



# Profile of Staffordshire Armed Forces Veterans



August 2023

## Key Findings – Prevailing Characteristics of Staffordshire Veterans



More veterans are male (87.4%) than female (12.6%), with a similar pattern evident nationally.



Veterans tend to be older, with the over 50's accounting for 78.0% of all veterans.



Of our districts and boroughs, Stafford has the highest number (6,070) and proportion (5.3% of its population) of veterans in County, likely linked to the military presence at Beaconsfield.



77.4% served in the regular forces, 18.2% in the reserve forces and a further 4.4% in both the regular and reserve forces.



58.5% are married or in a registered civil partnership, though rates of separation and divorce are higher amongst veterans (14.9%) than in the general Staffordshire population (11.6%).



Most likely to identify as Christian, with rates of Christianity (66.7%) higher than in the general Staffordshire population (57.0%).



More likely to own a house outright (54.0%) than the general Staffordshire population (35.7%).



More likely to report being bad or very bad health (11.7% of Staffordshire veterans) compared to the whole of Staffordshire population (6.5%).



Prominence of Armed Forces and Widow(er)s Pension Schemes, particularly in Stafford.



Prominence of armed forces financial hardship funding, again particularly in Stafford.



## Introduction

This report is intended to bring together demographic trends, characteristics and basic support requirements of veterans residing in Staffordshire. It is not an exhaustive source of information, but aims to provide new insight to leadership teams across Staffordshire County Council, together with partners, to support decision-making and aid in considering the impact such decisions may have on our veteran population.

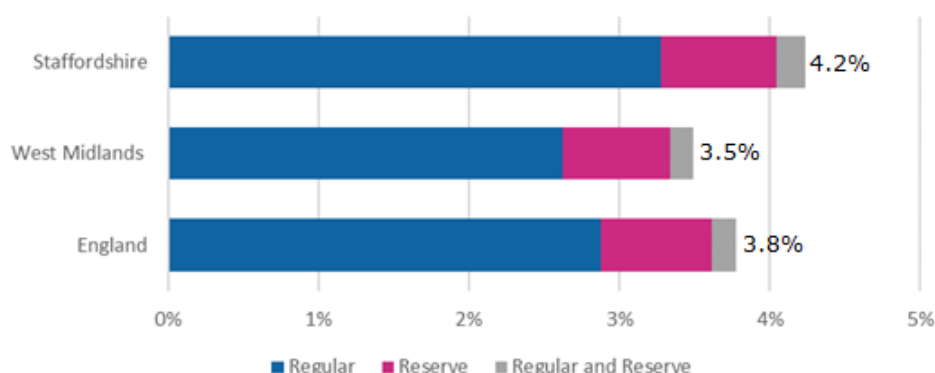
This report has been created using various sources of data including the 2021 Census data, Covenant Fund publications and British Medical Journal reports.

This report is subject to further review and update as new data sources are released.

## General Breakdown of Staffordshire Veterans

In the 2021 Census, 30,758 Staffordshire residents reported having previously served in the UK armed forces. This equates to 4.2% of the local adult population aged 16+. This proportion is above both the England (3.8%) and West Midlands (3.5%) figure.

**Figure 1 – Veteran Population Percentage**



Source: 2021 Census

Of these veterans, 77.4% (23,816) had previously served in the regular forces and 18.2% (5,587) in the reserve forces. A further 4.4% (1,355) served in both the regular and reserve forces.

The proportion of Staffordshire veterans who had served in the regular forces (77.4%) was higher than across England as a whole (76.3%) and the West Midlands (75.3%).



## Location

Notable numbers of veterans are present in all districts and boroughs of Staffordshire but they are most prevalent in Stafford, probably due to the army presence at Beaconsfield, accounting for 5.3% of the local population. They are least prevalent in East Staffordshire and Tamworth, accounting for 3.9% of the local population.

**Figure 2 – Veterans by District/Borough**

District/Borough	2021 Population Aged 16+	Served in Regular Forces, Reserve Forces or Both	% Served in Regular Forces, Reserve Forces or Both
Cannock Chase	82,478	3,414	4.1%
East Staffordshire	100,508	3,880	3.9%
Lichfield	88,596	3,607	4.1%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	103,183	4,129	4.0%
South Staffordshire	93,372	3,836	4.1%
Stafford	113,613	6,070	5.3%
Staffordshire Moorlands	80,855	3,323	4.1%
Tamworth	63,791	2,497	3.9%
<b>Stafford</b>	<b>726,396</b>	<b>30,756</b>	<b>4.2%</b>

Source: 2021 Census

A map showing a more detailed breakdown of the veteran population across Staffordshire is included in **Appendix 1**.

In total, 29,025 households in Staffordshire had at least one resident who had previously served in the UK armed forces (7.7% of all households) present at the time of the 2021 census. This was higher than both the England (7.0%) and West Midlands (6.5%) figures.

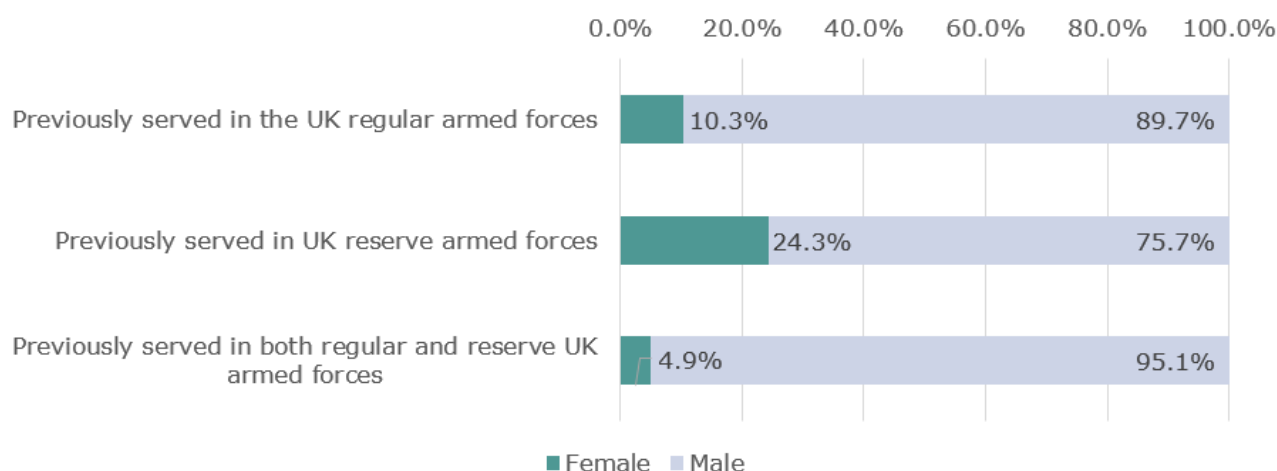
## Gender

Significantly more Staffordshire veterans are male (87.4%) than female (12.6%). This is slightly higher than the West Midlands average (87.0%) and England & Wales average (86.4%). For comparison, the whole of Staffordshire population is 49.5% male and 50.5% female.

When assessing reserve armed forces veterans in isolation, the difference between males and females was reduced. Males accounted for 75.7% of reserve armed forces and females accounted for 24.3%. **Figure 3** gives a breakdown of veteran population by gender and type.



**Figure 3 – Staffordshire veteran population by type and gender**



Source: 2021 Census

Although male veterans are more prominent in every district and borough, there remains some variation. Female veterans are most prevalent in Stafford accounting for 14.5% of all veterans and Cannock Chase the least prevalent at 11.4%. A gender breakdown for veterans in each district/borough is shown in **Figure 4**.

**Figure 4 – Veteran gender by district/borough**

District/Borough	Female Veterans	Male Veterans	Female Veteran Percentage Split	Male Veteran Percentage Split
Cannock Chase	390	3,020	11.4%	88.6%
East Staffordshire	465	3,415	12.0%	88.0%
Lichfield	450	3,160	12.5%	87.5%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	515	3,615	12.5%	87.5%
South Staffordshire	440	3,395	11.5%	88.5%
Stafford	880	5,195	14.5%	85.5%
Staffordshire Moorlands	420	2,900	12.7%	87.3%
Tamworth	310	2,190	12.4%	87.6%
Staffordshire	3,870	26,890	12.6%	87.4%

Source: 2021 Census

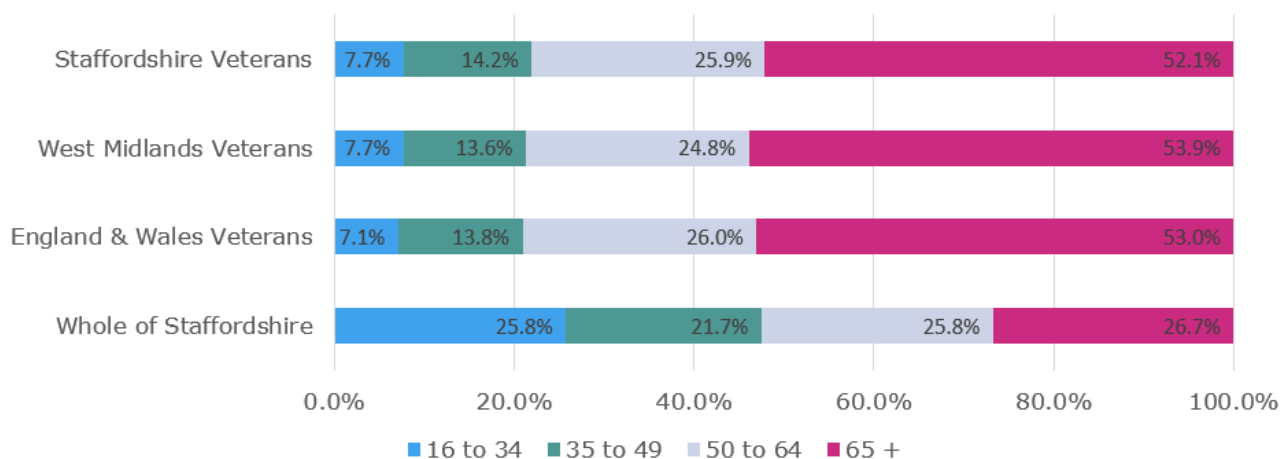
## Age

As might be expected, Staffordshire veterans tend to be older with the over 50's accounting for 78.0% of all veterans in Staffordshire. Conversely, veterans under the age of 35 account for just 7.7%. These figures are broadly in line with regional and national averages, as shown in **Figure 5**. For reference, a breakdown of the whole of Staffordshire population (16+) is also included.

Data has not been published by age and district/borough.



**Figure 5 – Staffordshire veterans by age**



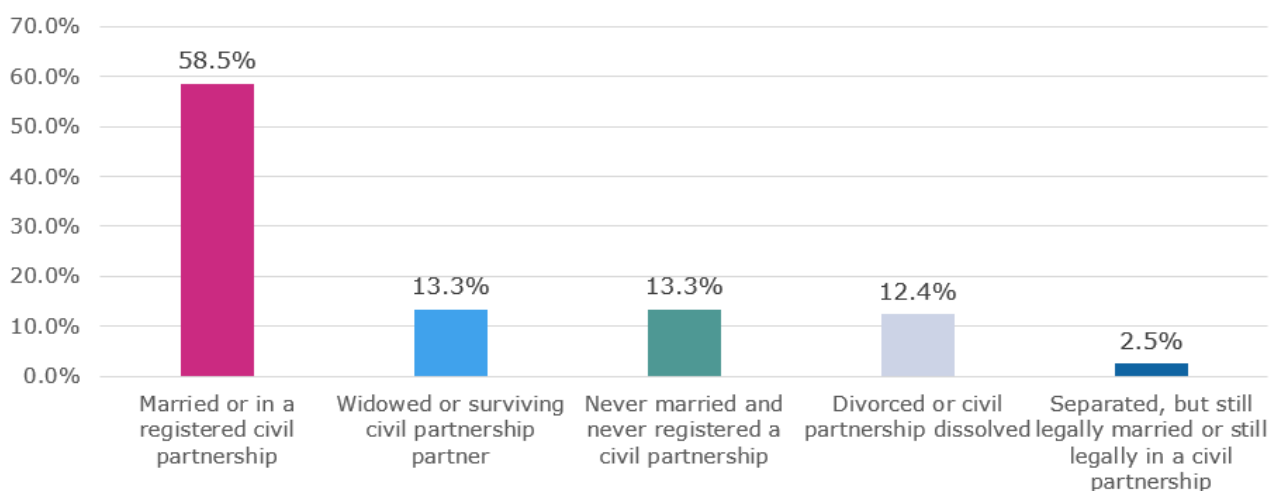
Source: 2021 Census

A further breakdown of veterans by working age can be found in **Appendix 2**.

## Partnership Status

The most common partnership status of Staffordshire is married or in a registered civil partnership (58.9%). 14.9% of Staffordshire veterans are separated or divorced. A full breakdown is shown in **Figure 6**, with further comparison to regional and national in **Figure 7**.

**Figure 6 – Staffordshire veterans by partnership status**



Source: 2021 census data



**Figure 7 – Veteran partnership status**

Partnership Status	England & Wales	West Midlands	Staffordshire
Never married and never registered a civil partnership	14.6%	14.9%	13.3%
Married or in a registered civil partnership	57.1%	56.4%	58.5%
Separated, but still legally married or still legally in a civil partnership	2.5%	2.4%	2.5%
Divorced or civil partnership dissolved	12.5%	12.2%	12.4%
Widowed or surviving civil partnership partner	13.4%	14.1%	13.3%

Source: 2021 census data

When compared to the whole adult population, rates of separation and divorce are higher amongst veterans. 14.9% of Staffordshire veterans are separated or divorced, compared to 11.6% of the Staffordshire adult population. This trend is even more pronounced in Tamworth (16.8%) and Stafford (16.1%). A full breakdown of those who are separated or divorced is shown in **Figure 8**.

**Figure 8 – Separation and divorce in Staffordshire**

District / Borough	Veterans	Whole of Staffordshire
Cannock Chade	15.5%	12.4%
East Staffordshire	15.6%	11.7%
Lichfield	12.7%	10.9%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	15.3%	11.5%
South Staffordshire	12.4%	10.7%
Stafford	16.1%	12.3%
Staffordshire Moorlands	14.8%	11.3%
Tamworth	16.8%	12.4%
<b>Staffordshire</b>	<b>14.9%</b>	<b>11.6%</b>

Source: 2021 Census

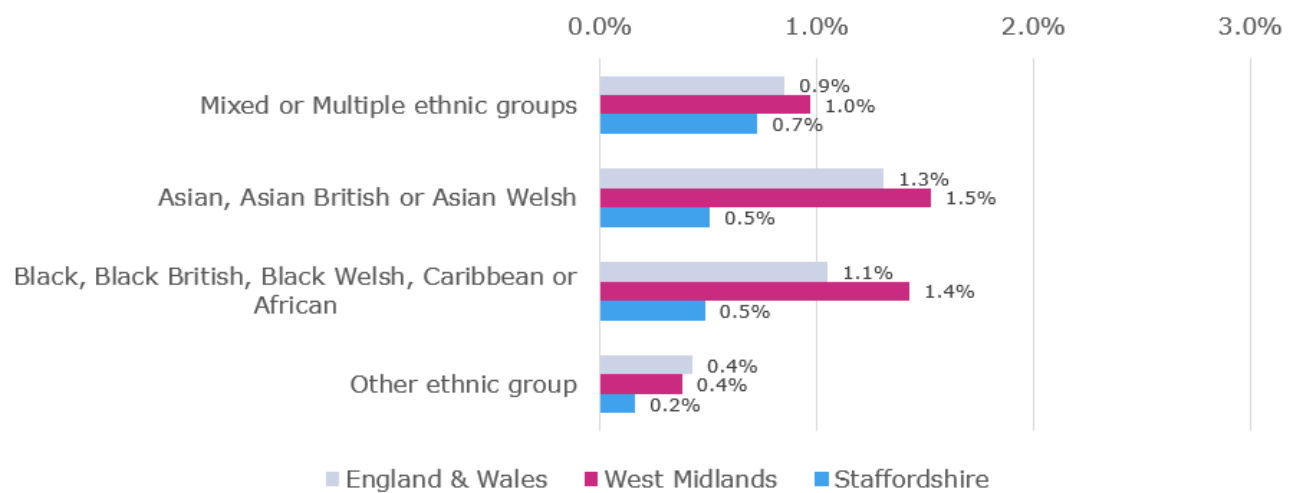
## Ethnic Group

The most prominent ethnicity of Staffordshire veterans is White (98.1%). This is broadly in line with regional and national trends and is similar to the whole adult population of Staffordshire. **Figure 9** shows the ethnic breakdown of respondents, in the remaining ethnic groups.

Data has not been published by ethnic group and district/borough.



**Figure 9 – Staffordshire veterans by ethnic group**

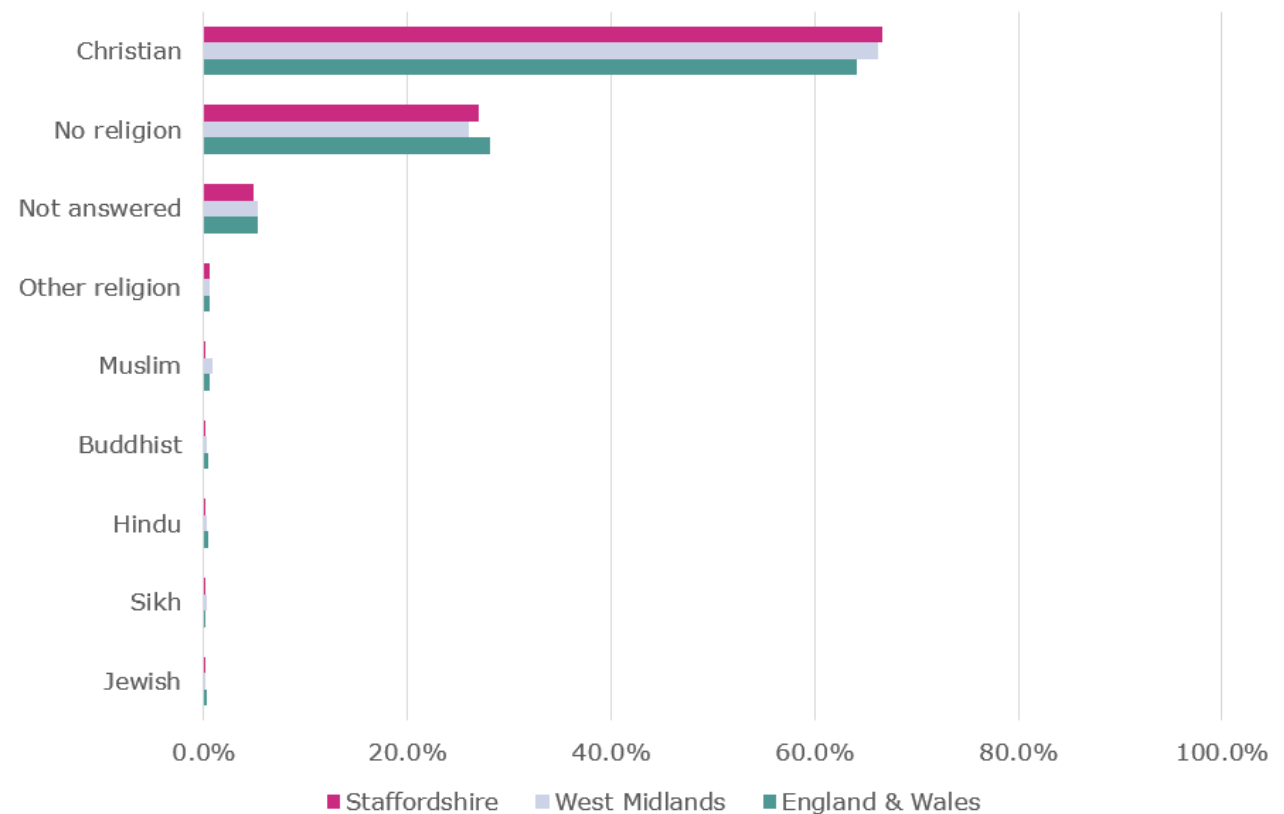


Source: 2021 Census

## Religion

Staffordshire veterans are most likely to identify as Christian (66.7%) or as having no religion (27.1%). This is broadly in line with regional and national trends for veteran populations, as shown in **Figure 10**.

**Figure 10 – Staffordshire veterans by religion**



Source: 2021 Census





Staffordshire veterans have a higher rate of Christianity (66.7%) than the whole of Staffordshire adult population (57.0%). Conversely, people stating they have no religion is lower amongst Staffordshire veterans (27.1%) than the whole of Staffordshire adult population (34.5%). The prominence of other religions is also lower amongst Staffordshire veterans. **Figure 11** shows the difference between Staffordshire veterans and non-veterans by religion.

Data has not been published by religion and district/borough.

**Figure 11 – Religious beliefs of Staffordshire veterans and non-veterans**

Religion	Staffordshire Veterans	Whole of Staffordshire
Christian	66.7%	57.0%
No religion	27.1%	34.5%
Not answered	4.9%	5.2%
Other religion	0.6%	0.5%
Muslim	0.2%	1.6%
Buddhist	0.2%	0.3%
Hindu	0.1%	0.4%
Sikh	0.1%	0.5%
Jewish	0.1%	0.0%

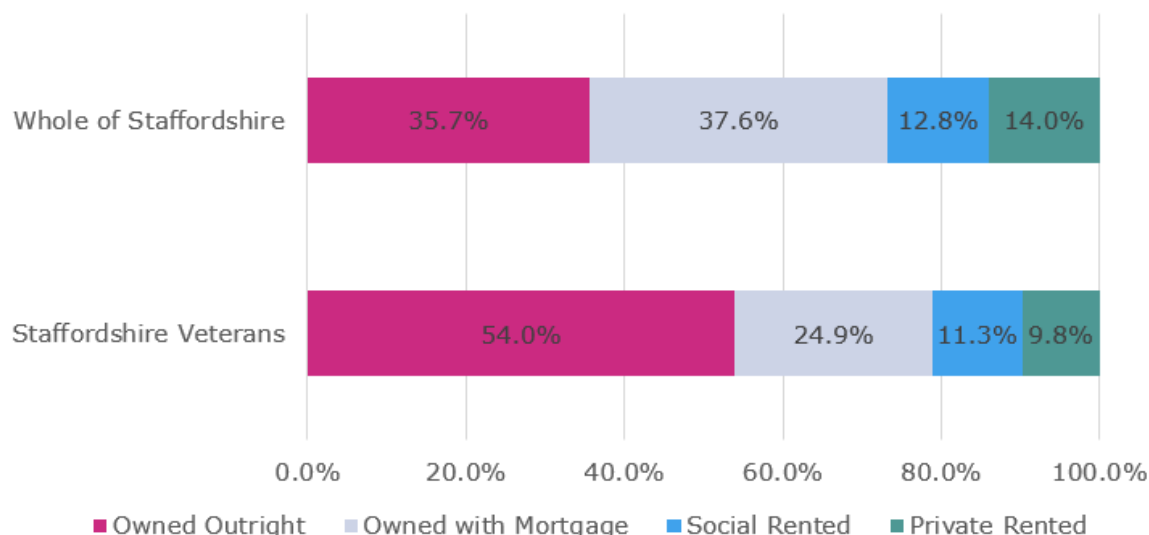
Source: 2021 Census

## Housing

Staffordshire veterans are most likely to own a house outright (54.0%) and least likely to privately rent (9.8%). Staffordshire veterans are more likely to own a house outright than the whole of Staffordshire population (35.7%). Staffordshire veterans are less likely to rent (social and private) than the whole of Staffordshire population. **Figure 12** shows a breakdown of Housing tenure. The trends shown here are likely in part to be due to veterans being an older demographic. These trends are also in line with regional and national figures.



**Figure 12 – Housing Tenure**



Source: 2021 Census

## Health

The health of Staffordshire veterans (self-reported) is broadly comparable to regional and national trends for veterans, as shown in **Figure 13**.

**Figure 13 – Health of Veterans**

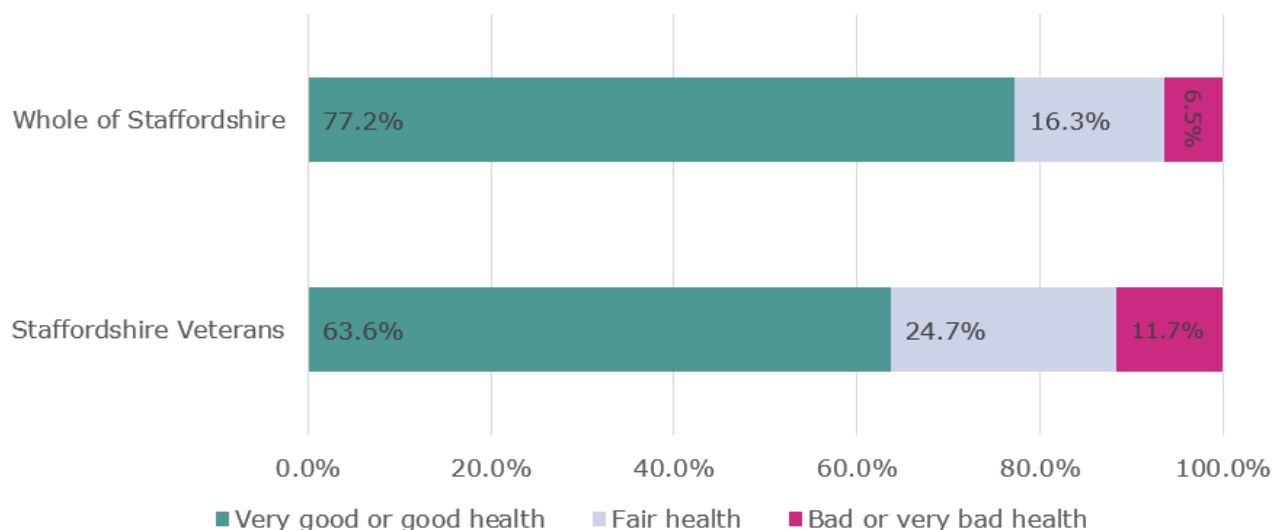
Health	England & Wales	West Midlands	Staffordshire
Very good or good health	64.4%	62.7%	63.6%
Fair health	24.2%	25.3%	24.7%
Bad or very bad health	11.4%	12.1%	11.7%

Source: 2021 Census

There is a notable difference in health of Staffordshire veterans when compared to the whole of the Staffordshire population. 77.2% of the whole of Staffordshire population reported they were in very good or good health, compared to 63.6% of veterans. A breakdown of perceived health is shown in **Figure 14**.



**Figure 14 – Health of Staffordshire veterans**



Source: 2021 Census

Staffordshire veterans report their health to be either ‘bad’ or ‘very bad’ is highest in Tamworth (13.4%) and Cannock Chase (13.3%). A full breakdown of veteran health by district/borough is shown in **Figure 15**.

**Figure 15 – Health of Staffordshire veterans by district/borough**

District/Borough	Good / Very Good	Fair	Bad / Very Bad
Cannock Chase	61.1%	25.6%	13.3%
East Staffordshire	65.1%	24.4%	10.6%
Lichfield	63.4%	24.9%	11.6%
Newcastle-under-Lyme	62.0%	25.5%	12.5%
South Staffordshire	62.0%	25.6%	12.4%
Stafford	66.9%	23.7%	9.4%
Staffordshire	63.6%	24.7%	11.7%
Staffordshire Moorlands	63.6%	24.1%	12.3%
Tamworth	62.2%	24.4%	13.4%

Source: 2021 Census



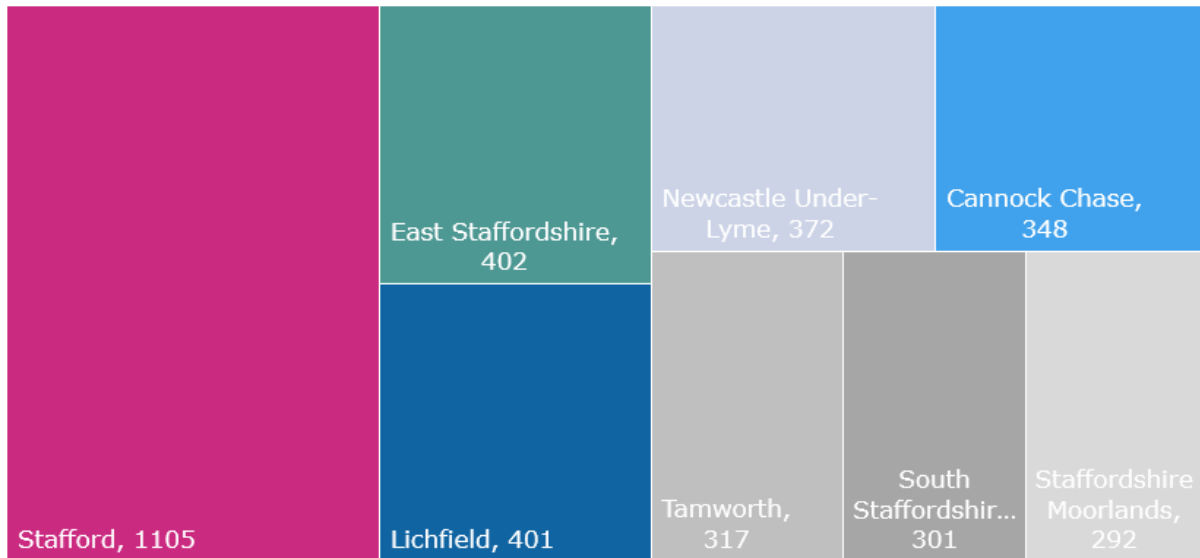


## Pensions

3,538 people in Staffordshire were in receipt of the Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS) as of 2019. Nearly a third of these people lived in the Stafford area, as shown in **Figure 16**, which is at least partly due to the higher veteran population in this area.

More information of Armed Forces Pension Schemes can be found [here](#).

**Figure 16 – Armed Forces Pension Schemes by district/borough**



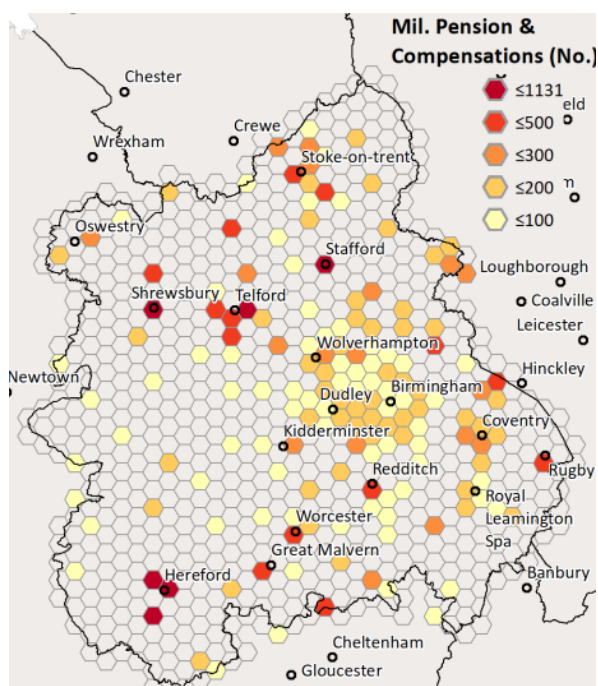
Source: Chart based upon data shown in 'Evidence based findings about the veteran population in England's West Midlands' report 2019, by Northumbria University

Further detail on military pensions in Staffordshire is shown in **Appendix 2**; an extract from the Northumbria University report 'Evidence based findings about the veteran population in England's West Midlands'.

The prominence of Stafford as an area with higher than average veteran pension and compensation needs is highlighted in **Figure 17**.



**Figure 17 – West Midlands map showing veteran pension and compensation requirements**



Source: Northumbria University, 'Evidence based findings about the veteran population in England's West Midlands' report 2019

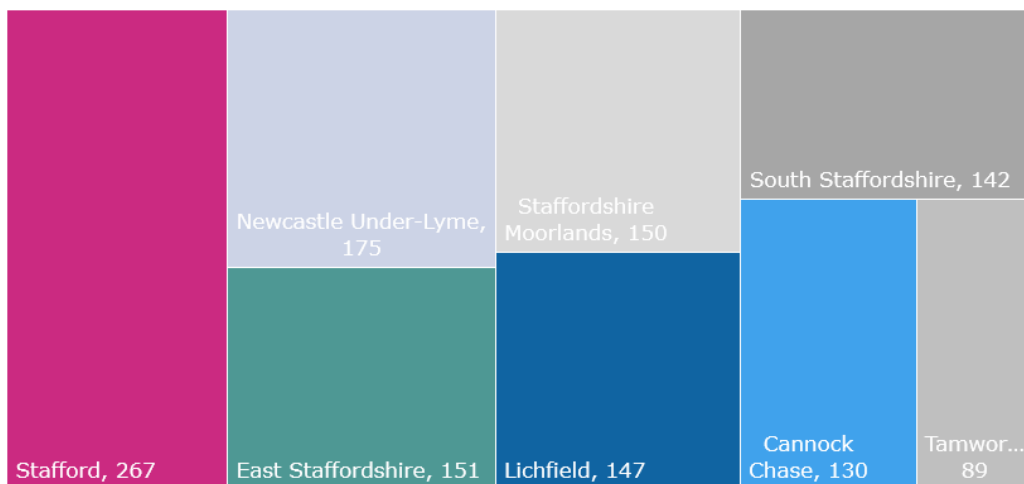
## Widows

As a related demographic, veteran widow(er)s pensions are shown in **Figure 18**. Further detail on widower pension breakdown in Staffordshire is shown in **Appendix 3**. Again, Stafford has the highest number of people in receipt of widow(er)s pensions (267), accounting for 21.3% of veteran widow(er)s pensions across Staffordshire.

Further information on the widow(er)s pension scheme can be found [here](#).



**Figure 18 – Widow(er)s Pension Scheme by district/borough**

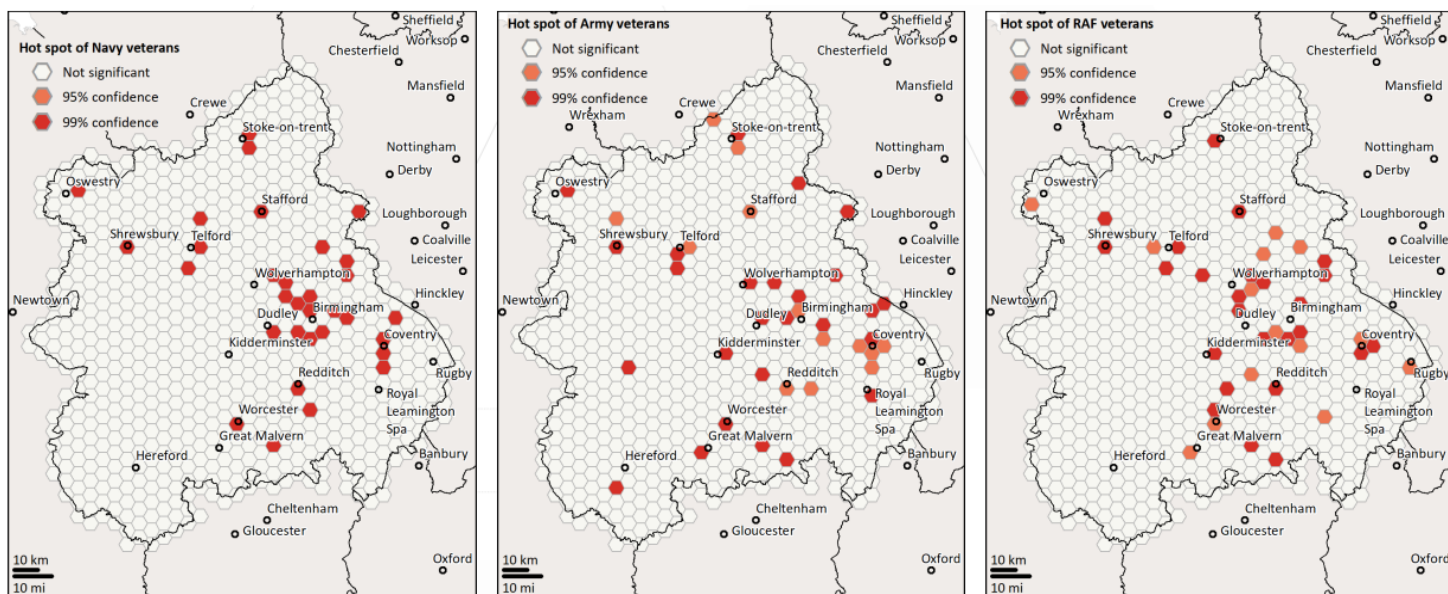


Source: Chart based upon data shown in 'Evidence based findings about the veteran population in England's West Midlands' report 2019, by Northumbria University

## Financial Hardship

There are veterans in receipt of financial hardship funding across several areas in Staffordshire. Although available data is limited, **Figure 19** goes some way to demonstrate financial hardship for navy, army and RAF veterans. Stafford clearly shows statistical significance in this area; a trend highlighted in previous sections.

**Figure 19 – Financial hardship of veterans in West Midlands**



Source: Northumbria University, 'Evidence based findings about the veteran population in England's West Midlands' report 2019





## Mental Health

Mental health difficulties are notable in veteran demographics. A recent study by the University of Chester and published by the British Medical Journal showed that 38% of veterans had a mental health marker on their medical records. Depression (17.8%), alcohol misuse (17.3%) and anxiety (15.0%) were the most prevalent disorders amongst veteran populations in the study. There was also some variation between the mental health of male and female veterans. Women had overall higher rates of disorders, particularly depression and anxiety, whereas men had higher rates of alcohol misuse and PTSD. The full report, with a complete list of caveats can be viewed [here](#).

Referrals for veteran mental health support in Staffordshire are broadly in line with regional and national averages. Much of Staffordshire (Newcastle, Staffs Moorlands, East Staffs, Lichfield, Tamworth and South Staffs) has a referral rate of 20-29 per 1,000 working age veterans<sup>1</sup>. Specific information on Staffordshire veteran mental health referrals is somewhat limited and incomplete, meaning specific data tables and conclusions are difficult to include.



## Useful Links

Northumbria University report entitled 'Evidence based findings about the veteran population in England's West Midlands', published by the Covenant Fund can be found [here](#).

British Medical Journal report on veteran mental health entitled 'Prevalence of common mental health disorders in military veterans: using primary healthcare data' can be found [here](#).

The ONS Census 2021 data is available to explore and use now, with several helpful resources made publicly available.

- Access to the ONS data tables can be found [here](#).
- ONS Local Authority interactive guide is available [here](#).
- The ONS Census 2021 bulletin on UK armed forces veterans can be found [here](#).

For more information contact the Insight Team at: [insight.team@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:insight.team@staffordshire.gov.uk).

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Northumbria University, 'Evidence based findings about the veteran population in England's West Midlands' report 2019. Map refocused and adapted.

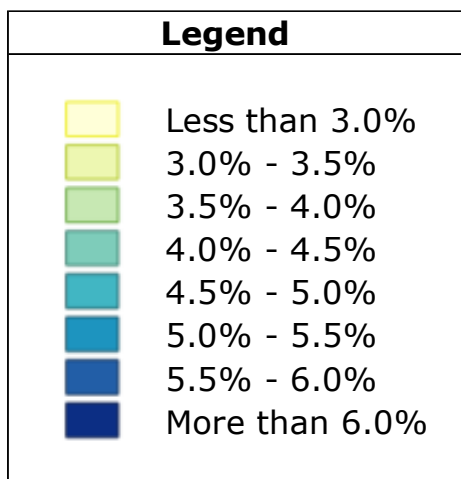
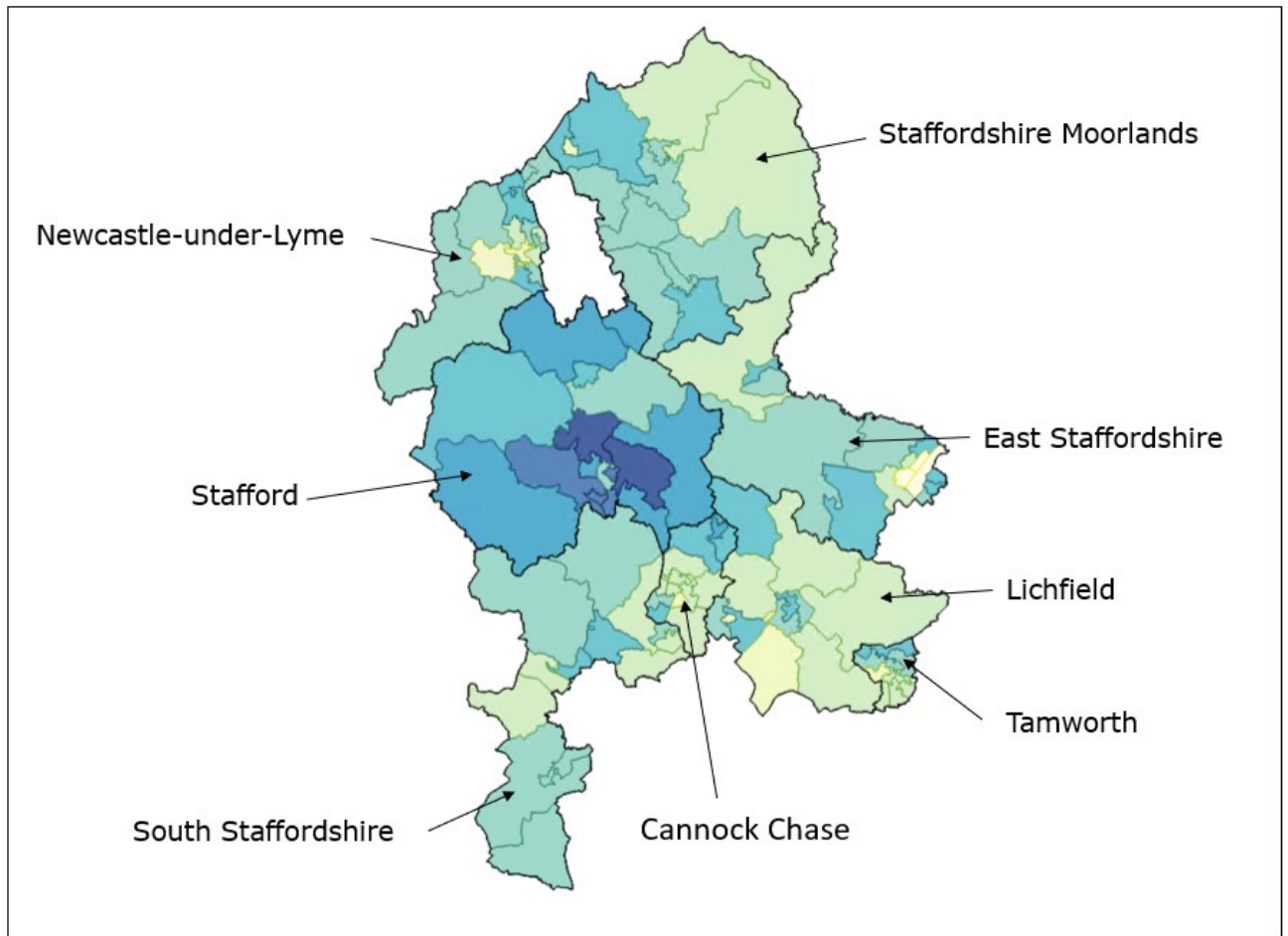






## Appendix 1 – Location and Concentration of UK armed forces veterans, Staffordshire 2021

This map shows the percentages of UK armed forces veterans in Staffordshire mapped at MSOA level.





## Appendix 2 – Working Age Veteran Breakdown

Area	Working age veterans	Residents aged 16 to 64	Veterans as % of all residents aged 16 to 64	Male working age veterans	Male veterans as % of all working age veterans	Female working age veterans	Female veterans as % of all working age veterans
Staffordshire	12,296	541,569	2.3%	11,400	92.7%	895	7.3%
West Midlands	65,692	3,561,430	1.8%	60,660	92.3%	5,030	7.7%
England & Wales	745,765	36,273,707	2.1%	684,070	91.7%	61,695	8.3%

Source: Northumbria University, 'Evidence based findings about the veteran population in England's West Midlands', 2019



## Appendix 3 – Military Pension West Midlands Breakdown

### 2. Military pension and compensation recipients (2017)

	All	Of which veterans	All AFPS	All WPS	WPS: Veterans (Disablement Pensioners)	WPS: War Widow(er)s	WPS: Other War Pensioners	All AFCS	AFCS: Serving Personnel	AFCS: Veterans
UK	405,019	374,023	307,085	113,292	96,835	15,937	520	32,599	15,222	17,377
ENGLAND	333,131	306,974	253,530	90,083	76,503	13,163	417	27,889	13,150	14,739
West Midlands	24,771	22,587	18,333	7,151	5,993	1,126	32	2,196	1,068	1,128
Herefordshire, County of	2,506	2,204	1,917	658	577	~	~	323	231	92
Shropshire	3,393	3,097	2,640	790	677	~	~	353	189	164
Telford and Wrekin	2,137	2,041	1,762	476	431	~	~	169	60	109
Cannock Chase	463	436	348	130	114	16	0	26	11	15
East Staffordshire	539	497	402	151	128	~	~	42	20	22
Lichfield	536	486	401	147	128	19	0	61	32	29
Newcastle-under-Lyme	498	465	372	175	151	~	~	20	11	9
South Staffordshire	425	387	301	142	117	~	~	32	13	19
Stafford	1,384	1,261	1,105	267	221	~	~	157	80	77
Staffordshire Moorlands	406	366	292	150	125	~	~	28	16	12
Stoke-on-Trent	975	886	655	351	292	56	3	80	30	50
Tamworth	384	369	317	89	80	9	0	25	6	19

Source: Northumbria University, 'Evidence based findings about the veteran population in England's West Midlands' report 2019.

