex	34%	75%	40.96%
Hertfordshire and west Essex	31%	65%	36.97%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>46.12%</b>

ATTENDED THESE EVENTS

14<sup>th</sup> Oct Suffolk RBL Information Day

14<sup>th</sup> Sept Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant Board

15<sup>th</sup> Sept Norfolk Battle of Britain Commemoration

20<sup>th</sup> Sept Essex Leading Better Together 2023

Following actions below agreed to ensure we achieve the revised target and using Remembrance Day as a focal point and communications lever.

Date	ICB	Who	Activity
11 <sup>th</sup> Oct	NW	Deputy Medical Director	Has emailed all those practices not accredited and those in rural areas with large geographical gaps in accredited practices.
13 <sup>th</sup> Oct	SNEE	Chief Exec	Emailing all practices not accredited.
16 <sup>th</sup> Oct	BLMK	Medical Director	Emailing the 8 PCNs without accredited practices.
TBC	HWE	Director of Integrated Specialist Care	Letter going from Chair of Herts AFCB to the 9 PCNs without any accredited practices.
17 <sup>th</sup> Oct	MSE	Chief Exec	Emailed Mac to ask him to send the email to all practices not accredited. Presented to Rochford PCN (12 <sup>th</sup> ) as the only PCN without any accredited practices.
16 <sup>th</sup> Oct	C&P	Chief Medical Officer	Email sent to all non-accredited practices.

OTHER ACTIVITY

- Core20PLUS5 is a national NHSE approach to inform action to reduce healthcare inequalities at both national and system level. The approach defines a target population – the ‘Core20PLUS’ – and identifies ‘5’ focus clinical areas requiring accelerated improvement to eradicate healthcare inequalities. The five focus areas are determined by each ICB depending on local identified need. SNEE have included veterans as one of their focus areas and AFCB should be encouraged to do the same.

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- Input into the Norfolk and Waveney ICS Social Prescribing Strategy 2023 to ensure Veterans are included in the plans for Care Navigators linking Vets and serving family members are signposted and linked to the most appropriate pathways.
- Linked in with regional leads for Op Courage, Op Nova, Op Restore, Op Community and Veterans Aware programmes straddling health and social care.
- Introduced veteran health care to the Age UK Later Life Provider Network.
- Participated in case study interview: Accessing your GP health records via the NHS app ensuring veteran coding is included on the NHS App.
- Ensuring that veterans are featured in the national Patient Safety Partners Network and that new Patient Safety Partners (PSP) are veteran aware.
- Joined the Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust (NCH&C) Veteran Awareness Group in my secondary PSP role at NCH&C.
- Joined the Patient Safety Learning's The Hub to provide opportunities to mention veterans in commentary on relevant posts and to start community discussions around veterans.

### VAPC Eastern England – Functional update for housing

Date: 19/OCT/2023

Submitted by: Andrew Catton

Property Springs Group - Spoken with founder to better understand how his charity Property Springs Group specialise in resolving housing problems for veterans. - Property Springs Group - help military personnel, whether they are still serving, transitioning, or a veteran get on the property ladder depending on their current situation. Based in Colchester but support personnel all over the UK. Keen to learn more about us and network.

Genesis Group - Spoke with the founder of the Genesis Group

A company formed of ex-serving and currently serving members of Her Majesty's Armed Forces. Genesis Group provide support to current, ex-serving and family members of public services (Armed Forces, Police, Fire, and NHS). In general, an all-round provider of care, support, and a place that is known throughout the communities. They strive to provide opportunities and aid to our fellow Veterans and serving personnel. Their charity provides support to current, ex-serving and family members of public services (Armed forces, police, fire, and NHS) and via several different means. These means are and not limited to:

- Mentoring/guidance
- Help with housing
- Help with employment
- Help with education and vocational training
- Help with mental health



## Eastern VAPC meeting

- Provide Support in day-to-day life
- Provide sign posting where required

We R Blighty – Charity specialising in helping veterans who are sleeping rough. Based in London but were doing work in Suffolk which is how I met them. [www.we-r-blighty.co.uk](http://www.we-r-blighty.co.uk)

GP Veteran Aware Scheme - Providing some assistance in promoting this scheme within the Suffolk area – to follow over coming quarter.

### Actions/ info from meeting

Jim Wright volunteered to take over as lead member for Bedfordshire and associated Bedfordshire authorities.