



# **Meeting the needs of the Armed Forces Community in North Yorkshire:**

What does the evidence tell us?

**April 2019**

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# 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Armed Forces Community is an extremely important feature of the economy and society of North Yorkshire. The Army's presence at Catterick is growing; there is a significant RAF presence including Fylingdales and Leeming and many former members of the Armed Forces and their families live in the area.
- 1.2 Shared Intelligence was commissioned by a partnership of councils to carry out research into the needs of the Armed Forces Community in North Yorkshire (including the City of York). The objective was to establish the composition of the Armed Forces Community in the area, understand the needs of the community, including spouses, partners and children, map the services available to meet those needs and identify any gaps.
- 1.3 The scope of the research included the project partner areas of York, Richmondshire, Hambleton, and Scarborough. It also includes the areas which cover the rest of the region including Harrogate, Selby, Ryedale and Craven.
- 1.4 A summary of the data sources we used to inform this research can be found below:

Qualitative	Quantitative
Interviews with councils, local service providers, and the MoD Review of literature	National data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veteran Annual Population Survey data</li> <li>• 2011 Census data</li> </ul>
Wider stakeholder events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Briefing workshop;</li> <li>• Mapping workshop; and</li> <li>• Sense-making workshop</li> </ul>	Fol request data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary address and organisation location</li> <li>• Exit locations</li> <li>• Service family accommodation</li> </ul>
Lived experience discussions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop with Reservists;</li> <li>• Conversations with Veterans and Veterans' service providers;</li> <li>• Focus group with Armed Forces Children;</li> <li>• Diaries of spouses and partners</li> </ul>	Local data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Yorkshire and York school census information</li> <li>• Veterans on housing waiting list (Scarborough and Selby)</li> <li>• Number of RBL cases</li> </ul>

## Presence of the Armed Forces Community in North Yorkshire and York

### KEY FACTS



There are over **10,000** serving personnel in North Yorkshire and **720** in York.

\*data from 2017



MoD employees account for **40%** of local employment in Richmondshire, **3.5%** in North Yorkshire and **1.1%** in York.



There are an estimated **41,000** veterans in North Yorkshire and **14,000** in York, the majority of whom are over 75.

There are **3,185** working age veterans in York and **12,461** working age veterans in North Yorkshire

- 1.5 The presence of the Armed Forces Community is most significant in Richmondshire, home to Catterick Garrison and a large number of ex-Service personnel and their families. The Armed Forces Community is also an important feature of Hambleton which holds the highest number of RAF jobs in the county. Hambleton is also home to serving personnel and their families of whom are associated with Catterick and Alanbrooke.
- 1.6 The presence in Harrogate and York is more modest, with the number of serving personnel likely to decrease in the future. Scarborough and Selby have a significant number of working age veterans who are likely to be in lower skilled employment. Craven and Ryedale's Armed Forces Community presence is minimal.

## Key findings

### Employment

- 1.7 A significant finding is the apparent under-employment of veterans. Furthermore, a high proportion of veterans in York and North Yorkshire are employed in comparatively low skilled jobs. In North Yorkshire a greater proportion of veterans are unemployed compared with the working age population as a whole. This is not the case in York, but it is a particularly pressing issue in Scarborough. Overall veterans are less likely to be unemployed in North Yorkshire and York than they are nationally.
- 1.8 We have qualitative evidence to suggest that the spouses and partners of serving personnel in York and North Yorkshire face significant barriers to employment, as is the case nationally. Reservists in the area have highlighted a lack of support from their employers including access to additional leave.

### Access to services

- 1.9 High quality data is required in order to understand the needs of the Armed Forces Community and how best to meet those needs. This research has identified significant data gaps on the needs of the Armed Forces Community, particularly working age and older veterans. The gaps are most significant in relation to housing, homelessness and health services, particularly mental health.
- 1.10 Significant data is available, however, on the number of Service pupils in the area and we have been struck by the large number of schools with a small number of children from Armed Forces families.

### The transition

- 1.11 Evidence nationally suggests that early service leavers are most likely to face difficulties. Our research suggests that recruits who are discharged from the Infantry Training Centre in Catterick receive an appropriate level of support and tend to return to the area in which they were brought up. The position of other people who leave early is less clear but there is a strong case for more sharing of information between the Armed Forces and public service providers to meet the needs of this potentially vulnerable group of people.

## Key recommendations

- 1.12 In the light of these findings we have three key recommendations. These are informed by three factors:
- The significant potential to encourage more organisations and businesses in York and North Yorkshire to become Armed Forces-friendly employers through signing the Armed Forces Covenant;
  - The potential to collect more data on the needs of the Armed Forces Community through contact with frontline public service staff;
  - Our understanding that the Armed Forces have good intelligence on which people leaving the service are most likely to face difficulties, including early service leavers.
- 1.13 We recommend that the councils in York and North Yorkshire should:
- Encourage more businesses and organisations to sign the Armed Forces Covenant and participate in the Employer Recognition Scheme, including through collaboration with local chambers of commerce and other business organisations;
  - Ensure that in appropriate circumstances people accessing services are asked whether they are a member of the Armed Forces Community, encourage other service providers to do the same and use the data collected to inform service provision and to better understand the needs of the community;
  - Liaise with the Armed Forces to secure a more collaborative approach to managing the transition of Armed Forces personnel to civilian life, particularly in relation to early service leavers and people who are likely to face challenging circumstances.

## Other recommendations

- 1.14 We also recommend that:

- There should be a greater sharing of expertise between schools, particularly those with a small number of forces children, including top tips and what works in supporting Service children. We also recommend a greater sharing of information between the Armed Forces, parents and schools.
- Armed Forces Champions are appointed in every school, including those with a low number of Service children. This would facilitate the information sharing between schools. We also recommend that Armed Forces Champions link in with existing Service children meetings that are convened by City of York Council and North Yorkshire County Council.
- Councils and local public services lead by example and provide flexible employment opportunities to spouses and reservists.
- There should be greater engagement with those veterans who are unemployed and in lower skilled occupations to understand the reasons behind this and the barriers to higher skilled employment.
- Organisations which provide services to retired ex-Service personnel share good practice and understanding on what works or what does not work. We also recommend that services available to them are more effectively promoted by developing a greater understanding of how to engage with this group.
- A network of organisations which provide services for spouses (both military and civilian) be developed, including Job Centre Plus, the Hive, Parents for Parents, so that a more coordinated approach is enabled.
- Councils and public services make better use of public spaces, such as library services, as a way to encourage integration between spouses and civilians, and vice versa. We recommend the development of additional services for spouses and partners which aim to reduce isolation.
- There should be more collaboration between military services and public services, particularly in transition of those people who may require a type of service, such as support in finding housing, or mental health.

## 2 Introduction

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- 2.1 The Armed Forces Community is an extremely important feature of the economy and society of North Yorkshire. The Army's presence at Catterick is growing; there is a significant RAF presence including Fylingdales and Leeming and many former members of the Armed Forces and their families live in the area.
- 2.2 Shared Intelligence was commissioned to carry out research into the needs of the Armed Forces Community in North Yorkshire (including the City of York). The objective was to establish the composition of the Armed Forces Community in the area, understand the needs of the community, including spouses, partners and children, map the services available to meet those needs and identify any gaps.
- 2.3 The research was commissioned by City of York council on behalf of the wider project partners comprising of North Yorkshire County Council, Richmondshire District Council, Hambleton District Council, Scarborough Borough Council and City of York Council. This group formed the steering group with whom we worked closely while carrying out the research.
- 2.4 This report sets out the results of our research drawing on quantitative and qualitative data. This data included the results of a Freedom of Information Request and the findings of interviews, focus groups, and workshops diaries with members of the Armed Forces Community and service providers.
- 2.5 The report begins by explaining our brief, methodology and evidence sources in more detail. It then provides an overview of the presence of the Armed Forces Community, with more detail set out in an annex. The core of the report focuses on the issues which our evidence shows requires attention. They are:
- Two issues relating to families:
    - Spousal employment;
    - The needs of children and young people in schools with small numbers of pupils from Armed Forces families;
  - Two issues relating to working age veterans:
    - The particular needs of early service leavers;
    - The under-employment and unemployment of veterans;
  - The isolation and accessibility issues facing older veterans and their spouses;
  - Access to services, particularly housing and mental health services;
  - Evidence of a lack of support for members of the Armed Forces Community from local employers.

## 3 Our brief and research

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- 3.1 The brief for this research was to provide an understanding of the scale, needs and experiences of the Armed Forces Community across North Yorkshire and York. The brief also requested the clarification on the extent to which current services are available for the Armed Forces Community and where there are any gaps in services or barriers to engaging with services.
- 3.2 The scope of the research included the project partner areas of York, Richmondshire, Hambleton, and Scarborough. It also includes the areas which cover the rest of the region including Harrogate, Selby, Ryedale and Craven.
- 3.3 The definition of the Armed Forces Community used for this report includes:
- Serving people, including reservists;
  - Spouses, partners and families of serving personnel;
  - Ex-service people (veterans), who have served for a day or more; and
  - The families of ex-service personnel.
- 3.4 In order to address the brief we have focussed on four key research questions:
- What is the size and make up of the Armed Forces Community in North Yorkshire, how is it distributed spatially and how is it changing?
  - What are the needs of the different members of the community?
  - To what extent does current provision meet those needs, in terms of scope and geographical coverage?
  - What are the gaps in provision of public services?

## 4 Methodology

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4.1 Research was carried out between April and November 2018 and consisted of both quantitative and qualitative methods including:

- A review of literature;
- Stakeholder interviews;
- Stakeholder workshops;
- Analysis of national and locally collected data; and
- Discussions with members of the Armed Forces Community.

### Desk review

4.2 Our review of literature involved a compilation of the various reviews of literature that we have undertaken for a number of research projects related to the Armed Forces Community. This includes evidence on the areas in which members of the Armed Forces Community are likely to suffer disadvantage in accessing services at a national level. This enabled us to understand particular areas of need relating to employment, housing, education, healthcare, and finances and also those who might find themselves at particular risk for example, early service leavers, those in transition, and spouses.

4.3 We also reviewed literature that had a focus on the Armed Forces Community in North Yorkshire and York. This covered areas such as the presence of the Armed Forces in the area and how it is likely to change, the needs of Service children, and the health needs of the Gurkha community.

### Stakeholder interviews

4.4 We conducted interviews early on in the research with six local authority Armed Forces leads, a military representative in Catterick, two representatives from military charities and a representative from a veteran project. These conversations helped us develop our understanding and identify the areas which needed further investigation.

### Stakeholder workshops

4.5 We conducted three workshops with stakeholders from across the region:

- Briefing session: this took place at the beginning of the research and involved around 30 people from local authority, military and charity sectors. The aim of this session was to help inform the areas which required particular attention.
- Mapping workshop: this took place just before the halfway point of the research. Around 45 people were in attendance from public services, military and charity organisations. Those in attendance had expertise in areas which included: veterans, community integration, family welfare, transition, health, addiction, housing, the Gurkha community, and Service children. This session used the expertise of those in attendance to help us to map areas of need in terms of sector and geography.

- Sense-making session: this took place at the end of the research phase and involved presenting the key findings of the research and using the expertise of those in attendance to understand what that means in practice and what recommendations we can make. There were around 25 attendees from similar organisations as previously stated.

### Data analysis

4.6 We analysed the following, nationally available, data sources, which can be split down to local authority level:

- The 2016 Veteran Annual Population Survey<sup>1</sup> (APS) which analysed the responses of those who identified as a veteran from a total sample of approximately 289,000.
- Working age veteran 2011 census data, released in 2018<sup>2</sup>. The results of a data linkage study by MoD and the Office for National Statistics where around 2.1million electronic Service leaver records were matched with the 2011 census data. The result was around 750,000 matched records for veterans under the age of 65.

4.7 We also submitted a request for data to the MoD in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We received the following data:

- The number of Service personnel who left the Armed Forces between 01 October 2013 and 31 September 2018 with an address on exit in North Yorkshire and York from MoD's Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system. It should be noted that a Service person can be counted multiple times if they have left and re-joined and subsequently left again and that there is no validation of addresses held on the system.
- Organisation location for regular Service personnel with an address in North Yorkshire or York. This includes the following address types: Out of hours contact address; pensions representatives; permanent home address; resident at work address; temporary offer address; and work location address. There is no validation of the addresses held on the system.
- Regular Service personnel who have a spouse or partner with a contact address in North Yorkshire or York. This includes contact address information for the following relationships: civil partner; spouse; second spouse; domestic partner. They have been "current date tracked" to remove historical data. There is no validation of the addresses held on the system.
- The number of occupied Service family accommodation in North Yorkshire and York. This does not include properties occupied in civilian licences or which are let under private rental schemes.

4.8 We have received a number of locally collected data from local authorities, such as:

- North Yorkshire and York school census data

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/annual-population-survey-uk-armed-forces-veterans-residing-in-great-britain-2016>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/census-2011-working-age-uk-armed-forces-veterans-residing-in-england-and-wales>

- The number of veterans on current housing waiting lists in Scarborough and Selby
- Richmondshire demographic data
- The number and spend of Royal British Legion (RBL) cases in 2018

#### Discussions with members of the Armed Forces Community

4.9 We have had a number of interactions with members of the Armed Forces Community. The aim of these conversations was to understand the lived experiences of accessing services in North Yorkshire and York, and to identify areas of disadvantage due to being a member of the Armed Forces Community. We have engaged with the following groups:

- A focus group with 12 Service children from 7 to 10 years of age, each of whom have a parent serving in the Armed Forces;
- A workshop with around 20 Reservists;
- Informal conversations with a number of older veterans using a pop up shed service;
- Discussion with a number of project leads which provide services for older veterans;
- Collection of diary entries from two spouses;
- Discussion with DWP in North Yorkshire and York, and the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) in Catterick;
- Informal conversations with early service leavers.

#### Data challenges

4.10 A summary of the data sources we have used to inform this research is presented below:

Qualitative	Quantitative
Interviews with councils, local service providers, and the MoD Review of literature	National data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veteran Annual Population Survey data</li> <li>• 2011 Census data</li> </ul>
Wider stakeholder events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Briefing workshop;</li> <li>• Mapping workshop; and</li> <li>• Sense-making workshop</li> </ul>	Fol request data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary address and organisation location</li> <li>• Exit locations</li> <li>• Service family accommodation</li> </ul>
Lived experience discussions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshop with Reservists;</li> <li>• Conversations with Veterans and Veterans' service providers;</li> <li>• Focus group with Armed Forces Children;</li> <li>• Diaries of spouses and partners</li> </ul>	Local data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Yorkshire and York school census information</li> <li>• Veterans on housing waiting list (Scarborough and Selby)</li> <li>• Number of RBL cases</li> </ul>

4.11 Despite these rich data sources, we have identified significant data gaps in a number of areas. In several cases this is because service providers do not routinely ask people whether they are

members of the Armed Forces Community or make best use of the data collected if they do. Significantly, these data gaps relate to many of the issues we have identified as requiring attention (see para 2.5). The data gaps we have identified include information on:

- Members of the Armed Forces Community receiving benefits or employment support;
- People accessing mental health services;
- People who are homeless or on housing waiting lists;
- The destination of people leaving the Armed Forces beyond an initial address;
- The location of older veterans who are not receiving an MoD or related Armed Forces pension.

## 5 The Armed Forces Community in North Yorkshire

5.1 In this section we provide a high level picture of the presence of the Armed Forces Community in North Yorkshire. Additional quantitative evidence is set out in the appendix.

### Serving personnel and their families

5.2 In 2017 the most recent available data showed that there were over 9,000 serving personnel in North Yorkshire and over 700 in York. It shows that serving personnel are concentrated in Richmondshire and Harrogate, where there are almost 6,700 and 1,900 respectively (see Table 1 below). Not surprisingly, the location of service family accommodation follows a similar geographical pattern as does the distribution of service children: over half of the schools with the highest number of pupils from Armed Forces families are in Richmondshire.

Table 1: Serving personnel statistics (2017)<sup>3</sup>

	Army			RAF			RNRM		
	Officers	Other ranks	Total	Officers	Other ranks	Total	Officers	Other ranks	Total
York	170	550	720	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Yorkshire	770	8280	9050	240	1450	1690	20	~	30
Richmondshire	560	6120	6680	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hambleton	70	450	520	220	1370	1590	20	~	20
Harrogate	130	1710	1850	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ryedale	0	0	0	10	80	100	0	0	0
Scarborough	0	0	0	0	0	0	0-	0	0
Selby	0	0	0	0	0	0	0-	0	0
Craven	0	0	0	0	0	0	0-	0	0

5.3 While the total number of Service personnel in 2017 was 11,490, the total number of military and civilian MoD employees totalled 13,240 in North Yorkshire and York (see Table 2). In 2017 there were over 12,000 MoD jobs in North Yorkshire and York, constituting 3.5 per cent and 1.1 per cent respectively of total jobs in the area. Again, these jobs are concentrated in Richmondshire, Hambleton and Harrogate.

Table 2: MoD employees (military and civilian)

	Number of MoD employees	MoD jobs as % of all jobs	Concentration of MoD jobs compared to England	Concentration of MoD jobs compared to North Yorkshire
Craven	0	-	-	-
Hambleton	2,410	5.8%	8.98	1.64
Harrogate	2,260	2.9%	4.42	0.81

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/quarterly-service-personnel-statistics-2018>

<b>Richmondshire</b>	7,220	40.1%	62.00	11.31
<b>Ryedale</b>	190	0.7%	1.15	0.21
<b>Scarborough</b>	0	-	-	-
<b>Selby</b>	0	-	-	-
<b>North Yorkshire</b>	12,080	3.5%	5.48	1.00
<b>York</b>	1,160	1.1%	1.68	0.31
<b>England</b>	167,040	0.6%	1.00	0.18

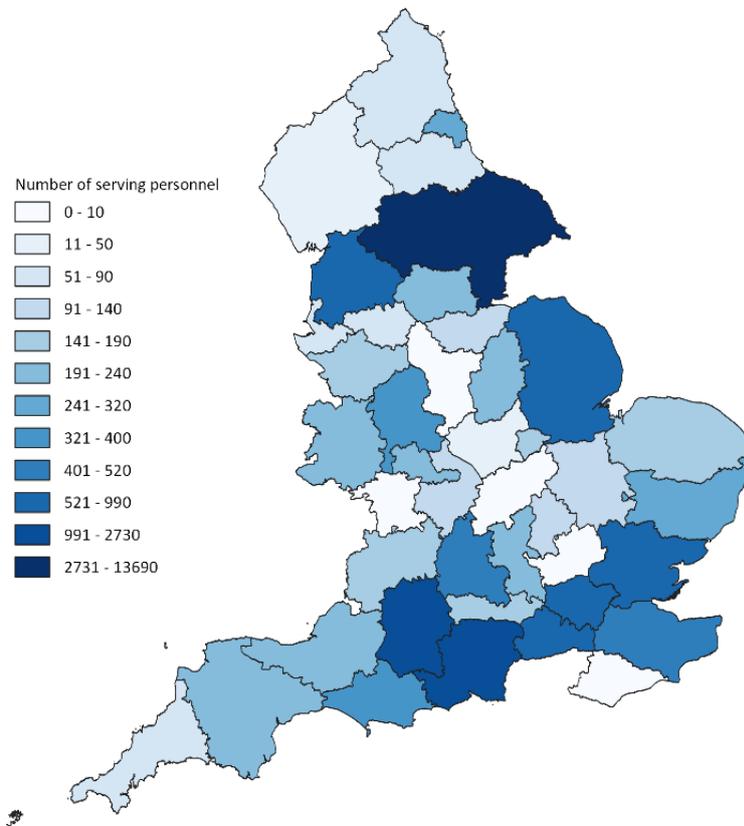
Source 1: Defence statistics (Oct 2017) and ONS BRES 2017

- 5.4 This pattern reflects the location of bases in the area. Catterick Garrison, located in Richmondshire, is by far the largest base and is expected to receive a total number of 2500 serving personnel by 2031, with the first 1000 arriving in 2021. The table below shows the other bases in the area and current future plans, which suggest the serving military will be even more concentrated in the Catterick area in the future.

District	Serving presence	Future
<b>Richmondshire</b>	Catterick Garrison	Expanding: an extra 2500 serving personnel by 2031
	Infantry Training Centre	No change
<b>Hambleton</b>	RAF Leeming	Decreasing
	RAF Linton-on-Ouse	RAF Linton-on-Ouse to close 2021
	Alanbrooke Barracks, Topcliffe	No change
<b>Harrogate</b>	Army Foundation College	
	Dishforth (Army)	No change
<b>York</b>	Worsley Barracks	Decreasing
	Queen Elizabeth II Barracks	To close
	Imphal Barracks	Decreasing
<b>Ryedale</b>	RAF Filingdales	

- 5.5 It is important to add that, according to MoD data, the number of Armed Forces personnel with a home postcode in North Yorkshire is higher than the number of relevant jobs in the area. This means that a significant number of Armed Forces personnel have their primary residence in North Yorkshire but work elsewhere. The map presented in Figure 1 below shows the occupation location of serving personnel with a primary address in North Yorkshire and York.

Figure 1: Organisation location for regular UK Armed Forces service personnel who have an address within North Yorkshire's postcode districts



Source: MoD 2018

## Veterans

- 5.6 It is estimated that there are 41,000 veterans in North Yorkshire and 14,000 in York, the majority of whom are 75 or older. Pensions data suggest that there is a more even spread of veterans across the area, with concentrations in Richmondshire, Harrogate, York and Hambleton (see table 3 below). Around 1,000 of those in receipt of a pension or compensation are not veterans (and are either still serving or a family member).
- 5.7 Pensions data includes people in receipt of an occupational pension under the Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS), people in receipt of ongoing pensions under the War Pensions Scheme (WPS) and people awarded compensation under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS).

Table 3: Location of Armed Forces pension and compensation receipts

Area	All types of Armed Forces Pensions Schemes	
	Total	% of total
<b>North Yorkshire (inc. York)</b>	10,858	100%
<b>Craven</b>	270	2%
<b>Hambleton</b>	1,851	17%
<b>Harrogate</b>	1,995	18%
<b>Richmondshire</b>	2,670	25%
<b>Ryedale</b>	411	4%
<b>Scarborough</b>	1,025	9%

<b>Selby</b>	648	6%
<b>York</b>	1,988	18%

Source: MoD 2017<sup>4</sup>

**Table 4: Working Age UK Veteran Estimates by location, and comparisons with England and Wales Population Estimates, Census 2011**

Local authority	Estimated Number of working age veterans	All usual residents aged 16 to 64	Veterans as a percentage of all usual residents aged 16 to 64
<b>York</b>	<b>3,185</b>	<b>132,860</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>North Yorkshire</b>	<b>12,461</b>	<b>371,472</b>	<b>3%</b>
Craven	664	33551	2%
Hambleton	2205	54798	4%
Harrogate	2858	98142	3%
Richmondshire	2335	33622	7%
Ryedale	770	31148	2%
Scarborough	2089	66082	3%
Selby	1540	54129	3%

5.8 Table 4 above shows that over a quarter of the estimated number of veterans are working age. Significantly, however, Richmondshire has a higher proportion of younger working age veterans (over half are under 44 years old) and the highest proportion of working age veterans in higher skilled occupations. Hambleton has the biggest share of veterans who are qualified to level four or above (degree level). In terms of areas requiring attention it is significant that:

- Scarborough has the highest proportion of working age veterans with no qualifications;
- Selby's overall population has higher levels of qualifications than the equivalent veteran population.

## The geographical picture

### Richmondshire

5.9 The presence of the Armed Forces Community is most significant in Richmondshire, home to Catterick Garrison. In 2017 there were 6,680 Army jobs in the district, a number which is increasing. The district also includes:

- Half of the service family accommodation in North Yorkshire;
- Over 1,700 service children in 23 schools;
- A significant number of working age veterans: 2,860 in 2011, a quarter of whom were under 35 years of age.

### Hambleton

5.10 The Armed Forces Community is also an important feature of Hambleton. There are 1600 RAF jobs in the district, but it is home to a higher number of serving personnel and their families who are

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/location-of-armed-forces-pension-and-compensation-recipients-2017>

assumed to be associated with Catterick and Alanbrooke Barracks. Just under a quarter of the Service family accommodation is in Hambleton and there are almost 800 service pupils in 26 schools. The district has a large, relatively highly skilled veteran population. The growth of Catterick is likely to increase the importance of the Armed Forces Community to the district.

#### **Harrogate and York**

- 5.11 The presence of the Armed Forces Community in Harrogate and York is more modest but still significant. There are 1860 Army jobs in Harrogate and 720 in York, with a commensurate share of Service family accommodation. Base closures are expected in both places. There is a sizeable working age veteran population in both places (around 3,000 each in 2011) and both have a significant number of schools with small numbers of Service pupils. It is thought the serving population in Harrogate is likely to be quite mobile due to the Army Foundation College.

#### **Scarborough and Selby**

- 5.12 There are no armed forces jobs in either Scarborough or Selby, but the evidence suggests that a significant number of working age veterans move to both places and are more likely to be low skilled and/or unemployed. In both places there are schools with low numbers of Service pupils: 32 pupils in 26 schools in Selby and 80 children in 32 schools in Scarborough.

#### **Craven and Ryedale**

- 5.13 The Armed Forces presence in both Craven and Ryedale is minimal, and each location has 18 schools with a small number of Service pupils.

## 6 Meeting the needs of the Armed Forces Community in North Yorkshire

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6.1 As we explained in paragraph 2.5, on the basis of our quantitative and qualitative evidence, we have identified seven areas that we consider to require particular attention in order to meet the needs of the Armed Forces Community in North Yorkshire. In this section we take each of those areas and present the current evidence base, highlight the challenges and recommend action.

### **Business engagement**

6.2 Research we have carried out nationally for the Forces in Mind Trust<sup>5</sup> shows that businesses and other organisations which have signed the Armed Forces Covenant are more likely to support the Armed Forces as employers and/or service providers. The Employer Recognition Scheme, with its bronze, silver and gold awards, provides a pathway for organisations which have signed the covenant to become Armed Forces friendly employers.

6.3 The latest data, from the Yorkshire and Humber Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (RFCA)<sup>6</sup> shows that in York and North Yorkshire 176 organisations have signed the Covenant, 53 of which are based in York. Of these 74 have ERS awards: 13 gold, 30 silver and 31 bronze.

6.4 At a local level, Job Centre Plus and CTP engage with employers and particularly those which recognise the skills of veterans and spouses and the benefits they bring. Regionally, Defence Relationship Management (DRM), which is an organisation within the MoD, engages with organisations and supports them when signing the Covenant and employing reservists.

6.5 Given the significance of the Armed Forces in the area, the number of organisations which have acted in support of the Armed Forces Community discussed above is a small proportion of the total number of businesses and employers, and less than half the signatories of the Covenant are participating in the ERS scheme. There is therefore significant potential to increase the number of Covenant signatories and ERS award winners. This should help to address the under-employment of veterans, the barriers to employment faced by spouses and the challenges experienced by reservists.

### **Spouses, partners and families**

6.6 Much of the work of the Armed Forces Community focuses on the needs of the small proportion of veterans who face challenging circumstances. It is important to understand the challenges faced by the spouses, partners and children of serving people. For spouses this can involve either isolation from the civilian community (if they live “behind the wire”) or isolation from Armed Forces support networks (if they live off-base). Children face particular stress when a parent is deployed and as a

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<sup>5</sup> Benefit not Burden: How to improve the delivery of organisational pledges made under the Armed Forces Covenant, Forces in Mind Trust (2019) <https://www.fim-trust.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/201901017-Final-digital-report.pdf>

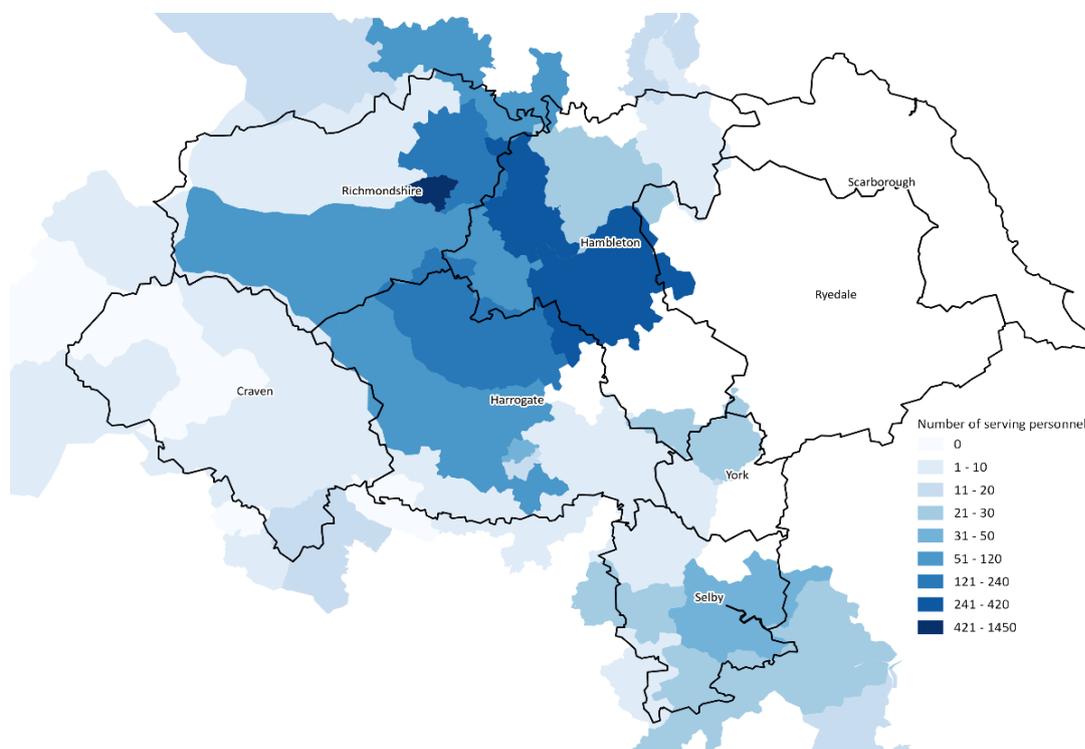
<sup>6</sup> In which the Regional Employer Engagement staff are based

result of being moved from one school to another. From our research and other published work<sup>7</sup>, it is clear that finding employment is a particular challenge for spouses. It also clear from our work that service pupils get high quality support in schools where they form a significant proportion of the population. There may, however, be specific challenges facing schools with a small proportion of service pupils. The following paragraphs explore these two issues in more detail.

### Spousal employment

- 6.7 The spouses and partners of serving personnel are a difficult group to identify which means that there is limited data on them and any specific needs they may have. MoD data<sup>8</sup> shows that in July 2018 there were around 2,600 occupied service family accommodation units in North Yorkshire and York, though these figures cannot be considered to be exact. We also have data on the post codes of Armed Forces personnel who live in the area. Both suggest a high concentration of Armed Forces families in Richmondshire, followed by Hambleton with a smaller presence in Harrogate and York.

Figure 2: Number of UK serving personnel who have a spouse or partner with a contact address in North Yorkshire's postcode districts



Source: MOD Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system

- 6.8 The Army Families Federation (AFF) found that the most prevalent reason for Privates and Corporals leaving the military was due to the lack of opportunity for a spouse to maintain a career<sup>9</sup>. When considering the barriers to employment that some spouses face, the Veterans Transition Review highlighted the gaps that a lot of spouses and partners have in their employment history as a

<sup>7</sup> Shared Intelligence, Benefit not Burden, FiMT (2019); and Army Families Federation, Military spousal/partner employment: Identifying the barriers and support required.

<sup>8</sup> MoD JPA data from FoI request in 2018

<sup>9</sup> AFF (2015) <https://aff.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/bigsurvey2015commandbrieffinal.pdf>

significant barrier to employment<sup>10</sup>. The AFF found in a survey (2016) that families consider mobility, the cost of and lack of appropriate childcare and the lack of family support, from the serving partner and the wider family network, as the most significant barriers to spousal employment<sup>11</sup>. The difficulties spouses face in maintaining employment impacts on financial circumstances and future housing prospects.

- 6.9 Our qualitative research has identified similar barriers to employment for spouses and partners in North Yorkshire. The nature of the Armed Forces, the Army in particular, is that of needing to be highly mobile. This means that spouses and partners of serving personnel have to relocate quite often, sometimes without much prior notice and has created a perception among employers that spouses are likely to move after a short period of time in a job. The MoD is currently developing the Future Accommodation Model which could address some of these mobility issues<sup>12</sup>.
- 6.10 The provision of affordable childcare is another barrier to employment which spouses face. The mobility of spouses and partners often means that they are in locations which are not near to a network of family support, which are often relied upon for support in providing childcare. The nature of the military also means that the serving person cannot be relied upon for providing childcare either. While childcare is often a barrier to employment for civilians as well, the unique circumstances of military spouses mean that the issue is often intensified for them as often, the spouse is the only person who can provide the childcare, unless it can be paid for.
- 6.11 A lack of community integration has been identified as an additional barrier to employment in the areas in which spouses and partners live on military barracks. There is generally access to all amenities when living “behind the wire” and therefore limited reason to access the wider community. This means that spouses could be missing out on local opportunities which could be identified by word of mouth, or through visiting local cafes or community centres, for example.
- 6.12 The types of areas in which services may be required to help remove some of the barriers mentioned above include the following:
- Information about childcare costs;
  - Work experience;
  - Gaining skills and qualifications;
  - Recognising transferable skills; and
  - The provision of information about employment opportunities.
- 6.13 While there are services which provide support in the above areas, as demonstrated in the directory below, there is a lack of a joined-up approach to provide them.

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<sup>10</sup> Veterans Transition Review (2014)

<sup>11</sup> <https://aff.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/AFFbigsurveyfullbrieffinal.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> More information available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-accommodation-model-what-you-need-to-know/what-you-need-to-know-about-fam>

Directory of services for spouses seeking employment		
Service	Location	Type of support
Job Centre Plus	North Yorkshire	Services available for all, but specific support provided to members of the Armed Forces Community, such as employment preparation support, job fairs and links with employers.
Hive and Army Welfare Service	Catterick (covering Topcliffe, Ripon and Dishforth); York (linked to Leconfield)	The information and signposting branch of the Army Welfare Service for serving personnel and their families.
Army Families Federation	National	Local presence to provide support for service families by offering advice. At a national level AFF campaign for improvements to services.
Parents 4 Parents	North Yorkshire	Available to all, providing peer support to parents in need either individually or through small support groups.
RBLI Lifeworks Families	National	A support service, funded by Armed Forces charities, to help Armed Forces spouses get the job they want, provided either online or in specific locations for courses.
RFEA Families Programme	National	Provide advice and guidance to spouses of serving and ex-service personnel.
Recruit for Spouses	National	An online employment service helping Armed Forces spouses find a job or start a business that works for them.
National Career Service	National	Provides information, advice and guidance to help with decisions on learning, training and work, available to all.

### Service pupils

6.14 Quantitative data is available on the number of Service pupils in schools because of the Service Pupil Premium that schools receive. Data from the school census shows that there are significantly more Service pupils in schools in Richmondshire than other areas in North Yorkshire (see table below). Almost a third of pupils in the district attract the Service Pupil Premium and they attend over two thirds of the schools in the area. There are smaller numbers of Service pupils in Hambleton and Harrogate, but almost three quarters of the schools in those districts have at least one service pupil attending. In York, there is a medium number of Service pupils spread in over four out of five schools in the district.

Table 5: Number of Service Pupils. Source: North Yorkshire County Council and City of York Council.

District	Total service pupils	% service pupils	Number of schools	Number of schools with service pupils	% schools with service pupils
Craven	25	0.4%	44	18	40.9%
Hambleton	778	8.2%	59	42	71.2%

Harrogate	666	3.2%	89	62	69.7%
Richmondshire	1738	29.5%	34	23	67.6%
Ryedale	48	0.9%	38	18	47.4%
Scarborough	80	0.7%	55	32	58.2%
Selby	32	0.4%	47	26	55.3%
North Yorkshire (excludes York)	3367	5.0%	366	221	60.4%
York (2018)	455	2.0%	60	51	85%

- 6.15 A striking feature of the data on service pupils is the large number of schools with a small number of service pupils. This could be due to the changing nature of the Armed Forces, with families having their family homes away from their associated military units. It is likely that the schools with fewer Service pupils will have the military community less engrained in their policies and will therefore be the schools where greater support and understanding of the needs of the Armed Forces Community will be required. It may be more difficult for these schools to implement the types of policies implemented in those schools with large numbers of Service children.

### Meeting the needs of Service pupils

We spoke with children at a school in Richmondshire where around 50 to 60 per cent of pupils were Service children. This enabled us to understand the key issues they face because of the Service of one or both of their parents.

Generally, the children did not want to feel any different to civilian children and often they did not speak about the fact they were from a Service family. Having access to staff or pupils who understood the experience of what it is like to be part of a Service family was important to some of the children we spoke with.

When asked about what they found the hardest about being a child of someone serving in the Armed Forces, the most common theme that came up in the discussion was around the anxiety and worry the children face when a parent is deployed. They spoke about the fear that they may never see them again and the fact that, during the deployment period, they have the mindset of thinking that their parent could die. This was also found in research undertaken by North Yorkshire County Council<sup>13</sup>.

*“The worst thing is having the mindset of thinking your parents could die”*

*“The best thing is seeing them come back after being away so long”*

The children also spoke about the increase in responsibilities that they take on, and research suggests this is exacerbated when the remaining parent needed care<sup>14</sup>.

*“I try to help mum out by doing jobs and help to remove any stress for her”*

A few of the children felt they were not able to talk about these difficult circumstances with adults, and that this presented problems. They recognised that having people to talk to can make a difficult situation slightly easier. Having people that can be approached, whether another

<sup>13</sup> Growing up in North Yorkshire (2016), NYCC.

<sup>14</sup> Children’s Commissioner, Kin and Country (2018)

Service pupil or a member of staff with an understanding of the issues, is something which is therefore very important.

*"It makes you feel better if you do say it out to someone"*

Interestingly, moving to a new school is an area which the children find both easy and hard. The frequency of moving is something which some of the children said was difficult and having to frequently pack and unpack. Adapting to new schools is found to be difficult, especially making new friends and being in an unfamiliar environment. The elements of moving which the children found to be easy are linked to them exploring new places and meeting lots of new people. Social media has helped them keep in touch with close friends in previous addresses. This is in line with the findings from recent research which suggests that moving becomes second nature to them the older they get<sup>15</sup>.

The children also spoke about the emotional highs that they experience and which is something they find easy to cope with. Seeing their parent come back after a long period away and the celebrations that are associated with this is something the children spoke about.

6.16 An additional area of concern which was identified in research by the Children's Commissioner for England<sup>16</sup> is around the risk of bringing up children with sheltered lives due to being "behind the wire", and the issues this could cause when they leave home<sup>17</sup>.

6.17 Further research on the experiences faced by children is currently being conducted by the Army Families Federation and the University of Winchester<sup>18</sup>. Current research suggests there are a number of areas in which service pupils may require support. These are:

- Support adapting to new schools: making friends and adapting to a new environment;
- Support around dealing with emotions: the highs and lows;
- An understanding of Service children's circumstances;
- Additional support if both parents are deployed;
- Additional support during GCSE years;

6.18 The school which hosted our discussion with Service Pupils takes a number of steps to meet these needs:

- They provide a buddy system where they introduce a new Service child to a friend who can show them around the school and help them to settle in smoothly in the new surroundings.
- They have a good understanding of the military, with heads of years regularly informed and they employ several staff members who are also members of the Armed

<sup>15</sup> Children's Commissioner, Kin and Country (2018):

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/publication/kin-and-country-growing-up-as-an-armed-forces-child/>

<sup>16</sup> The Office of the Children's Commissioner for England is a non-departmental public body responsible for promoting and protecting the rights of children, especially the most vulnerable.

<sup>17</sup> Children's Commissioner, Kin and Country (2018)

<sup>18</sup> More information can be found here: <https://aff.org.uk/news/lets-listen-to-our-service-children/>

Forces Community to act as Armed Forces Champions. This is an important role as they make themselves known to Service children and can provide support if required.

- They make best use of the performance data they collect by regularly tracking the performance of Service children to see if there are any gaps in their learning due to frequent education disruptions, and if there is, they provide additional support in after school clubs, or one to one catch ups.

6.19 Research suggests that schools which have a member of staff with extra responsibility for Service children provide effective support<sup>19</sup>. The data suggests that there are Service children in a wide number of schools, but further research is required across North Yorkshire and York to understand whether Armed Forces Leads exist across these schools.

6.20 Research has also identified that there is often a communication issue between parents, the Armed Forces and schools. This falls under the remit of the Service Pupils' Champions, a role which was created by North Yorkshire County Council to support the emotional wellbeing and social development of Service children.

6.21 There are a number of county-wide services which provide support to schools as required. These have been included in the draft directory below.

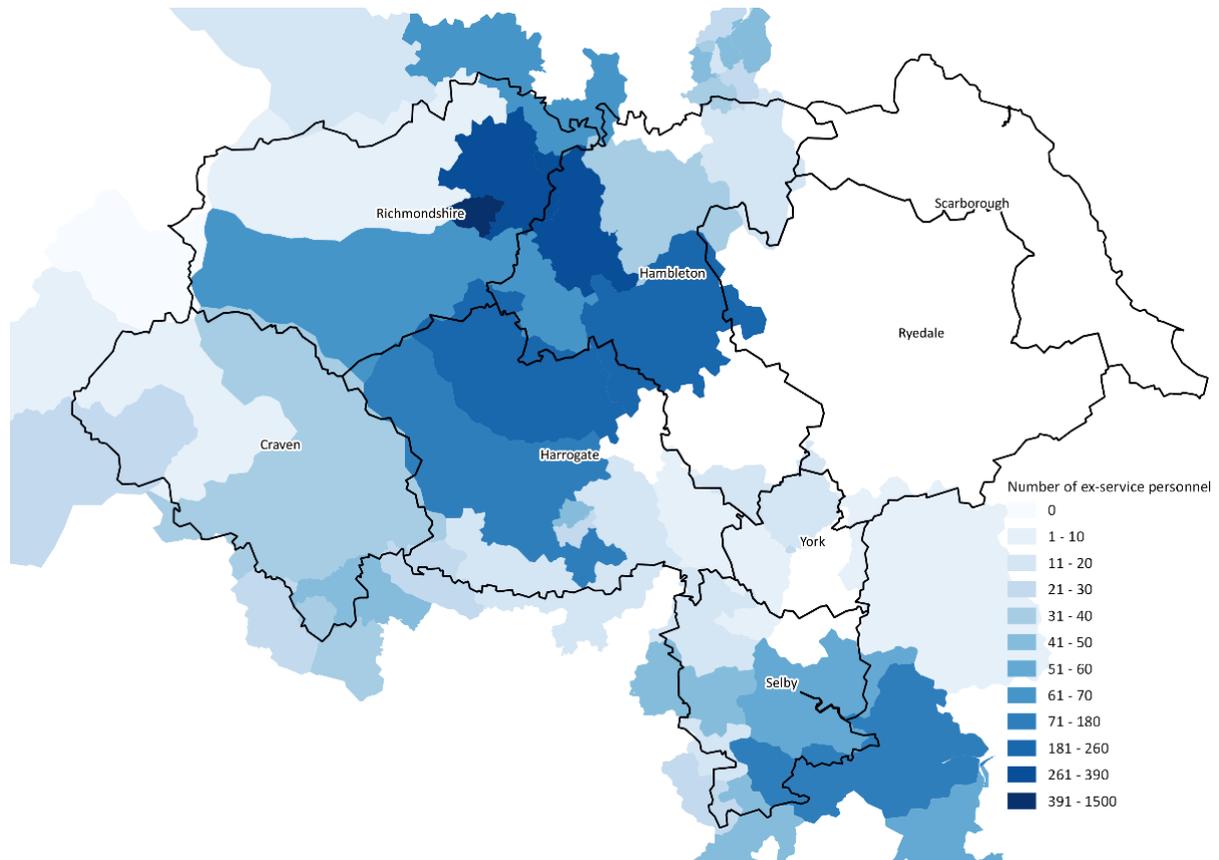
Directory of services for Armed Forces children		
Service	Location	Type of support
Service Pupil Premium	National	For children of serving personnel (not Reservists). State, academy and free schools can receive £300 per service child for assistance in providing the additional support that these children may need.
Service Pupils' Champions	North Yorkshire	For service children. Two Service Pupils' Champions who support the emotional wellbeing and social development of service children.
Army Welfare Service and the Hive	Catterick; Harrogate; York	Wide range of support for families of serving personnel.
Army Families Federation and RAF Families Federation	National	Provide advice around education and childcare.
Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS)	National	Provides advice, support and guidance to families, particularly on the educational wellbeing of service children.
Youth clubs	National	Provide a range of activities and a social network.
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)	National	NHS services for children who have difficulties with their emotional or behavioural wellbeing.

<sup>19</sup> Children's Commissioner 2018

## Working age veterans

6.22 Data from the MoD shows that the spatial distribution of the first addresses for people staying in North Yorkshire on transition mirrors the distribution of the serving population, as is shown in Figure 3 below. Our analysis reveals some significant trends in relation to the skills of veterans (see appendix).

Figure 3: Number of UK Service personnel in the last 5 years with an exit location in North Yorkshire Postcode Districts



Source: MoD JPA 2018

6.23 Overall the qualification levels of veterans is similar to that of the overall population, but:

- Scarborough has the highest proportion of working age veterans with no qualifications;
- Selby's overall population has higher levels of qualification than the veteran population;
- There is evidence of under-employment in York.

6.24 The brief for this research highlighted the importance of exploring the needs of early service leavers and our work and other research has highlighted the challenges facing low skilled and unemployed veterans.

### Early service leavers

- 6.25 Research has uncovered that Early Service Leavers (ESL) are among those most at risk of an unsuccessful transition as they are most likely to experience unemployment and other problems<sup>20</sup>. ESLs are those who leave the Armed Forces after completing anywhere between one day and four years military Service. This group are offered the least in terms of training and funding opportunities when transitioning out. Research suggests that this reduced transition package means that they can be less prepared to deal with issues relating to daily civilian life<sup>21</sup>.
- 6.26 We know that nationally the retention of new recruits is an issue, and this is reflected at the Infantry Training Centre (ITC) in Catterick where one in three recruits are discharged due to a range of circumstances. This suggests that a high proportion of ESLs are in fact 'early' ESLs having not completed the full year of military training. Qualitative data from the MoD and DWP suggests that these ESLs, who do not complete their training, often return to where they are from.
- 6.27 The DWP in Richmondshire provide a range of support to ESLs to assist with transitioning out of the Armed Forces. One part of this support is to visit ESLs transitioning out of the Infantry Training Centre in Catterick. The data that has been collected about this group shows that, in 2018, their service supported 404 leavers from the ITC, a quarter of whom had been discharged due to medical reasons. Around a third had employment lined up, and another third were registered to claim benefits. Just over 5% were destined to be homeless.
- 6.28 Less is known about ESLs who have served for a number of years and who are more likely to stay in the area to settle after transitioning out before a full four years' service. All the evidence suggests that this group will need support relating to accommodation, employment and welfare.
- 6.29 While limited, the CTP does provide support to this group by helping with CV writing and employment opportunities. The Job Centre Plus in Richmondshire has developed a bespoke package of support, along with the Army transition service at Catterick. Along with the core offer which is described in paragraph 6.40 in the next section, the service provides an information session to those leaving at the ITC with basic information on transition and services to approach if they are in need of help.

### Low-skilled and unemployed veterans

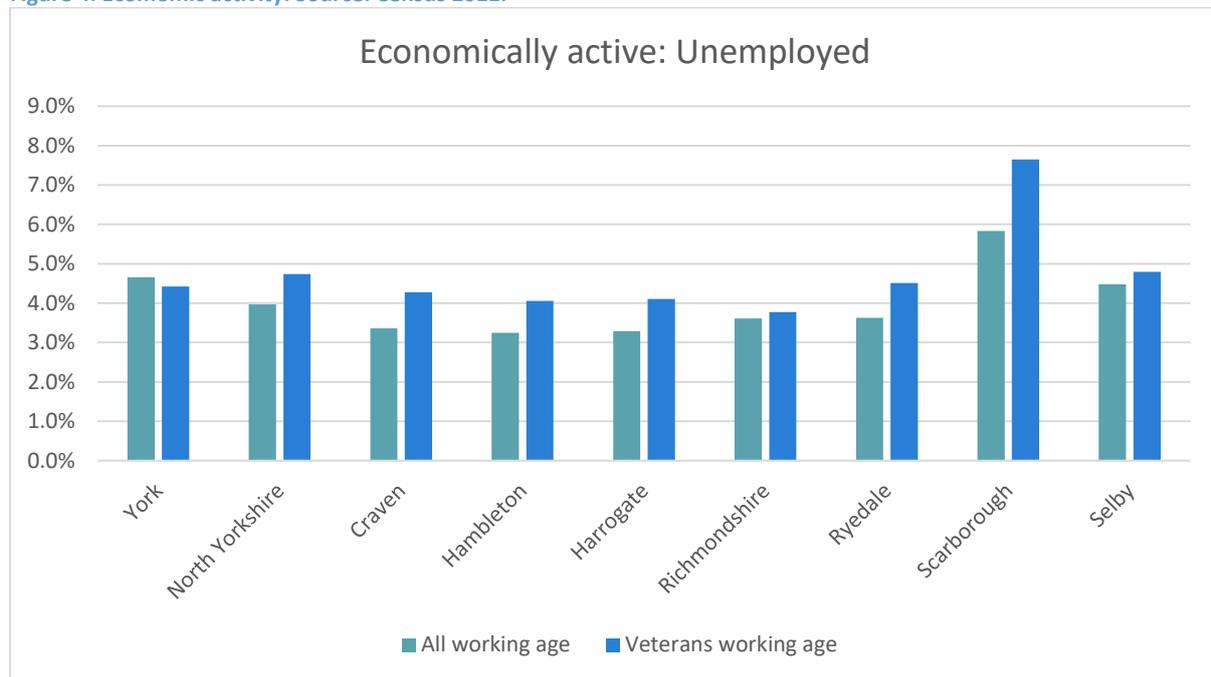
- 6.30 The proportion of veterans who are unemployed in the region is lower than the national average (5.7%) of veterans who are unemployed, with the lowest proportion in Richmondshire (3.8%). Despite this, the proportion of unemployed veterans in Scarborough is significantly above the national average (7.6%). The proportion of veterans who cannot access the employment market due to being sick or disabled in Scarborough (6.7%), is double the average of North Yorkshire and York (both 3.6%).
- 6.31 While this pattern is generally reflective of the working population as a whole in North Yorkshire, the census data suggest that a higher proportion of veterans are unemployed. York is the only place in which a lower proportion of working age veterans are unemployed (4.4%) than the total working age population (4.7%). In all other areas, a greater proportion of veterans are unemployed than the total

<sup>20</sup> Veterans Transition Review 2014

<sup>21</sup> Trajectory: Veterans in the UK. Issues facing the ex-service community

working age population. The difference is smallest in Richmondshire, and largest in Scarborough. This is reflected in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Economic activity. Source: Census 2011.

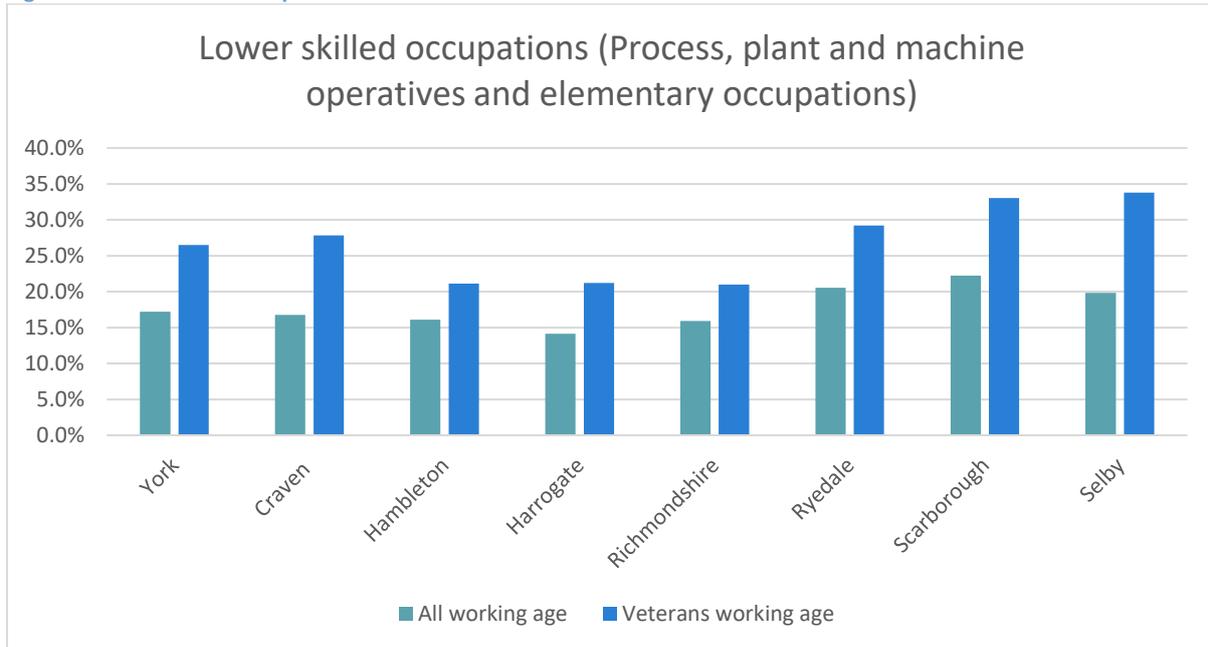


- 6.32 For those working age veterans who are in employment, around a quarter of them across North Yorkshire and York are employed in occupations which tend to be associated with being lower skilled. This rises to over a third in Selby (34%) and Scarborough (33%) – places where the presence of the Armed Forces Community is less significant. Between 10 per cent and 19 per cent of veterans are in skilled trade occupations (lowest in Richmondshire, highest in Scarborough).
- 6.33 Research suggests that veterans tend to work in low paid, routine jobs<sup>22</sup>. This is the case in North Yorkshire and York where there is a greater proportion of veterans in these lower skilled occupations than the general working age population across all districts in North Yorkshire, suggesting an underemployment issue. This difference between populations is greatest in Selby followed by Craven and Scarborough, as can be seen in Figure 5 below. Research suggests that junior ranks are more likely to be employed in these types of occupations<sup>23</sup>. There may be reasons why working age veterans would choose to be underemployed, for example to be in low skilled employment to top up an Armed Forces pension. Further research is recommended to gain a greater depth of understanding into this.
- 6.34 In general, the proportion of veterans in occupations that could be associated with higher skills (managers, directors and senior officials and professional occupations) is broadly in line with that of the proportion of the working age population in each district. Despite this, there is a lower proportion of veterans in York, Selby and Scarborough than in the working age population which are employed in these occupations.

<sup>22</sup> Deloitte Veterans Work

<sup>23</sup> Deloitte Veterans Work

Figure 5: Lower skilled occupations. Source: Census 2011.



- 6.35 We know that in all areas, other than York, there is a higher proportion of veterans who are unemployed than the general working age population, and we know that this is greater in some districts. We also know that around a quarter to a third of working age veterans in employment in the region are employed in jobs which tend to be associated with lower skills, and that this is disproportionate when compared to the general working age population.
- 6.36 This suggests that some veterans are in fact disadvantaged because of their Service. Those who are working in lower skilled occupations are also likely to be receiving a low income and potentially most at risk of in-work poverty. Receiving a low income can lead to a range of issues, such as lack of access to housing and mental health needs. These issues are dealt with in later sections of the report.
- 6.37 We know that the identification of transferable skills is an area in which those transitioning out of the Armed Forces have difficulties and the lack of identification of transferable skills could lead to working age veterans being in employment where their skills are not fully recognised. Organisation such as the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) and DWP are providing support to working age veterans, as well as identifying training and development opportunities. Equally, research suggests there is a lack of understanding amongst businesses of the key skills veterans possess which limits opportunities in higher skilled positions<sup>24</sup>.
- 6.38 There is a need for better promotion of and signposting to services available. Ideally, this signposting would happen before transition has taken place, and therefore requires the military to have a good understanding of the services available.
- 6.39 We also know that those who are transferring out of the RAF generally do not have an issue in accessing quality employment. This could be because the RAF is smaller and those serving in the RAF tend to be higher skilled, and that these skills are more likely to be recognised by civilian employers.

<sup>24</sup> Deloitte Veterans Work

- 6.40 All Service leavers are entitled to support from CTP, yet many of those who leave early are most in need of support. The amount of support they receive is dependent on the length of their Service (and rank). This means that Early Service Leavers (leaving before completing four years of Service) are not eligible for any funding, as discussed in the previous section. The CTP provide access to Enhanced Learning Credits, where the person in transition can access a range of courses to gain civilian qualifications. This is necessary because the qualifications received whilst being in the Armed Forces are often not recognised in the civilian world. There is therefore a lack of cross military-civilian understanding.
- 6.41 The change to Universal Credit at Job Centre Plus means that there is more flexibility in the type of support that can be provided even though data is not currently collected on veterans using the service. This is because each of the different types of benefits (housing, child, income etc.) are under one umbrella so a customer's needs can be addressed holistically, based on the individual, rather than by the type of benefit they are claiming. This means that Job Centre Plus in Richmondshire have developed a package of support for members of the Armed Forces Community (including spouses) that can fill in many gaps which other services cannot provide. This includes the following:
- Job fairs for all members of the Armed Forces Community;
  - Training and assistance with qualifications and work experience opportunities. Especially aimed at developing transferable skills and understanding the sectors of interest for retraining;
  - Using their knowledge of local employers;
  - Support for those who are struggling to find housing.
- 6.42 In addition, Job Centre Plus work with employers from a wide range of sectors in order to demonstrate the skills that veterans have to offer and the benefits that members of the Armed Forces Community may bring to their business.
- 6.43 The Armed Forces Leads at the Richmondshire Job Centre Plus maintain a North Yorkshire and York-wide network of Job Centre Plus Armed Forces Champions. This is important as it means that those areas, such as York, where the Armed Forces are not as engrained in public services can have access to valuable knowledge and information.
- 6.44 Ultimately, there is a lack of locally collected data on working age veterans and what their needs are. There is limited local data on the services which veterans seeking employment and in low skilled employment require.

#### Directory of employment support services for working age veterans

Service	Location	Type of support
Career Transition Partnership (CTP)	National. Resettlement centre located in Catterick	Members of the Armed Forces in transition (two years before, up to two years after). The provision of resettlement services for those leaving the Armed Forces. The support provided depends on length of service.

CTP Future Horizons	National (online). Advisor based in Catterick.	For early service leavers. The provision of resettlement support to help ESLs into suitable employment.
The MoD's Enhanced Learning Credits Scheme	National	The provision of financial support for higher level learning (Level 3 or above). Funding amount differs depending on number of years' service, and starts after 4 years.
Army Welfare Service	Catterick; Harrogate; York	Service leavers guide: e.g. HardFacts
Job Centre Plus	North Yorkshire	Services available for all, but specific support provided to members of the Armed Forces Community, such as employment preparation support and links with employers.
RBL Life Works	National	A course for any ex-service person which helps them enter or progress in their chosen career.
RFEA: The Forces Employment Charity	National	Provide employability and employment support to working age veterans, irrespective of length of service.
The Officers' Association	National	Provides advice on transition and employment to serving or former officers.

## Isolation and access to services and support

- 6.45 Isolation is an issue which in many ways reflects the rural nature of large parts of North Yorkshire. There are a number of small communities which are cut off from public transport networks and which rely on access to other forms of transport.
- 6.46 We have identified during this research that there are two groups of the Armed Forces Community which are at risk of being isolated with limited access to services. These are older veterans and spouses and partners. These two groups will be explored separately below. There is also some evidence to suggest that the Gurkha community are at risk of isolation due to cultural and language barriers, and a lack of awareness of local services<sup>25</sup>.

### Older veterans

- 6.47 The Annual Population Survey of veterans (2016) estimates that there are 55,000 veterans in North Yorkshire and York, and that the bulk of these are over the age of 75. We also know from the data collected from pension receipts that these are concentrated in Richmondshire, Hambleton, Harrogate, York and Selby. Though we cannot assume that these are over the age of 65 due to the inclusion of various types of military pensions.

<sup>25</sup> Gurkha and Nepalese Health Needs Assessment, North Yorkshire County Council (2017).

- 6.48 The fact that service users are not consistently asked whether they are members of the Armed Forces Community and the unwillingness of many veterans to identify themselves as being so contribute to a significant data gap on the specific needs of this group.
- 6.49 We know from our qualitative research that the needs of older veterans are similar to the needs of those from across that age group. There are a number of existing organisations and projects which provide befriending services, or services which enable participants to build skills and hobbies and develop a common interest.
- 6.50 There are two barriers to engaging with this group. The first is that many older veterans do not recognise when they are in need of help. Second, many older veterans do not identify with that term. This means that there are a number of services, for example those provided by military charities, which these veterans could be missing out on.

*“the biggest barrier is getting them here” (Veteran project coordinator)*

- 6.51 For those veterans that may be particularly lonely, we know that when they have accessed a befriending or network building service, the shared identity and common bond that they have is particularly important.

Directory of services for older age veterans at risk of becoming isolated		
Service	Location	Type of support
Ex-Forces project, run by Community First Yorkshire	North Yorkshire wide (not including York)	A range of services for veterans aged over 65 including: advice, opportunities to take part in hobbies and activities, befriending, home visits and gardening, support for carers, ex-Gurkha outreach, events and trips out.
Joining Forces project, Age UK and SSAFA		A project to support the life and wellbeing of veterans born before 1950, and their family and carers. A befriending service which is one of the projects in the Ex-Forces project above.
First Light Trust	Scarborough	An organisation for veterans in any difficult circumstances. Provides advice and guidance, signpost to services and help develop hobbies. They also have café community hubs in a number of locations.
RBL	National	Offer a range of support for older veterans and their family.
Veterans' Breakfast Clubs	National network	A chance to meet and get together with other veterans in a local area.

### Spouses and partners

- 6.52 Another group that is at risk of becoming isolated is the spouses and partners of serving personnel. Due to the transient nature of the Armed Forces and in particular the Army, the spouses and

partners of serving personnel often have to re-locate. We have explored the impact that this has on their employment opportunities but our research also suggests that this is a group that is at risk of becoming isolated.

- 6.53 The fact that the serving person is often on deployment means that a spouse will often find him or herself alone for lengthy periods of time. For those spouses with children this provides access to other mothers but for those without children it is a particularly isolating time. Furthermore, the nature of the military means that any events are often organised at a battalion level which means that spouses are not integrating with the spouses of those in other battalions. The Army also hosts a 'Family Day' but this is only for the local military community which limits the making of connections with the local civilian population.
- 6.54 We have mentioned the issues relating to community integration and how that could impact access to local employment opportunities. This could also have an impact on the isolation of spouses. We know that this is an issue in particular in those areas where spouses live "behind the wire". Service Family Accommodation linked to the RAF in Hambleton is decreasing which means that more families are buying houses in the local area and are therefore more integrated into the community. This implies that community integration issues can be assumed to be concentrated around Catterick. Further research is required to understand whether this is an issue for families based in York and Harrogate.
- 6.55 There are limited services which aim to reduce spouse loneliness and isolation in Catterick. There are limited facilities for community type interactions and there is a lack of events which take place outside of the working day. The creation of a community centre which is accessed and used by both civilian and military people would be beneficial and could be used to host coffee mornings, play groups and other social activities.
- 6.56 Another barrier for spouses in Catterick is the lack of public transport. If the spouse is without access to a car the area is particularly isolating as access to the main urban areas is limited.
- 6.57 Job Centre Plus in Richmond has identified that isolation is a particular risk for spouses in Catterick and has therefore begun to organise events which bring together the local and the military communities. This includes hosting job fairs which are open to the Armed Forces Community and civilian community. There are plans for further integrated events, such as coffee mornings and wellbeing events, though there is a lack of available locations to host these types of events.

Directory of services for spouses at risk of becoming isolated		
Service	Location	Type of support
Job Centre Plus	North Yorkshire	Services available for all, but specific support provided to members of the Armed Forces Community, such as employment preparation support, job fairs and links with employers. Richmond providing specific assistance to community integration.
Hive and Army Welfare Service	Catterick (covering Topcliffe, Ripon and	The information and signposting branch of the Army Welfare

	Dishforth); and York (linked to Leconfield)	Service. For serving and their families.
Army Families Federation	National	Local presence to provide support for service families by offering advice. At a national level AFF campaign for improvements to services.
Parents 4 Parents	North Yorkshire	Available to all. Providing peer support to parents in need either individually or through small support groups.

## Access to housing and mental health services

### Housing

- 6.58 Housing issues relate to veterans and those who are serving and not in military accommodation. The AFF Big Survey report from 2016 highlighted that families expressed doubt over whether civilian landlords would understand the needs of Service families and whether private landlords would respond to any special circumstances of military families, for example not being guaranteed to remain in the same house during deployment<sup>26</sup>.
- 6.59 In relation to the housing issues faced by veterans, research suggests that the lack of awareness about civilian housing and the lack of planning whilst in the Armed Forces is one of the biggest causes of accommodation problems, and that training about this needs to happen before transition<sup>27</sup>. It also suggests that securing suitable housing is one of the most difficult things to achieve during transition, especially for junior ranks or for those who had difficulties finding suitable employment.
- 6.60 The 2011 census demonstrated that around a third of veterans live in rented accommodation in North Yorkshire and, slightly fewer in York. This is greatest in Richmondshire (40.5%) followed by Ryedale and Hambleton (33%). Selby is the area with the lowest proportion of veterans in rented accommodation (20.6%). We know that nationally the private rented sector is the least sustainable and is often used as a last resort. Of those veterans in rented accommodation around two in five veterans are in privately rented accommodation. This rises to almost two thirds in Craven and Scarborough. Our research has identified issues relating to private landlords such as refusal to house those who are receiving housing benefit which can lead to use of 'rogue landlords' with properties in a very poor condition. Many private landlords do not offer contracts for over 6 months which means it is effectively temporary accommodation.
- 6.61 Research with local authorities shows that housing is an area in which policies and criteria are adopted in order to reflect the needs of the Armed Forces Community<sup>28</sup>. Anecdotally, local authorities in North Yorkshire and York mention that housing is a core focus in terms of the services they provide for veterans. Despite this, few local authorities collect data on the housing needs of

<sup>26</sup> <https://aff.org.uk/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/AFFbigsurveyfullbrieffinal.pdf>

<sup>27</sup> Veterans Transition Review 2014

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.fim-trust.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Covenant-Report-2nd-Ed.pdf>

veterans in their districts. The only way to have more data on the housing needs of veterans is to begin asking the question of whether those accessing housing services have ever served in the Armed Forces and to make use of the data that is collected on a regular basis.

- 6.62 Our qualitative research suggests that there is a shortage of housing available for single men and that homelessness is a significant issue in the Catterick area.
- 6.63 The Beacon is located in Catterick and has 31 one-bed flats for single veterans in the area without access to housing. It has been running from Riverside since the year 2000. People using this service often have a mix of complex needs and have access to support workers, health and wellbeing support, and access to training and skills development.
- 6.64 SPACES (Single Persons Accommodation Centre for Ex-Services) is a housing advice service which is also located at the Beacon, and provides support to ex-service personnel across the country. The service targets Service leavers who are vulnerable and has links with housing and veteran support services across the country.

Directory of services for access to housing		
Service	Location	Type of support
Local authority housing	District level	Housing teams support those in need of social housing.
Social housing: Broadacres	North Yorkshire and York	Provision of social housing across the region.
The Beacon	Catterick	Supported housing for homeless veterans in Catterick.
SPACES	Catterick/national	A housing advice and service for single veterans designed to help them find appropriate housing when they leave the Armed Forces.

### Mental health

- 6.65 National research suggests that around one in five veterans have a mental illness, which is lower than the general population. Call to Mind<sup>29</sup> suggested that veterans with a mental illness may have needs related to pre-enlistment factors, physical health issues that have correlations with mental health, and due to overcoming stigma. These needs can present in the form of PTSD, self-harm and suicide, where veterans under the age of 24 are at higher risk of suicide than civilian and serving populations, and substance misuse issues.
- 6.66 There is evidence which suggests that some mental health problems can be linked to a combination of pre-service and post-service vulnerabilities such as substance abuse, homelessness and unemployment<sup>30</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> FiMT 2017

<sup>30</sup> Veterans Transition Review 2014

- 6.67 The Gurkha Health Needs assessment identified concerns around the recognition and prioritisation of mental health. It also identified that the poor recording of ethnicity meant analysis was challenging<sup>31</sup>.
- 6.68 In particular the mental health needs of female veterans are largely unknown.
- 6.69 There are a number of services provided through the NHS for veterans with mental health needs<sup>32</sup>. The NHS Complex Treatment Service (CTS) and the Veteran Transition Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS) is provided to veterans in North Yorkshire by the Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust.
- 6.70 The veterans Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS) was launched in 2017 and provides community-based treatment for veterans and those transitioning out of the Armed Forces. It aims to recognise the signs of mental health problems early as well as provide support for more complex mental health difficulties. While the core focus is that of supporting the needs of those with mental health problems, it provides a holistic service by supporting additional needs that could impact the mental health of a person, such as housing, employment, and dealing with finances. For those veterans with more complex mental health problems, the CTS provides intensive care and treatment. Anecdotal evidence suggests that although veterans are prioritised, there are access issues to these services due to there being large waiting lists. Sometimes, veterans in difficult circumstances find it challenging to make appointments, and currently, if this is the case, they have to go back to their GP and be re-referred, making the process much longer.
- 6.71 Information and data is collected by the NHS trusts which provide the services mentioned above. We have not been able to access it for this research and therefore we are unable to use it to inform level of need in the area. Data collected about the types of issues that require support for those people engaged with the TILS would be particularly useful for local authorities. We are not aware that this data is shared in a way that is useful.
- 6.72 While there are a number of services available for veterans and those in transition, our research has identified a lack of action taken earlier on during a serving career. Mental health can often be hidden, especially if family members are not around, and therefore difficult to identify in its early stages. Anecdotally, personnel can have difficulties raising mental health issues due to the culture of the Armed Forces. It is important that mental health issues are acknowledged and tackled much earlier, and the Armed Forces have the biggest role to play in enabling this.
- 6.73 Furthermore, the qualitative research has identified that spouses and partners of those serving in the Armed Forces are at risk of becoming isolated. The impact of this potential isolation on mental health is currently unknown, both at a local and national level.

Directory of services for access to mental health services		
Service	Location	Type of support
Phoenix House	Catterick	Recovery centre for serving and veterans.

<sup>31</sup> Gurkha and Nepalese Health Needs Assessment, North Yorkshire County Council (2017).

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/military-healthcare/nhs-mental-health-services-for-veterans/>

Combat Stress	National	Charity providing support and treatment for veterans with trauma-related mental health problems. Online, helpline and community support.
NHS TILS	Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust	Support in mental health and in removing barriers to issues.
NHS CTS	North Yorkshire	Support for veterans with more complex mental health needs.
North Yorkshire Horizons	North Yorkshire	Drug and alcohol recovery service.
First Light Trust	Scarborough	An organisation for veterans in any difficult circumstances. Provide advice and guidance, signpost to services and help develop hobbies. They also have café community hubs in a number of locations.

## Reservists

- 6.74 Data from October 2017 suggested that there were 870 Volunteer Reserves and 140 Regular Reserves (ex-Regular Service personnel who retain a liability to be called up for military service in times of need) in North Yorkshire (not including York)<sup>33</sup>.
- 6.75 Qualitative research has identified a number of areas where Reservists may need extra support or have particular needs because of their Service. Many Reservists spoke about the lack of support from their employers, as mentioned in the earlier section.
- 6.76 The training for Reservists is generally in the evenings and weekends and does not affect those working in standard working hour positions. For those in shift work this can cause problems or reflect badly on those who may have to decline shifts, and some local employers have declined to employ Reservists due to the fact that it will impact shift patterns. Each year, Reservists are required to undertake a two-week block training, which many employers do not recognise, which results in Reservists having to take this time out of their annual leave.

*“In an ideal world, employers would give extra days for Reservists”*

- 6.77 There are also issues around perception. Research identifies the reluctance of some employers in employing reservists due to disruption and costs<sup>34</sup>. A survey of employers undertaken by Defence Relationship Management (DRM) highlighted that employers believed that reservists place additional pressure on them. Equally, the reservists we spoke to often sensed the perception from employers they have been engaged with that they would not want to employ a reservist. This meant that some of them had declined to tell employers about their Service, unless it was absolutely necessary.

<sup>33</sup>

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/684031/2018-02751.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/684031/2018-02751.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> Veterans Transition Review, Lord Ashcroft 2014

“[We need to] advertise and communicate the benefits more. For example, the benefits for employers for employing reservists include crossover of skills.”

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- 6.78 Reservists also spoke about the disadvantage they face in accessing services which Regular serving personnel can access. This relates to both access to discount type services, but also healthcare for military related injuries.
- 6.79 In the event of deployment, Reservists and their families have similar needs to Regular serving personnel. In particular, support provided to the children of Reservists is unknown as they do not receive Service Pupil Premium yet if a parent of a Reservist child is posted away from home it is likely that the child will have similar feelings of anxiety and worry mentioned in the section above.
- 6.80 Therefore, the particular needs of reservists can be summarised as:
- Returning to employment after mobilisation.
  - Employer understanding of the Reservist role and its requirements, such as additional leave, and a lack of understanding of the additional skills a Reservist may bring to a role.
  - The access of military services when in service.
  - Culture mix: military/civilian/Reservists presents unique perspectives, and the potential role of this in increasing the understanding of the Armed Forces.
- 6.81 Based on the findings above, we recommend:
- All local authorities to lead by example and put in place policies which support Reservists and demonstrate the benefits of employing Reservists.
  - Local authorities to work with employers to identify the benefits to their business of employing reservists.

Directory of services for Reservists		
Service	Location	Type of support
Reserve Forces and Cadets Association	Yorkshire and the Humber	Provide support to Reserve forces in the area. They also engage with employers to promote the work of the Reserves in the local community.
SSAFA	National	Provide a range of services for Reservists.

## 7 Conclusions and recommendations

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7.1 The objective of this needs assessment is to help the councils and other service providers in York and North Yorkshire agree what action they should take to better meet the needs of the Armed Forces Community in the area.

7.2 On the basis of this research we have identified three priority areas in which action is required:

- Enabling and encouraging businesses and other organisations to become more Armed Forces-friendly employers;
- Better targeting of support to meet the needs of the Armed Forces Community underpinned by action to better understand those needs;
- Improved collaboration between the Armed Forces and public service providers to manage the transition, particularly for early service leavers and people at risk of facing challenging circumstances.

7.3 We have made one key recommendation and a number of other recommendations for each of these three areas.

### Armed Forces friendly employment

7.4 **We recommend that the councils in York and North Yorkshire should encourage more businesses and organisations to sign the Armed Forces Covenant and participate in the Employer Recognition Scheme, including through collaboration with local chambers of commerce and other business organisations.**

7.5 We recommend that this work should focus on promoting the benefits of being an Armed Forces-friendly business, and work with employers to demonstrate the skills of those who have been in the military, how they can be translated into the workforce and the other benefits which ex-service personnel, reservists and spouses bring as employees.

7.6 We recommend that councils and military partners such as the RFCA and DRM regional managers should share good practice of those employers which are supportive of the Armed Forces Community.

7.7 We recommend that councils and local public services lead by example and provide flexible employment opportunities to spouses and reservists.

7.8 We identified the unemployment or underemployment of working age veterans. We therefore recommend the provision of support in finding sustainable employment by councils and services such as:

- Networking events with Service leavers and employers
- Working with those in transition to provide them with a greater understanding of the civilian job market

- Access to bespoke education and training opportunities
- Access to work experience before completing transition

7.9 We identified that a significant proportion of veterans are in low skilled employment, suggesting that there is an underemployment challenge. We recommend greater engagement with veterans in this position to understand the reasons behind this and whether there are any barriers to higher skilled employment.

## Understanding and meeting need

**7.10 We recommend that the councils and other service providers should ensure that in appropriate circumstances people accessing services are asked whether they are a member of the Armed Forces Community, encourage other service providers to do the same and use the data collected to inform service provision and to better understand the needs of the community.**

7.11 The value of asking the question is twofold: first, to ensure that the member of the Armed Forces Community in need is given the appropriate provision of service at the earliest point possible. Second, to collect and analyse data on the level of need in an area which will better inform services.

7.12 In relation to spouses, we recommend in particular the collection of more data on this group by DWP who provide employment and benefit related support.

7.13 There are a number of findings around the need for more information sharing or more collaboration between the military, public services, councils and other organisations.

7.14 We identified that there are a number of schools in North Yorkshire and York with a large number of Service pupils and there are also a large number of schools in the region with a small number of Service pupils. We recommend a greater sharing of expertise between schools, including top tips and what works in supporting Service children. We also recommend a greater sharing of information between the Armed Forces, parents and schools.

7.15 We recommend that Armed Forces Champions are implemented in every school, including those with a low number of Service children. This would also facilitate the information sharing between schools. We also recommend that Armed Forces Champions link in with existing Service children meetings that are convened by City of York Council and North Yorkshire County Council.

7.16 We identified that spouses and partners are often isolated from the local community and therefore unaware of services that are available to them. We recommend the development of a network of organisations which provide services for spouses (both military and civilian), such as Job Centre Plus, the Hive, Parents for Parents, so that a more coordinated approach is enabled.

7.17 Older veterans were also identified as a group which is particularly difficult to engage with and this lack of engagement could be a barrier to them accessing services. We therefore recommend that organisations which provide services to this group share good practice and understanding on what works or what does not work. We also recommend that services available to them are more effectively promoted by developing a greater understanding of how to engage with this group.

7.18 We recommend councils and public services make better use of public spaces, such as library services, as a way to encourage integration between spouses and civilians, and vice versa.

- 7.19 We recommend the development of additional services for spouses and partners which aim to reduce isolation.

### **Collaboration on the transition**

- 7.20 **We recommend that the councils and other service providers should liaise with the Armed Forces to secure a more collaborative approach to managing the transition of Armed Forces personnel to civilian life, particularly in relation to early service leavers and people who are likely to face challenging circumstances.**
- 7.21 We recommend more collaboration between military services and public services, particularly in transition of those people who may require a type of service, such as support in finding housing, or mental health.
- 7.22 Research has identified that early service leavers are more likely to fall into difficult circumstances. We therefore recommend better data collection by those organisations providing services to ESLs, such as the military welfare services, or CTP and that this is shared, as appropriate, between public services.
- 7.23 We identified that many ESLs who leave the military before completing training at the Infantry Training Centre have often served for a few months, and often have lives to return to. Future work is necessary to scope the needs of the ESLs who have completed the ITC, or who have been in the military for over a year.

## 8 Appendix I: Data

### Armed Forces Community Population

#### Serving personnel and their families

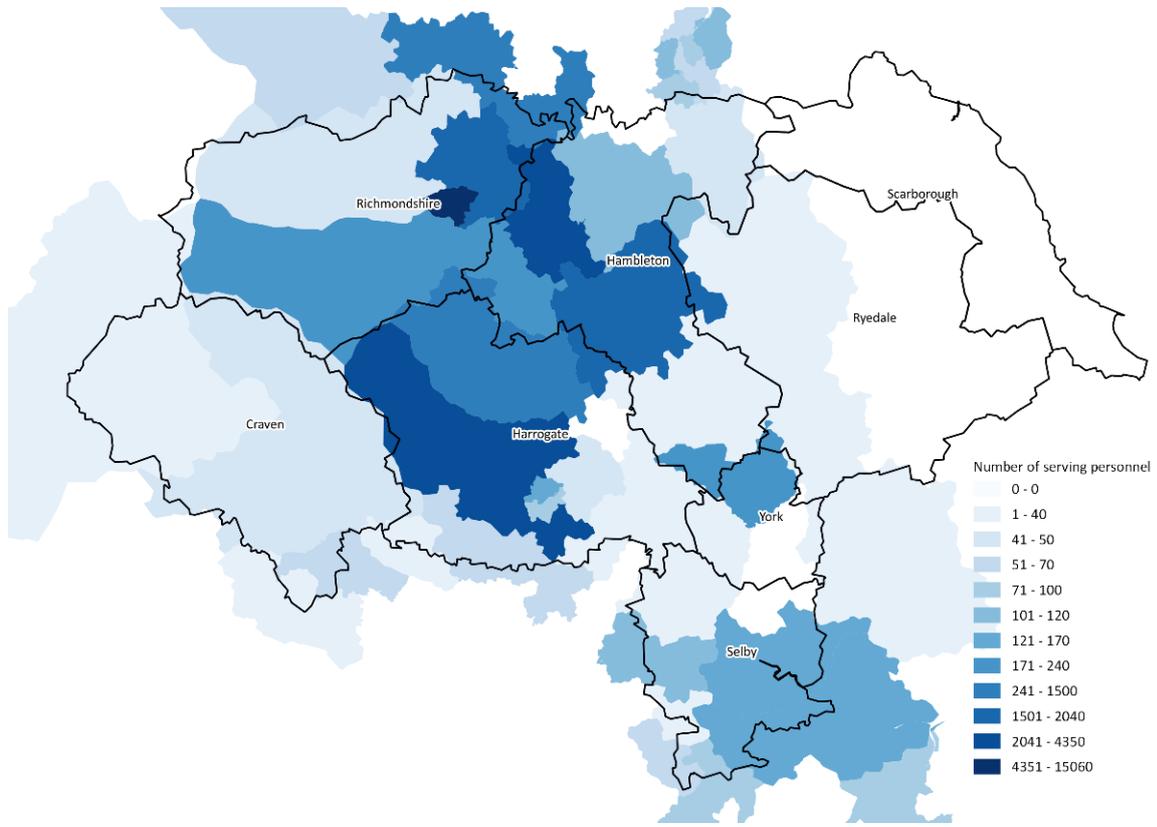
MoD Serving personnel statistics, Defence Statistics 2017.

	Army			RAF			RNRM		
	Officers	Other ranks	Total	Officers	Other ranks	Total	Officers	Other ranks	Total
<b>York</b>	170	550	<b>720</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>North Yorkshire</b>	770	8280	<b>9050</b>	240	1450	<b>1690</b>	20	~	<b>30</b>
<b>Richmondshire</b>	560	6120	6680	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Hambleton</b>	70	450	520	220	1370	1590	20	~	20
<b>Harrogate</b>	130	1710	1850	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Ryedale</b>	0	0	0	10	80	100	0	0	0
<b>Scarborough</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0-	0	0
<b>Selby</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0-	0	0
<b>Craven</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0-	0	0

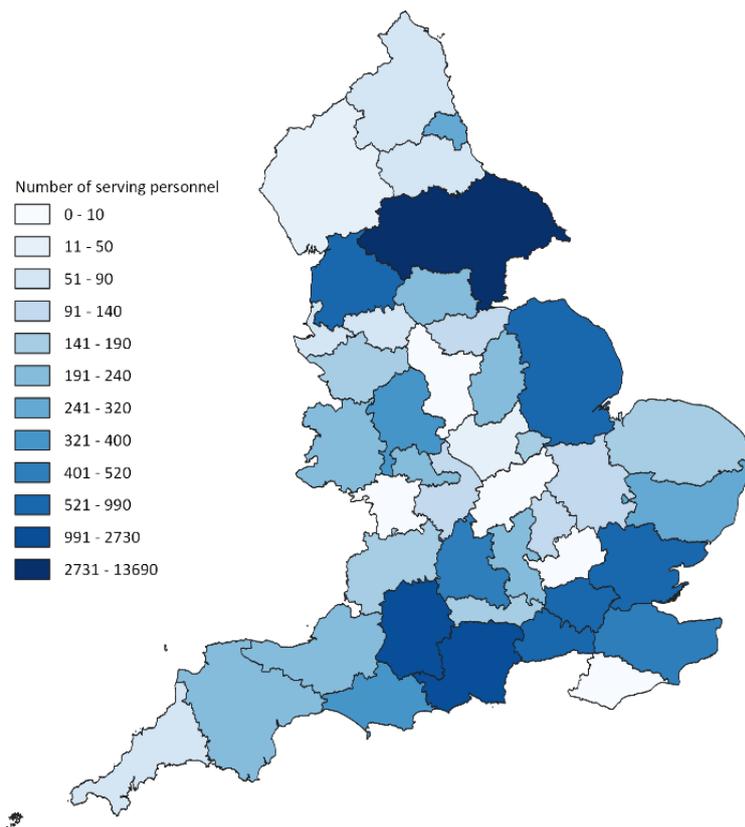
MoD employees (military and civilian), Defence Statistics October 2017 and ONS BRES 2017.

	Number of MoD employees	MoD jobs as % of all jobs	Concentration of MoD jobs compared to England	Concentration of MoD jobs compared to North Yorkshire
<b>Craven</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Hambleton</b>	2,410	5.8%	8.98	1.64
<b>Harrogate</b>	2,260	2.9%	4.42	0.81
<b>Richmondshire</b>	7,220	40.1%	62.00	11.31
<b>Ryedale</b>	190	0.7%	1.15	0.21
<b>Scarborough</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>Selby</b>	-	-	-	-
<b>North Yorkshire</b>	12,080	3.5%	5.48	1.00
<b>York</b>	1,160	1.1%	1.68	0.31
<b>England</b>	167,040	0.6%	1.00	0.18

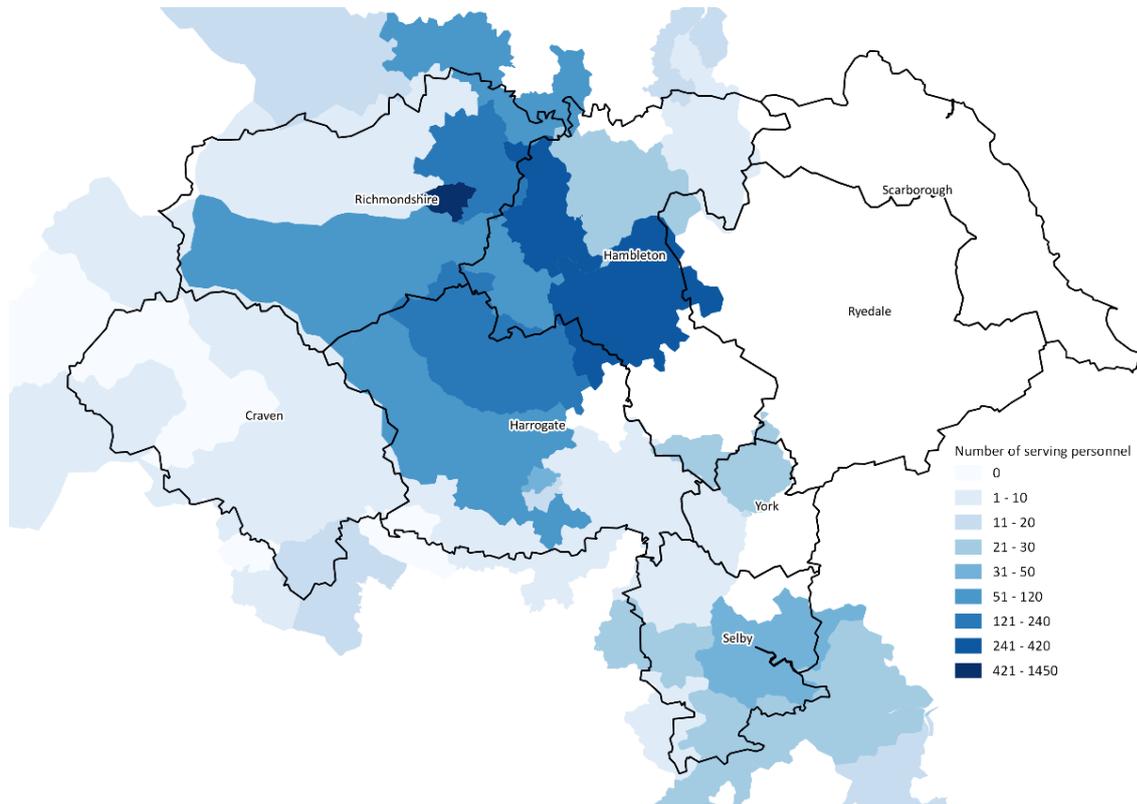
Number of regular UK Armed Forces service personnel by Postcode Districts in North Yorkshire, Defence Statistics 2018.



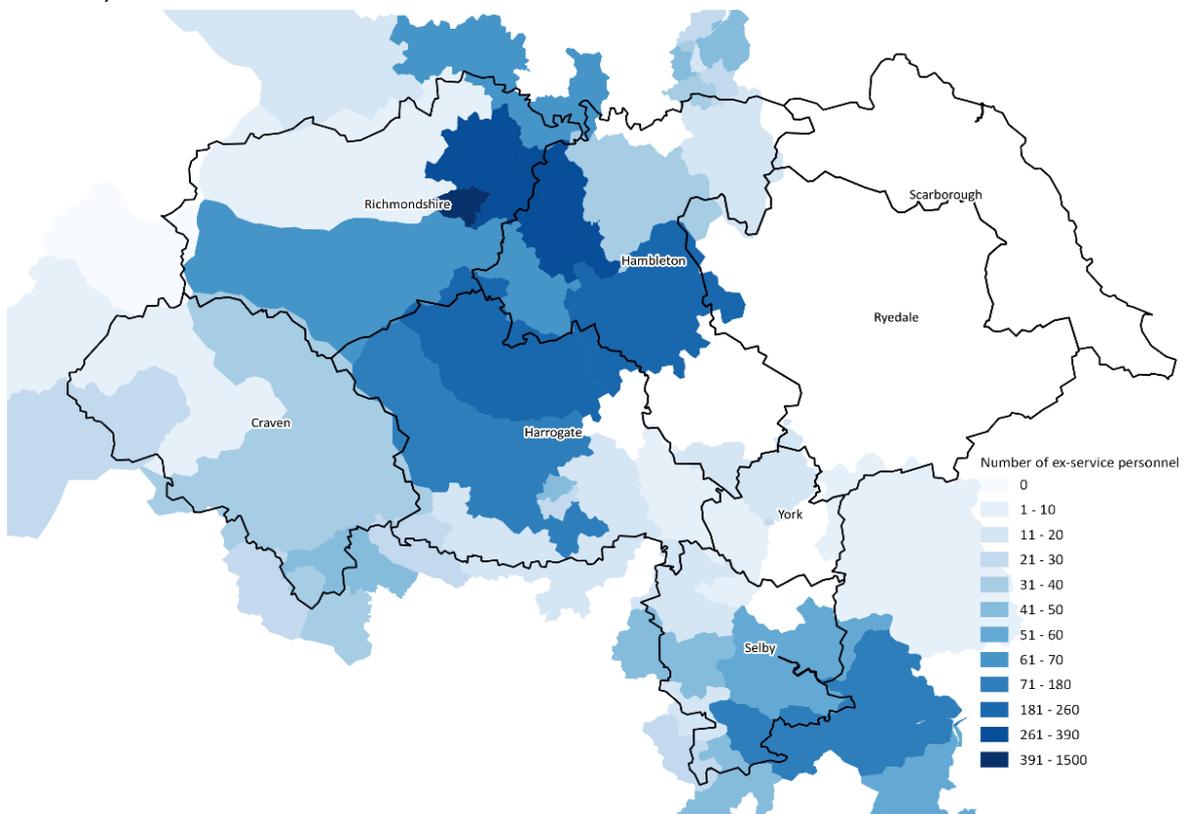
Organisation location for regular UK Armed Forces service personnel who have an address within North Yorkshire's postcode districts, Defence Statistics 2018.



Number of UK serving personnel who have a spouse or partner with a contact address in North Yorkshire's postcode districts, Defence Statistics 2018.



Number of UK Service personnel in the last 5 years with an exit location in North Yorkshire Postcode Districts, Defence Statistics 2018.

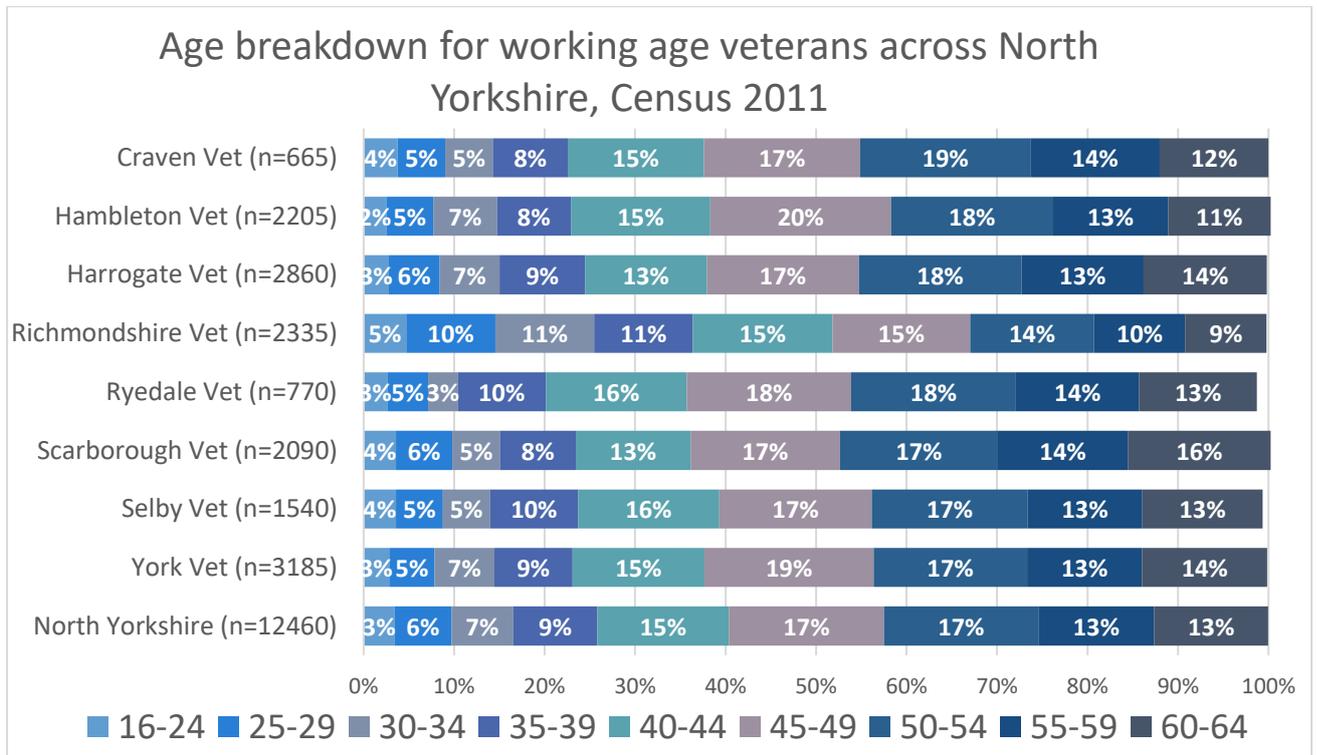


## Veterans

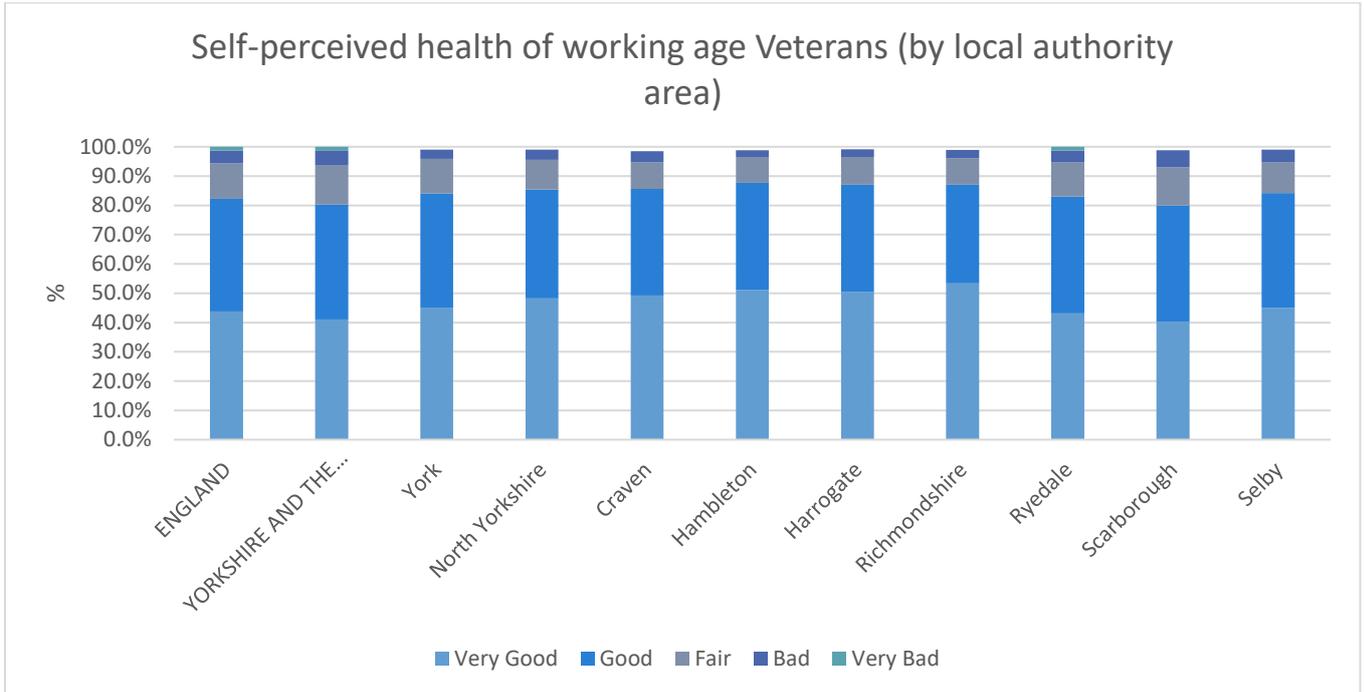
UK Armed Forces Veterans residing in Great Britain, 2016. Section 2: Location of Veterans, Annual Population Survey.

	Veterans	Non-Veterans	% of the population
<b>York</b>	14,000	223,000	6%
<b>North Yorkshire</b>	41,000	701,000	6%

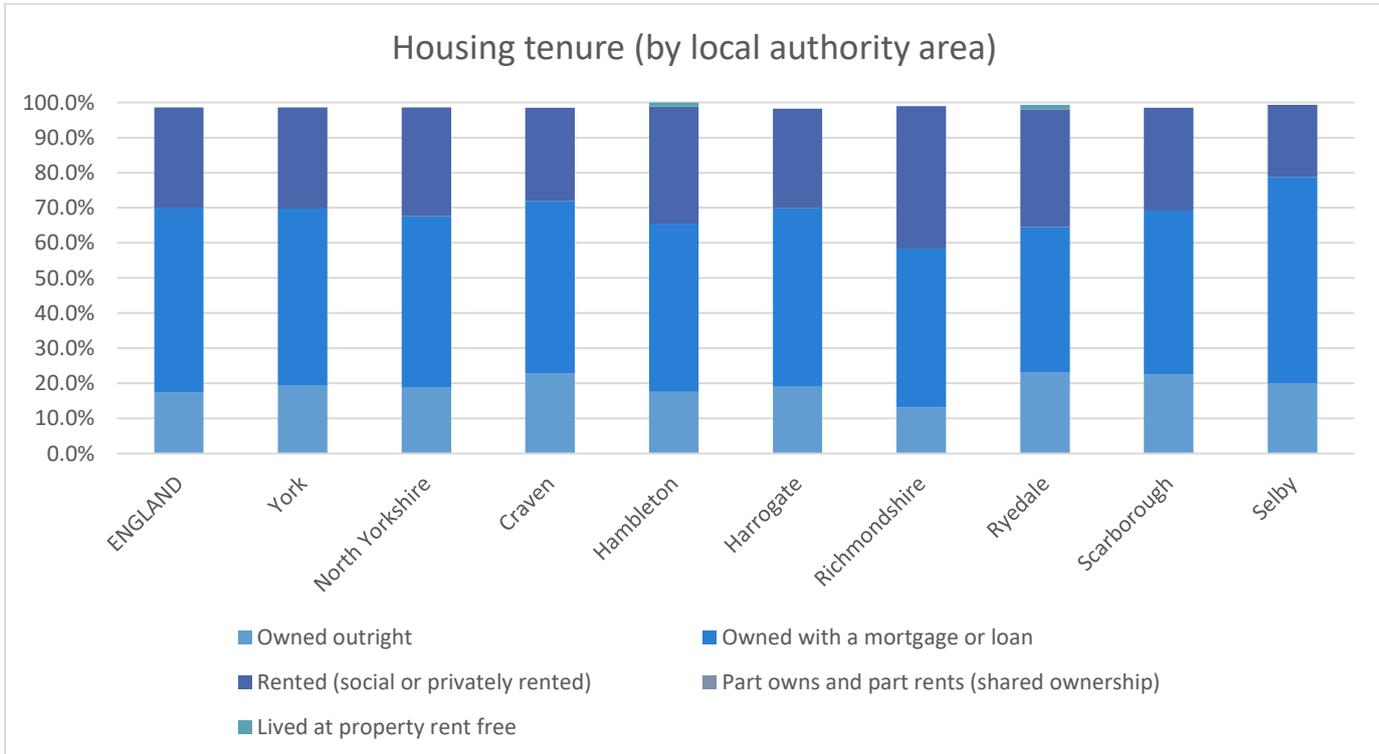
Age profile for working age veterans in North Yorkshire and York, Census 2011.



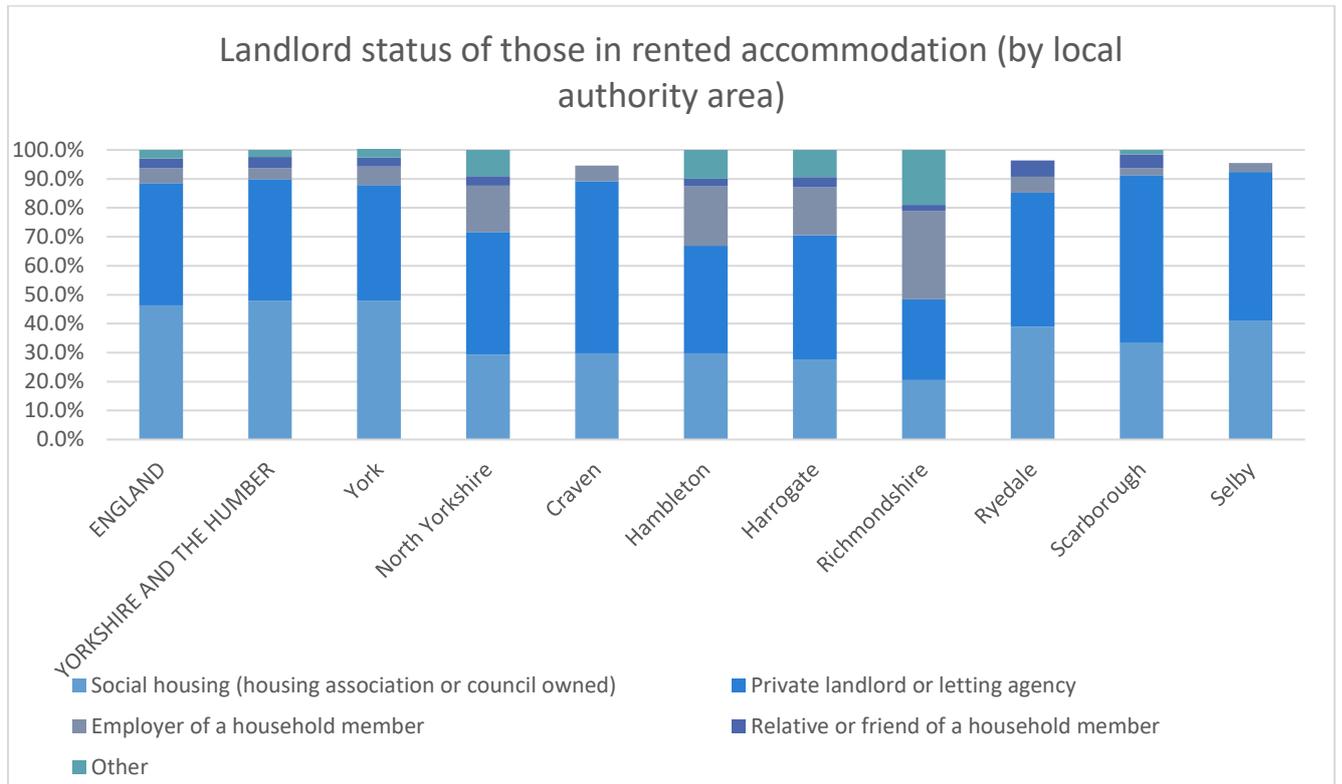
Self-perceived health for working age veterans in North Yorkshire and York, Census 2011.



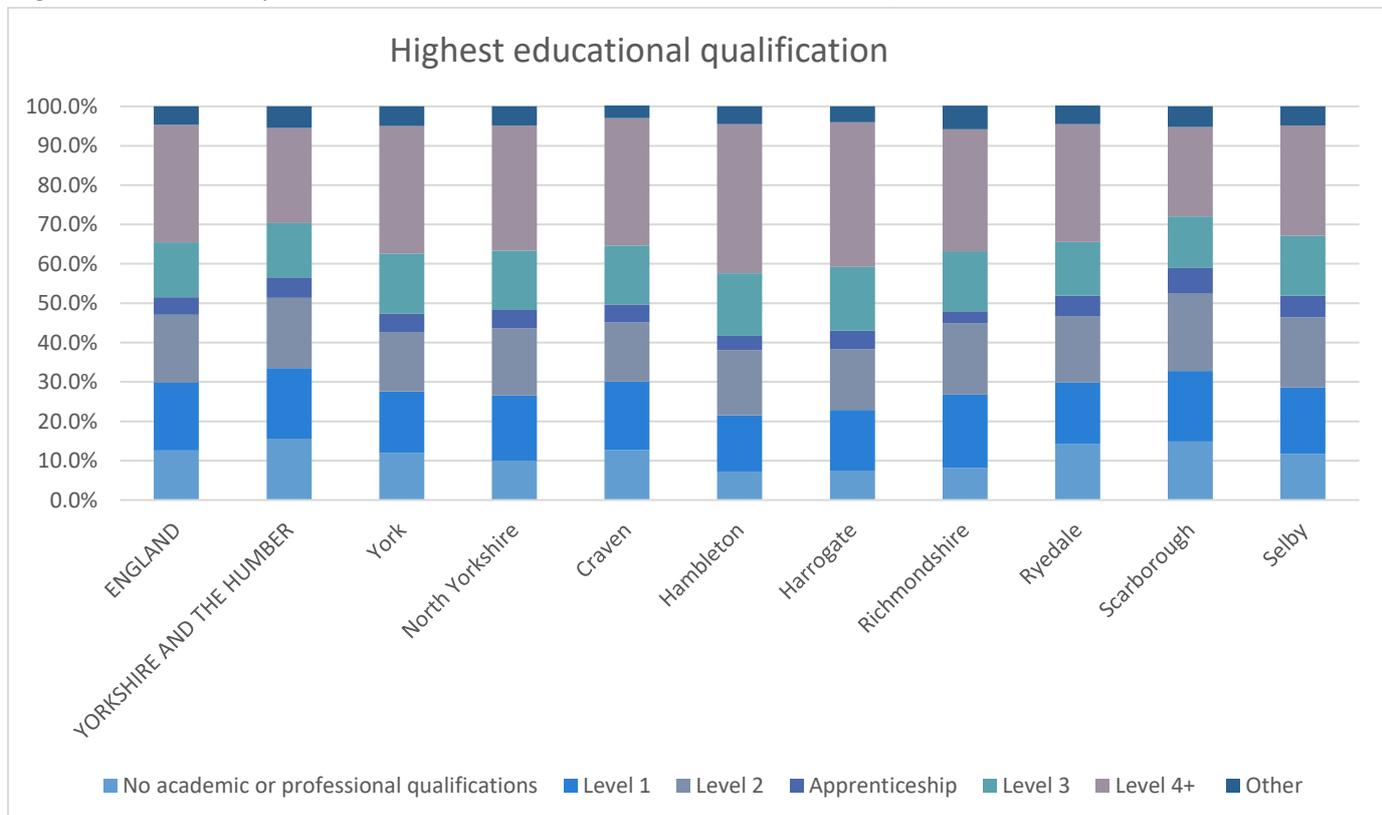
Housing tenure for working age veterans in North Yorkshire and York, Census 2011.



Landlord status of those in rented accommodation for veterans in North Yorkshire and York, Census 2011.

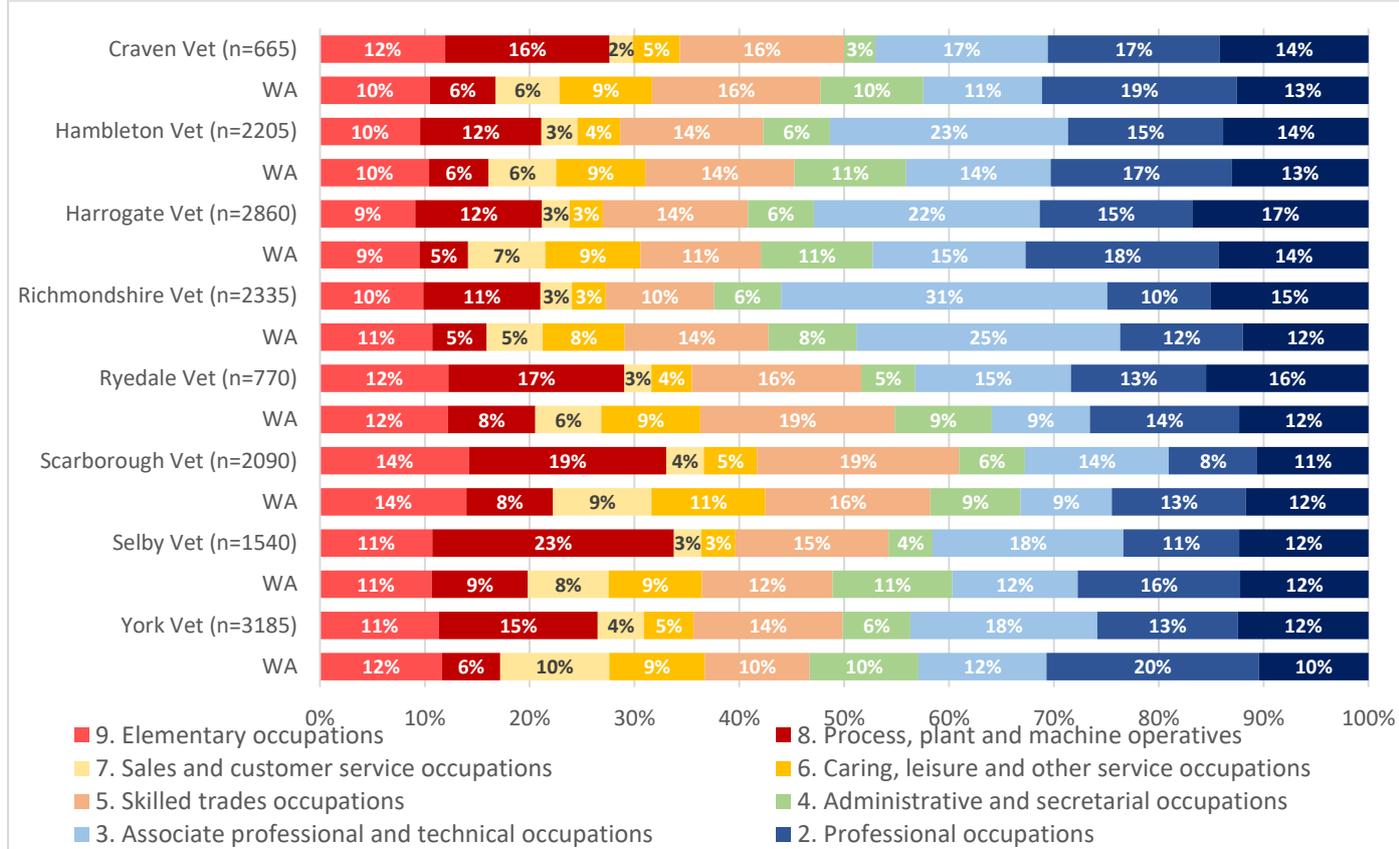


Highest educational qualification for veterans in North Yorkshire and York, Census 2011.





Occupation of working age veterans in comparison to the working age population in North Yorkshire and York, Census 2011.



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