

Somerset's Military Community

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- How many members of the military community in Somerset?
- What are the community's health and social needs?
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Numbers

Regulars	Reservists	Dependants	Veterans	Total
3,171 (census)	480	1,800 (school children only)	7,400 (Pension recipients)	
3,270 (MoD)		3,600 (adults and children)	13,000 (modelled estimate)	
		46,000 (all & veteran dependants)		
3,250	500	2,000 – 46,000	13,000	19,000– 62,000
2011 Census: 2017 MoD data	Modelled from regional estimates	MoD data 2019; modelled data 2017)	MoD data 2019; 2017)	Estimates

So what?

- Large numbers indicate the significance of the community in Somerset.
- Large numbers mean that most members of the community are 'average'.
- Poor local data mean that we often have to use national data instead, and may miss out significant differences or variation within Somerset.



Department
of Health &
Social Care

NHS

England

Jackie Doyle-Price MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of
State for Mental Health,
Inequalities and Suicide Prevention

Kate Davies OBE
Director of Health & Justice,
Armed Forces and Sexual
Assault Services Commissioning

**DATA AVAILABLE FOR SERVICE PLANNING FOR VETERANS AND
THE DELIVERY OF THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT**

To: Chairs of Health and Wellbeing Boards

It is also important how the data is used. There is a diverse population spread of veterans, so an aggregated collection of data will not work as effectively as when broken down to address the local issues. A number of services provided to

somersetintelligence.org.uk

Available data can be found on the Somerset Intelligence website

The screenshot displays the Somerset Intelligence website interface. At the top left is the Somerset Intelligence logo, and at the top right is a search bar with the text "Search our site" and a "Search" button. A navigation menu on the left lists various categories such as "Home Page", "Ward Community Profiles", "District Community Profiles", "Electoral Division Profiles", "Joint Strategic Needs Assessment", "Census 2011", "People & Neighbourhoods", "Population Estimates", "Population Projections", "Household Estimates and Projections", "Indices of Multiple Deprivation", "Migration", "Equality and Diversity", "Armed Forces Community", "Veterans and Dependants", "Serving Personnel and Dependants", "Rurality", "Rural Roadshows", "Somerset Rural Youth Project", "Commissioning Locality Profiles", "Digital Inclusion", "Internet Speeds", and "Electoral Statistics".

The main content area is titled "Armed Forces Community" and includes a breadcrumb trail: "You are here: Home > Home > People & Neighbourhoods > Armed Forces Community". Below this, there is a section titled "Serving Personnel and Dependants" with a sub-section "2011 Census". The text states: "The Office for National Statistics (ONS) Census in 2011 asked respondents whether they worked in the armed forces. The key facts for Somerset are as follows:-".

- 3,171 said they worked for the armed forces and were usual residents of Somerset
- Almost two in three (65%) lived in a household and just over one in three (36%) were in a communal establishment (principally the bases of RNAS Yeovilton in South Somerset or Norton Camp Taunton Deane)
- The armed forces population was much younger than the general population in the 16-34 age group and only 7.5% were aged 50 or more
- 92% were male
- 65% of those aged 16-24 lived in a communal establishment
- 65% of those aged 16-24 lived in a communal establishment employees lived elsewhere.
- Armed forces broadly reflect the ethnic profile of the county's population (171 people)

Below this is a section titled "Veterans and Dependants" with a sub-section "Ex-Service Community Survey Report". The text states: "Following its first major survey in 2005, The Royal British Legion (RBL) conducted a comparative study in 2014 to estimate current and projected numbers of veterans and dependants in the UK and identify their health and wellbeing needs (see below)."

Below this is a section titled "Ministry of Defence statistics" with a sub-section "The Ministry of Defence (MoD) publishes numbers of its military personnel on an annual basis on the Gov.uk website. The key facts for Somerset are as follows:-".

- At 1st October 2017, there were 4,670 MoD personnel working in Somerset
- Seven out of ten (70%) were military and three in ten (30%) were civilian
- MoD personnel were employed primarily in the Naval service
- Overall numbers of personnel declined from 5,400 in October 2016 to 4,670 in October 2017

At the bottom right, there is a section titled "Did you know" with a sub-section "There were 1,455 road casualties in 2014". The text states: "These 1,455 were 22 fatal, 1,245 'serious' and 1,245 'slight'. This represented a fall of 10% from the number of road casualties in 2013 compared to a national decrease of 4%." Below this is a link to "Read our SINEPost monthly newsletter".

Characteristics of those in need

Combat Stress (2010): a 'typical' new referral

- 44 years old
- Ex-Army
- Childhood trauma, neglect, poor care giving
- Multiple, traumatic exposures
- Ultimatum from family on behaviour
- Multiple house moves, employers, unemployment or homelessness
- Many children, mostly not in touch
- History of domestic violence
- Significant physical illness
- Classically diagnosed with PTSD, depression, alcohol abuse
- No prior intervention & NHS had not helped (for a variety of reasons)

Suicide

- Rates are up to four times the national average for civilians among some service groups.
- Risk in ex-Army males aged under 24 years is two to three times higher than for the same group in the general and serving populations.

Housing

- Veterans housing difficulties include:
 - Inadequate transition planning from the Armed Forces
 - A shortage of affordable accommodation
 - Problems sustaining a tenancy
 - Relationship breakdown
 - For single veterans, unfamiliarity with:
 - housing market
 - welfare system
 - budgeting

Homefinder	Former member of the Armed Forces (last 5 years)	Serving member of Forces moving due to injury, condition or disability from service	Serving or former reservist who needs to move because of a serious injury	Armed forces partner separated (last 12 months)	Bereaved spouse /partner of leaving Services Family housing	Total
Mendip DC	6	5	1	4	2	18
Sedgemoor DC	9	5	8	4	5	31
Somerset West & Taunton*	24	7	13	10	7	63
South Somerset DC	12	3	8	16	4	43
Total	51	20	30	34	18	153

*Figure probably high because Taunton is the county town.

Criminal justice

- More likely than average to be imprisoned for sexual or violent offences; generally older & may be a long gap between discharge and imprisonment
 - Likely that social deprivation draws people into the military, and is also a risk factor for imprisonment
- Somerset **Domestic abuse** service has had about 15 referrals per year in last two years from military families.
 - Mixture of current and former military
 - No distinctive patterns from small numbers

Why is the military community at risk?

1. Military personnel from more deprived communities and households '**bring their vulnerabilities with them**'. Many are young and male, including some who have left the military because of bad behaviour.
2. The **nature of military life** makes more vulnerable, for many particularly through relocation. Active combat poses extreme mental and physical threat. Macho military culture, including drinking, can make things worse.
3. Most members of the community fall into neither category. But some fall into both.

So what do we know?

- The military community is large:
 - So necessarily not, on average, very different from the county population as a whole.
- The military community is diverse in age and income:
 - Some serious need can be hidden in average figures
- Two small groups have the greatest need:
 - Young and recently discharged military personnel are at particular risk
 - There is a small cohort of older, ex-military rough sleepers in particular need

How could we get better data?

Better, local data will require the military community to be identified in Somerset's administrative systems.

- Members of the military community should **offer** information about their status when using public services such as health and social care.
 - This will benefit them in getting access to such services.
- Schools, social workers and medical practices need to **ask** consistently about military status.
 - There is, for instance, a pupil premium for schools

Can you help?

Any questions?