

# Delivering on the Armed Forces Covenant

15

Presentation to Leicestershire  
Health and Wellbeing Board

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# Armed Forces Covenant (AFC)

## What is the AFC?

- A promise by the nation
- Reflected in local Covenant commitments
- Addressing disadvantage so armed forces personnel, past and present, get the same treatment and access to services as the civilian community
- UK-wide Strategy for Veterans published Nov 2018. Consultation to support implementation ended 21<sup>st</sup> Feb.
- Armed Forces Covenant Fund - £10m p.a.

# Government Strategy for our Veterans

## **Cross-cutting factors:**

- Collaboration between organisations
- Coordination of Veterans' services
- Data on the Veterans community
- Public perception and understanding

## **Key themes are:**

- Community and relationships
- Employment, education and skills
- Finance and debt
- Health and wellbeing
- Making a home in civilian society
- Veterans and the law

# Armed Forces Covenant in Practice

Local commitments by organisations vary but can include:

- Access and provision of services eg housing, healthcare, schools
- Supporting employment eg veterans and service leavers, reservists
- Working with and supporting cadet forces
- Discounted services
- Raising awareness and supporting community engagement
- Working in partnership
- Celebrating the contribution of the Armed Forces

# Armed Forces Community

- Data gaps and under-reporting - 2021 Census to include veterans.
- Covenant-funded 'Map of Need' in development
- In 2016\* estimated 2.5million UK Armed Forces Veterans across Great Britain (approx. 5% of household residents aged 16+ in England)
  - 98% white
  - 90% male
  - 63% aged 65 or over
  - 92% veterans compared to 89% non-veterans have a qualification but less likely to be at degree level (20% versus 30%)
  - 78% working age veterans in employment compared to 79% non-veterans
  - 75% veterans own their own home compared to 77% non-veterans

*\* Based on ONS annual population survey*

# Armed Forces Community Locally

Locally based / connected regiments and facilities include:

- Chetwynd Barracks, Chilwell - 7th Infantry Brigade / HQ East 'The Desert Rats'
- Kendrew Barracks, Cottesmore – Royal Anglian Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps, Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment
- Melton Defence Animal Training Regiment including Canine and Equine Training Squadrons, Veterinary Training Squadron
- Army Reserves incl Medical Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps, Royal Yeomanry, Royal Anglians
- Army Reserve Centres eg Ulverscroft Rd, Glen Parva, Loughborough
- Defence and Medical Rehabilitation Centre in Stanford Hall, Rushcliffe
- Local cadet forces across LLR

# Armed Forces Community in Leicestershire

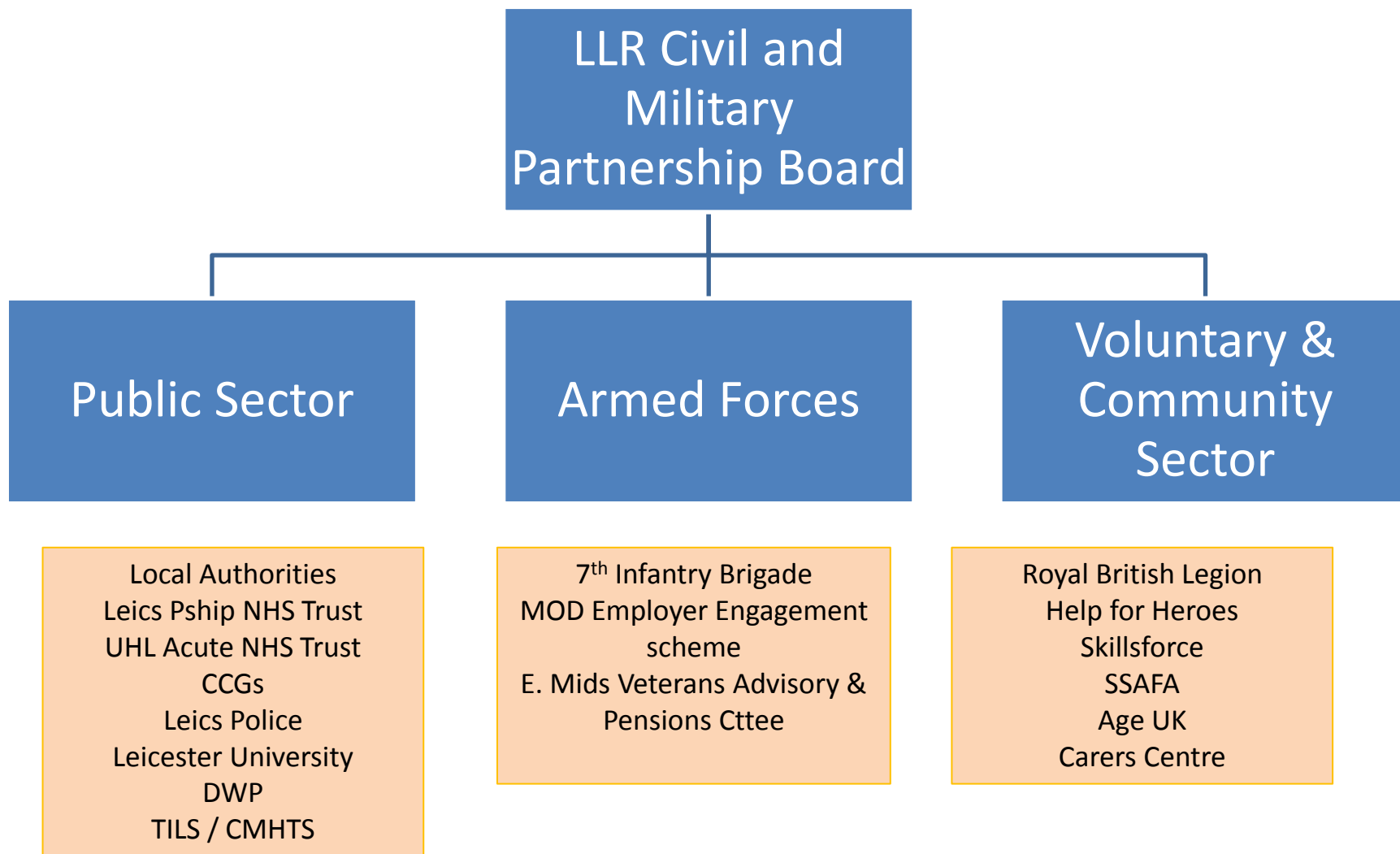
In East Midlands veterans estimated to make up 6-8% of population  
(i.e 34,500 – 46,000 in Leicestershire)

Some local indications of numbers in the County:

- Spring term school census identified 480 children for service child pupil premium
- No rough sleepers identifying as veterans in Leicester
- 155 veterans from Leicestershire in HM Prisons

*But*.....does everyone declare their Armed Forces service??

# Working in Partnership





# Armed Forces & Health Needs

- Evidence suggests Veterans' health and wellbeing is generally consistent with – or better than – the rest of the population
- PTSD prevalence broadly comparable to general population as is common mental disorder.
- KCL research suggests conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan may have led to an increase in PTSD - 9% compared to 5% for those not deployed. 23
- Early service leavers (<4 yrs), deployed reservists, combat troops, those with pre-existing risk factors - all at increased risk
- Suicide and self-harm rates statistically significantly lower than UK general population except males under 20 which are equivalent to
- *Implications of public perception and stigma?*
- *Only 25 – 50% who need help actually seek it?*

# Armed Forces & Health Provision

- National strategies: Defence People Health and Wellbeing and Defence People Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Priority access for service-related conditions subject to clinical need
- Specific GP coding at registration for veterans
- ‘Veteran friendly GP practices’ - Military Veteran Aware Accreditation
- Veterans and Armed Forces issues now part of the GP curriculum
- Veterans Trauma Network
- Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS) and Complex Mental Health Service
- Veterans Gateway support and signposting

# Health and Wellbeing Board Support

- Links with Civil and Military Partnership Board
- Awareness raising especially primary care
- Promotion of the veteran friendly GP accreditation scheme
- Addressing data gaps and under-reporting
- Consideration of Armed Forces needs and provision as part of wider needs assessments

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