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Summary

The Age UK Yorkshire and Humber Mission Possible project provided support to veterans born in or before 1950 and their families in five areas across Yorkshire and Humberside. The project has been highly successful supporting more than 1500 veterans, more than double its target. The project has worked with veterans primarily aged over 80, many with multiple health conditions.

The project has provided a wide range of opportunities for veterans to address both personal issues that they faced and to engage in social activities designed to avoid/ reduce isolation and loneliness. It had a positive impact on the lives of veterans, supporting them to maintain their independence, including securing aids, home adaptations, and over £675,000 in benefits.

It included those who were at Dunkirk, D-Day, veterans of HMS Belfast, Halifax crew members; paratroopers, radar operators who went ahead during the Liberation and received international recognition for their bravery; those on the convoys; with Chindits, Gurkhas, Polish Free Forces, Partisans; POWs; WRNs and women in bomber command or on defence batteries in London; and veterans in all branches of the Forces, some of them highly decorated; veterans from Korea (including Canadians living and serving in the UK), Northern Ireland and the Gulf; and those who did national service at home and abroad, including participants in nuclear testing in the Pacific. For some their lives changed forever; and they still have traumas or are unable to speak about their experiences. For some, indeed this project led to them talking for the first time, even to their families about their service experience. The project also engaged women from the Land Army and Bevin Boys, but these are not included in the project total.

Additional veterans from across Yorkshire and Humberside and their families attended a further range of events, including Kelham Island Museum (Sheffield); Pudsey Tea Dance; and the Yorkshire Air Museum (Elvington, North Yorkshire) but received no other support from the projects beyond attending the social events. More than 125 events and activities were held, involving between 1200

and 1500 people, including partners, relatives and many not in the 1500 supported directly.

The events and activities received excellent media coverage which raised the profile of veterans and Age UK. Public awareness and interest were very high for WW2 veterans, but wider interest and recognition of those who "served" on the home front; undertook national service; or served after WW2 was significantly less.

The project raised awareness within Age UK to the range of supports that are available to veterans, and the need for early identification of whether people or their families have served in the armed forces.

An enduring legacy of the project is Age UKs participation in their local Covenant Partnerships. Age UK partners engaged with a wide range of organisations including veterans' charities. While local charities were very engaging, as were individual caseworkers, some of the larger national charities seeming less willing to work in partnership with local Age UK partners. They focused on veterans' issues but did not always recognise that the "veteran" aspect may be the least important element of the challenges faced by an older person who has served his or her country. Similarly, the project has left a legacy as Age UK partners are now much more aware that the people, they work with may have served; many have changed their approaches to take account of this. Other Age UK partners are now engaged in specific work with veterans beyond the scope of this project, while the five partners have taken the learning from the project to shape their future offer and have built the approaches and new relationships into their ongoing information, advice and well-being work.



Project Learning

We have learned that:

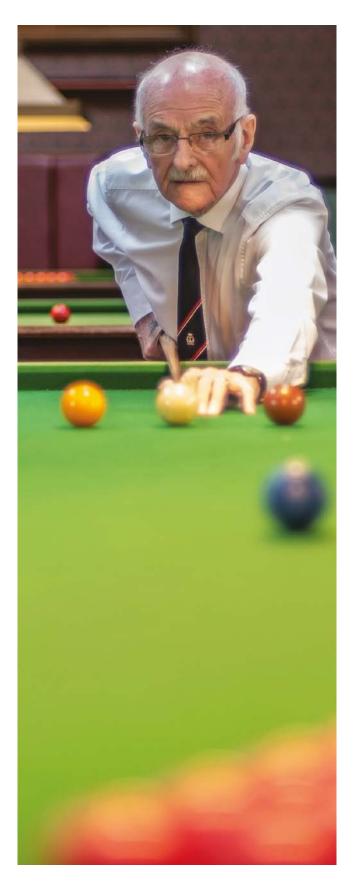
- Age UK partners already worked with a large number of veterans but that this was not always identified, and all agencies should ask at first contact
- the needs of older, frail veterans are often the same as other frail older people; and signifcant case work can be required to help them. Many of the elderly veterans are now frail and have multiple long-term health conditions that reduce their quality of life and where action is taken
- issues around hearing loss can be significant and are not always recognised. The cost to an individual of addressing these issues can be significant
- providing a period of case work support, acting as advocate and "fixer" can be sufficient for an older veteran to maintain his/her independence and to achieve what is important to them.
 Too often, older veterans do not know what is available, or are accepting of their situations and do not feel they can/should ask for help. A period of "well-being" support or casework can make a significant difference to their quality of life

- some veterans were keen to talk about their experiences, particularly with other veterans where they still felt a comradeship; but it need careful management as many "Don't talk about the war" and some still suffer trauma from their experiences
- veterans could access support via veterans' charities that were not otherwise avaiable: there is a lot of support available to veterans that are not to other people, but that the response of the veterans' charities at a regional level can be highly variable: we found that the Royal British Legion can be difficult to work with and does not always engage above individual case workers
- there are a plethora of ex-forces associations and groups that can support people locally and can help with outreach work, but that can also be quite insular as they are run by volunteers
- in rural areas, it is necessary to work through other groups and organisations to reach veterans; and that these can be scattered and isolated without support networks in place
- transport is a major limiting factor in supporting older veterans to be socially active to avoid isolation; while their housing situation can provide significant challenges - which veterans'

charities can potentially help with. focusing on benefit take up could have a significant impact on veterans' lives

- not only are we encountering more frail, older veterans mostly with multiple health conditions, but we are also encountering increasing numbers of veterans with alcohol or drug dependencies; and/or with mental health condtions, some of which relate to their service (the project has worked with Combat Stress)
- there is a large appetite for reminiscence and finding out more about people's stories from WW2, though not necessarily more widely than the frontline stories. There are lots of stories that should be captured and stored for future use before they disappear – but there is not the funding to do it. Those who "supported the war effort" in other ways, or served after WW2 do not get the same recognition, but many WW2 vetrerans felt "neglected"
- Covenant Partnerships are effective routes to engage with local partners, but this can be difficult to achieve in large counties such as North Yorkshire
- other organisations and charities were very supportive and keen to engage

We have also learned that it is very difficult to measure outcomes quantitatively for a project that is largely based on outreach and supporting other groups; and that these make their own impact which is difficult to separate and attribute to our work specifically; and that qualitative outcome measures are difficult to measure for frail older people.



Introduction

Age UK Support Services Yorkshire and Humber (SSYH) secured funding from the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Ageing Veterans Fund to implement a three-year project (Mission Possible: Active Service in Later Life) to deliver a range of support to veterans born in or before 1950. This included surviving World War Two veterans, those who undertook national service and other voluntary enlisted veterans. It is also for the family and carers of these ex-service personnel.

The project involved five Age UK local partners: Bradford and District, Hull (East Riding), Knaresborough, Leeds and Sheffield.

The project started with recruitment in four Partner areas from April 2016, while the fifth, went live in Age UK East Riding in October 2017 before transferring to Age UK Hull. The project ended on 31st March 2019. Careful budget management enabled services to continue until the end of May 2019 in three areas.

The Project Portfolio

The projects and support provided varied between local partners, although all were based on broadly similar approaches, designed to meet identified needs, reduce isolation, increase involvement and provide a gateway to a range of other services provided by Age UK or other organisations. (More detail in Appendix One). Each partner offered a mixture of one to one holistic support, outreach, information, advice and signposting, and various social activities. Social activities and events were also organised across the Yorkshire and Humber region.

The SSYH provided co-ordination, liaison with Age UK nationally and veterans' charities, support to partners, communications and promotional activity to raise the profile of the project; to support activity to reach isolated veterans; to promote volunteering and to encourage corporate social responsibility.

Age UK Bradford and District went live in June 2016. It provided one to one case work support, a number of social groups, and co-ordinated the development of the Yorkshire Film Archive "Memory Bank". This was followed by Age UK Sheffield commencing in the summer of 2016

providing independent living support for individuals and outreach sessions.

Age UK Leeds began work in September 2016 providing support planning and supporting social groups, as did Age UK Knaresborough, providing one to one support planning, and linking into its Support at Home service which provides multicontact practical and emotional support in the home, takes people shopping and on outings either in groups or as individual trips out with a support worker, assisted bathing services or lunch clubs or social activity groups such as bridge.

Age UK East Riding began work in October 2017 providing outreach services, befriending, information and advice and support to social groups in Bridlington and the surrounding rural villages. This service became part of Age UK Hull in 2018.

Aims of the Programme

The programme focused on:

- supporting older veterans and their carers to
 - * feel they have a better quality of life, improved well-being and are less lonely
 - * are able to take better care of their own health
- engaging volunteers, both veterans and nonveterans to:
 - * impact on local community resilience
 - * improve their employability
 - * improve the empowerment of veterans
- promoting a positive awareness of the needs of older veterans, and the role that Age UK can play to support them through:
 - * regional promotion and awareness raising
 - * engagement with Covenant Partnerships
 - * the development of the film archive, reminiscence and inter-generational activity

The projects all provided a mixture of:

- outreach into communities
- · direct support and referral
- holistic one to one assessment
- support to individuals in their own homes, including the provision of Information and Advice, and signposting and support to access other services, both within Age UK and through other organisations
- support to access community or residential care
- assistance to improve mobility including through, aids, adaptations & transport; and tangible home adaptations
- benefits assessments and claims
- social activities and groups, including intergenerational work; leisure and social issues: coffee mornings, outings and events
- reminiscence & inter-generational work
- help to get medals not previously claimed

The veterans using the services

The project supported more than 1500 veterans, more than double its 750 target.

This was achieved by:

- active promotion and outreach work in a variety of settings, including hospitals and sheltered housing schemes
- promotion through community groups and social events
- working with other veteran and regimental organisations, and with Covenant Partnerships to promote the Age UK offer
- working with Adult Social Care and hospital discharge services
- · highlighting stories in the local media
- changing Age UK triage approaches: learning the value of asking "have you or anyone in your family served?" significantly increased the number of veterans supported, and identified a large number of older people supported by Age UK who had served but had not previously been identified as veterans

The project is targeted at veterans born before or during 1950. This has resulted in it reaching the "older old" and the profiles show that the majority of people supported fall into this category.

The veterans were:

- mostly older, with nine out of ten aged over 80, and 20% over 90. 4% were aged under 70
- predominantly men, although 12% were female veterans, with this proportion increasing over the life of the project
- of overwhelmingly white British or Irish ethnic origin (99%), with a small number of Polish, Afro-Caribbean and other Commonwealth veterans supported
- equally divided between those living alone and those living with their partner/wife/husband
- mostly army veterans with 20% RAF veterans; 12% undertook national service and 6% identifying women's service through WRN and WRAF

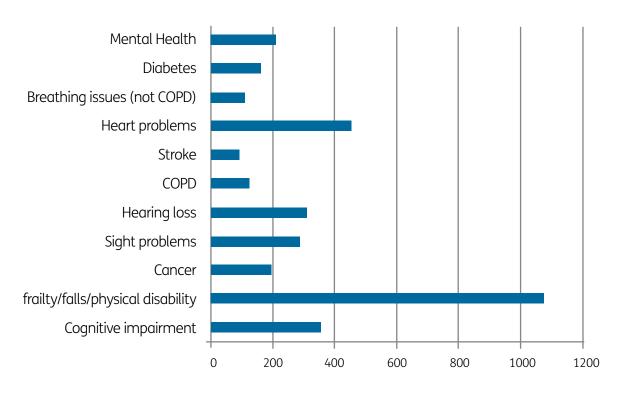
We found:

- most were in poor health. Only approximately 15% had no health conditions
- many were frail with multiple health conditions including trauma and/or suffer with cognitive impairment (often dementia) or heart problems
- significant numbers also have a range of other common but serious health conditions
- reduced mobility transport often a major barrier; while home living conditions often challenging
- many require support with day to day tasks
- half were supported by an informal carer
- during the project we saw an increase in the number of veterans with mental health problems and/or with alcohol abuse

- social isolation a major problem
- some needed support following bereavement
- many commented that they struggle with the cost of non-NHS hearing aids
- many faced financial challenges: but some older vets won't claim benefits
- they did not know their entitlements
- over £675,000 in benefits secured for veterans during the project, with some claims ongoing

This is similar to other older people that Age UK supports, and most of the challenges or issues we worked with were the same as for other older people in these age brackets.

Exhibit One: Reported incidence of major health issues among veterans supported

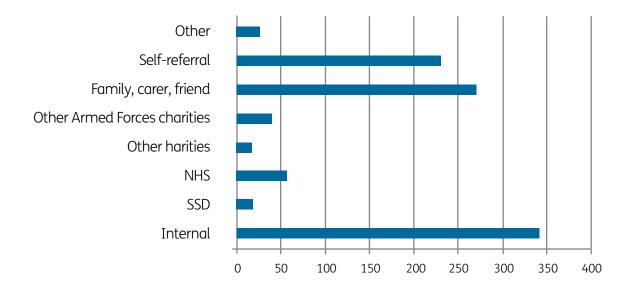


Referrals

For any project of this nature, identifying veterans and securing referrals can be a challenge. By routinely recording whether people using services have served in the Armed Forces, the local partners have been able to identify veterans to work with. The majority of referrals have come from selfreferral, family and friends and internal referrals. Interviews suggest that some of the veterans have used Age UK services previously, while word of mouth recommendations have led to others seeking support. This reinforced the need to identify people's service as triage; and to promote Age UK services. Once people have engaged with Age UK, they will often return when they have any further challenges.

Referrals are received from the NHS (GPs; home from hospital services) with fewer from Social Services. A small number of referrals have been received from Armed Forces Charities, usually Regimental charities or SSAFA.

Exhibit Two: Referrals



Impact for the veterans

Both the one to one support and social activities had a significant impact for the veterans supported and their families. We observed how much they enjoyed the social activities; and how the one to one interventions enabled them to remain connected to the wider social activities.

One to one support

The major and most significant element of the service was the one to one support provided to veterans. Support is personalised and follows a holistic assessment of the person's needs and wishes when they approach the service. For many veterans this means a home visit, lasting two-three hours for a discussion with the project co-ordinator.

Often the veterans require support with several issues, and their situations can be quite complex. The issues are usually similar to those faced by other older frail people: requiring support with day to day tasks in order to remain independent in their own home; social isolation; reduced mobility requiring transport solutions, and financial challenges.

Veterans report that Age UK's support has made a major difference to them, while case studies provide evidence of support enabling people to continue to live independently at home; to avoid the need for higher level care support, and to attend social activities more easily, improving their social contact and reducing the risk of loneliness and social isolation.

A sample of well-being data using the Outcomes Star was by two partners and showed 2/3 people reported improvements of over two points. Improvements were spread across all factors, but how people feel, being involved in meaningful activity, and having an improved social life were common improvements. Only two veterans reported a decline in any outcome scores. Two other partners used a simple questionnaire to test impact. This also received overwhelmingly positive feedback.

The scale of the impact achieved is currently best presented through case studies. These case studies are representative of the support that we have seen provided or has been outlined to us by staff and by veterans attending Mission Possible events.

Veterans and their families interviewed praised the professionalism of the Age UK staff and the support provided.

"Thank you so much for everything you have done for 'S'. You have allowed him to start living again at 94!" Granddaughter of one of our service users.

"It is very comforting to know that I can ring and ask for help and they will visit. He was a good fella to deal with – nice, bright and he really listened."

"He was brilliant, and so kind with it. He did everything for me. I could not wish for more. He said, "Anything you want, ring me". He would be the first bloke I called if I had a problem."

"She was brilliant. She sorted out my Attendance Allowance after I had been refused, and organised rails and ramps so I can get out of my house. And she invited me to events - I really enjoy coming to the events."



"He got his Attendance Allowance and it was backdated. It is making a lot of difference. He had to stop driving so this lets him get taxis to his club. It is getting more difficult. I am all he has, and this gives me time for myself too. They have told me to apply for Carers' Allowance, but I will need help to do it too as it is too complicated, and I don't want to get it wrong."

The veterans received a wide range of supports from internal Age UK services including Information and Advice services, and by referral on to other external providers; often with the project co-ordinator acting as advocate for the veteran in sorting arrangements and services with other providers. More than 1750 onwards referrals have been made to internal Age UK services and other providers including Forces Charities, Social Care carers' support organisations, and other voluntary sector organisations for a wide range of issues, including for Blue Badges, community transport, social care support, aids and adaptations, and financial support.

They helped me apply for **Attendance Allowance and** were successful. I have never had much money. They told me "claim it, it is yours. You are entitled to it".

I have never had so much money as I have now! My son lives away but visits me twice weekly and sorts my laundry and shopping. I am using the money to pay for my shopping and to pay for his petrol to come and help me." The additional finance has improved Mr A's quality of life and enabled him to maintain his independence with the support of his son.

Group activities

The project organised one major regional event, which proved challenging given the frailty of many participants. The project also held three more local events at Pudsey Tea Dance, Elvington Yorkshire Air Museum and Sheffield Kelham Island Museum to bring veterans together in smaller groups and social settings, some with a military theme but some simply social events. Other Age UK Partners and veterans' organisations were invited.

Each of the partners provided group and outreach activities as part of their service offer. Bradford and District supported over eighty social groups as well as organising its own events, while the other partners held at least one event or supported at least one group each month, and organised specific events and outings.

While accurate numbers are not available, we estimate that between 1200 and 1500 people have participated, a mixture of veterans, family members and other older people, in over 125 events and activities with a mixture of:

- reminiscence sessions, often using the Film Archive materials
- lunches or similar social events
- coffee mornings
- film showings
- attendance at and support to existing groups and activities



We observed a range of these activities and talked to participants. The events were very popular with participants, who universally indicated that they thoroughly enjoyed the events. The events encouraged people to meet socially.

- They help to reduce isolation for some people:
 "We would just be sat at home if we were not
 here". Some people did not get out apart from
 groups like these, and were only able to attend
 because the projects organised transport for
 them to attend. Ensuring transport is available,
 and particularly that taxis respond effectively to
 bookings was a challenge for projects.
- The groups were not just attended by the more fit and mobile veterans, but by a range of veterans, aged up to 99 years, including some with mobility issues, and some accompanied by partners or family members.
- We also met members of local Forces Charities and groups who attended these events to offer support to older veterans, and on two occasions we attended events involving the local council's Covenant Champion.
- They enabled like-minded people to come together socially for an enjoyable session. We observed supportive, friendship groups that had developed as a result of groups, with people organising their own activities and trips beyond the group, contacting non-attenders to check they were not unwell, and discussing a wide range of topics including using computers, safely accessing the internet or online banking and current affairs. In Knaresborough arrange of other supports, such as health checks were introduced via a social group.
- The groups enabled people to talk about their experience in service, or simply about years gone by. Many veterans indicated that they appreciated the opportunity to meet other veterans, and some wore medals, or elements of dress uniforms.
- They encouraged and enabled people to talk

about their experiences, and several have revealed facts about their service lives that their families were previously unaware of, while others have had the courage to talk about traumatic experiences for the first time, and to seek help as a result.

- We talked to a number of veterans who attended the big regional event held as part of the project. All had very much enjoyed it, particularly meeting other veterans and the nostalgic entertainment. However, it is clear that this event was logistically difficult to manage and may be better replicated at a more local level.
- The three sub-regional events were very successful and drew in veterans working with other partners and were used to involve other Age UK partners. The Elvington event received major media coverage including the Daily Telegraph, BBC York And Forces TV; while the Sheffield event received regional newspaper coverage.
- The projects were all highly successful in securing regular media coverage for their activities.
- Reminiscence activities using the YFA films, including in sheltered housing schemes, residential homes and at existing social groups helped identify veterans, and particularly finding out about isolated veterans who can be contacted to offer support. We have observed sessions where those attending provided links to other isolated veterans. Bradford events were featured in the Bradford Film Festival and on large screens in the City Centre.
- Outreach sessions were held through existing older people's groups and clubs, and via other Forces Charities and veterans' groups to engage veterans in the project. We spoke to several veterans who had engaged in the project as a result of this outreach work.

Several of the projects worked with local veterans' breakfast clubs, including supporting the establishment of a new club in East Riding.







Volunteers

The projects have attempted to involve volunteers in the projects through:

- the veterans themselves becoming involved as volunteers, working with other veterans or in reminiscence or promotional activity, for example work with schools
- other volunteers, including younger veterans supporting the older veterans in the project

The projects have had limited impact in recruiting and supporting volunteers. They have succeeded in empowering some veterans, most notably through volunteers going into schools to run activity sessions:

- Age UK Bradford has several veterans supporting activities in schools.
- Age UK Leeds secured additional funding to develop a schools' project taking veteran volunteers into schools.
- Age UK Hull had younger volunteers acting as befrienders.
- Age UK Knaresborough had a volunteer supporting its coffee mornings, which ensured its sustainability beyond the project; and working in its shopping service.
- The sub-regional events were supported by numerous volunteers, including Age UK staff and their family members.

Mr T has volunteered to attend 3 sessions at Primary and High Schools, being interviewed, helping pupils to understand Britain in the Post War period and enjoying the intergenerational opportunities. He is 84 and lives on his own. He has mild dementia. He was married for 60 years but his wife died four years ago. Mr T attends a weekly Age UK group near his home to help him as he still misses his wife. Mr T attended the opening Military Memories Yorkshire Film Archive session in 2016. He heard about it through mutual friends. Mr T has attended further Yorkshire Film Archive / Reminiscence sessions delivered to the Elder group he attends. He has attended all of the project's events, taken part in Healthy Ageing sessions, NHS surveys and Dementia studies 1:1.

Mr T's finds the school volunteering really enjoyable. It has boosted his confidence and shown him that his experiences are important. "I love talking to the kids, they make me laugh. They can't believe we had no food and would queue for hours for one potato."

Mr T is interested in all the work of his local Age UK and wants to be involved as much as possible. He has also contributed to Dementia studies as his wife suffered with Alzheimer's. Mr T says that his social life has improved which is important to him.

"I love talking to the kids, they make me laugh. They can't believe we had no food and would queue for hours for one potato." Some younger veterans also provided support to older veterans.

Mr JC came to an Age UK resource centre as he was a veteran and had just been bereaved. He was depressed and had had a minor heart attack. His wife had passed away following a long illness during which he had become her full time carer. This had kept him very busy and he was now at a loss as to what to do with himself and feeling very lonely and isolated. His GP and a close friend of his had both suggested he come to see us.

Mr JC was trained and placed in the team providing a shopping and befriending service for older frail people who are mostly housebound. Mr JC does their shopping and reports back to the shopping manager any issues of poor health or any other problem so the organization can pass to other either internal or external services. This took up some of his day and gave him a sense of purpose and self-worth. He received much gratitude from service users which made him feel better. about himself.

MrJC's quality of life has improved. He is involved in the planning and delivery of services. He enjoys volunteer parties and has made new friends within the volunteer group. He also attends a monthly veterans' coffee morning organised by the project. He is a much needed and valued resource: without Mr JC's involvement and commitment many people would not receive their shopping and a friendly chat over a cup of tea each week.

MrJC's quality of life has improved. He is involved in the planning and delivery of services. He enjoys volunteer parties and has made new friends...





Stakeholders

The project achieved a good profile regionally, working with the local media in each of the project areas. This was more successful than attempting to take a regional approach.

The project engaged the regional Forces Charities. However, while there was a commitment to joint working with the Regional Royal British Legion, this achieved little in practice.

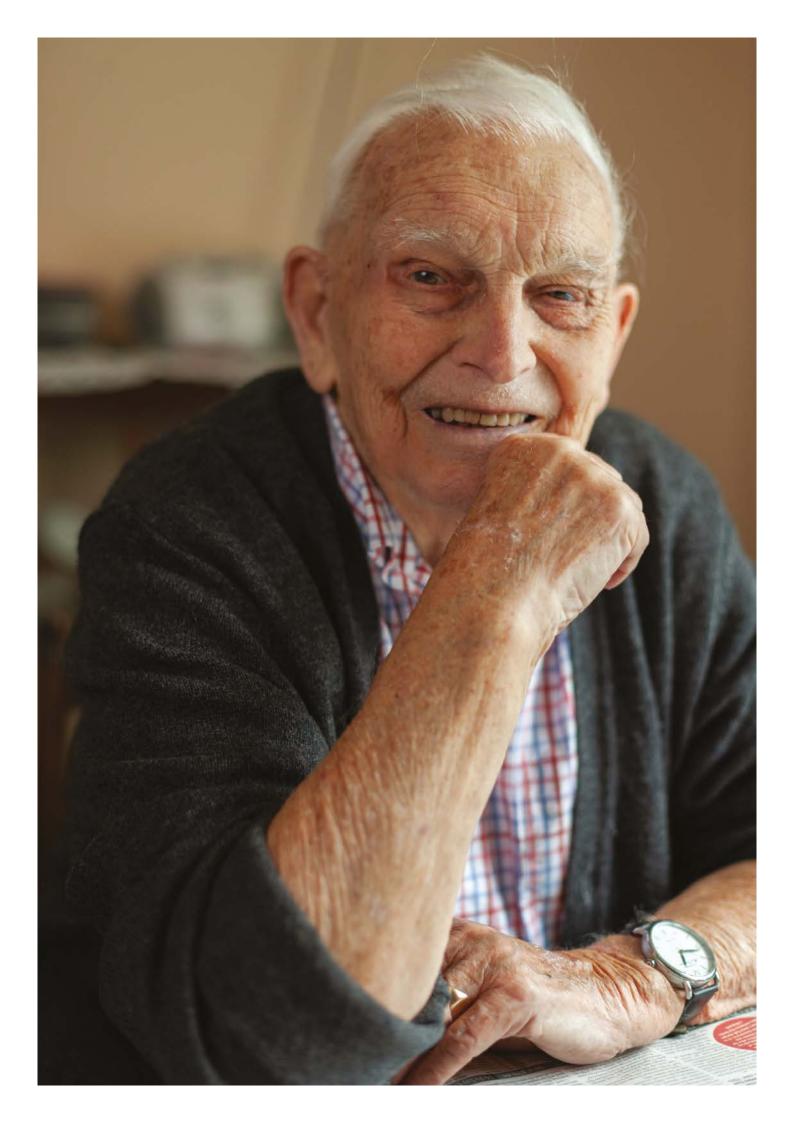
The individual projects had an impact, although it varied between areas, in building practical arrangements with their local branches of the Forces Charities or specific veterans' organisations. This has proved challenging as these organisations are themselves run by volunteer veterans and take different approaches to engaging with other organisations. As noted earlier, relatively few referrals have come from Forces Charities, with larger numbers referred to Forces Charities, usually for financial assistance, where the project has had a significant impact. Representatives of local veterans' organisations have attended Mission Possible events in their local area. Discussions with these representatives illustrate that they value the work of the project, which they feel meets demand and provides support that they cannot provide themselves; especially befriending support which several told us is a significant gap for elderly veterans.

In the three city areas and East Riding, the projects participated fully in the local Covenant Committees and Armed Forces Day and were able to report on progress and to highlight issues. Council Covenant Champions have attended Mission Possible events, and in Leeds the project co-ordinator was recognised with an award at the annual Forces Day event.

The Yorkshire Film Archive element of the project has been very successful with the films shown at the Bradford Golden Memories Film Festival, and on the big screen in the city square in Bradford. The DVDs are used extensively by some of the projects and are liked by the people who have attended sessions using them.

The Imperial War museum North has also been engaged and is interested in archiving the stories, photographs and other materials provided by veterans engaged in the project.

We also received support from Wetherspoons, local pubs, sheltered housing schemes and a variety of places that our veterans visited.



Appendix 1

Bradford and District

Our project in Bradford was slightly different to our other four projects. The main focus of the project was supporting existing groups across Bradford and District and the development of new groups if there were no existing groups. The project helped to link Forces charities and Regimental Groups within the locality, and playing an active role in the Covenant Partnership. Bradford and District undertook the development of the reminiscence work with the Yorkshire Film Archive

Over the life of the project it has worked with approaching 100 groups and organisations, and organised a number of trips/ outings for veterans, including working with the newly developed Bradford Bulls Rugby Club veterans project; and working in partnerhsip to establish breakfast clubs, including with Wetherspoons, that continue beyond the project's life.

It has linked into the North Yorkshire Ex-Forces project working with its core team and Age UK North Yorkshire & Darlington to develop new supports in Skipton close to their border, and to enable veterans in that area of Bradford to be supported once this project ended.

The project developed strong links with a number of schools and expanded with a schools intergenerational project (which will leave a lasting legacy) with veterans visiting schools to support the schools on projects within the national curriculum. In this respect, the project was the most successful in securing and working with "volunteers" – the veterans visiting the schools.

Bradford's project also provided one to one support to veterans and signposted them into other services both within Age UK and more widely, though to a lesser extent than our other projects.

Hull

This project provided one to one support to veterans; and a lot of outreach work to raise awareness of the support that is available to veterans, attending groups and organisations across the district, and playing an active role in the Covenant Partnership.

The latter part of the project saw the work expanded to interact with veterans' organisations to encourage them to use Age UK Hull's facilities as a way to bring older veterans into contact with Age UK; and to undertaking additional outreach work in Beverley and Bridlington to promote take up of Information and Advice sessions, have benefits checks etc.

The project was successful in recruiting volunteers from younger veterans to act as befrienders to frail elderly veterans.

Knaresborough

The project has primarily supported veterans one to one with case work support to address complex multiple health needs.

It was successful in both providing social opportunities for active, mobile veterans and also in enabling older, more frail veterans to maintain their independence and to live safely at home.

It established successfully a coffee morning which has become a self-sustaining support group that has continued to grow across the life of the project, and has been sustained into the future by a volunteer (non veteran). This group has acted as a social group; as mutual support and friendship; and has arranged a series of discussions on topics facing older people such as computer security; and been used to introduce issues such as conducting health checks. The group, supported by our project has also organised a series of social outings.

Leeds

The project co-ordinator focused on providing one to one support and signposting to older, frail veterans across the City and to promotion and outreach via sheltered housing schemes and organisaitons including some BME communities.

Providing support to very frail, older veterans, with a large number of referrals from Supporting Wellbeing team at Age UK Leeds and St James' Hospital via the Age UK Home from Hospital team.

Establishing a short term schools reminiscence project as a result of the project. This project received media coverage including radio, online reporting and regional press.

Supporting older frail veterans to attend social activities including with regimental and forces organisations, and to take part in Armed Forces Day events.

Becoming an established partner within the Covenant Partnership in the City. The project worker being presented with an achievement award by the local Covenant Partnership for her achievements in working with older veterans.

The project had a significant impact in reducing loneliness and isolation and improving quality of life. This has been measured similarly to the other projects, but also using outcomes stars with some veterans.

Sheffield

The project provided one to one case work support through an Independent Living Co-ordinator providing one to one support to over 600 veterans. The project led to Age UK Sheffield cxhanging its triage approach and including whether people "served" on its customer database, which identified a large number of older veterans being supported across the organisation.

The project had a significant impact in reducing loneliness and isolation and improving quality of life. This has been measured similarly to the other projects, but also using outcomes stars with some veterans. The project secured £564,000 in benefits was secured for veterans during the project which demonstrates the project's impact.

The project undertook some additional outreach work, primarily linking into other veterans' charities and well-being charities; becoming an active member of the City's Covenant Partnership; and working with local businesses, pubs and museum to put on events for veterans; supporting veterans to take part in Armed Forces Day events.

Appendix 2 - our stories

Mr B is 83 years old and lives on his own in a ground floor flat. He served in the Army during the Korean War.

He lives with multiple health conditions including arthritis, diabetes and a triple fusion of his foot. Due to his health issues, he experiences difficulties mobilising and relies on a walking stick to prevent falls. He drives a mobility car which has been adapted to transport his scooter. Mr B's son lives nearby, visits throughout the week, and supports him with his weekly shop.

Mr B was referred to Age UK by the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA) for support with a benefits check. Mr B was already receiving the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA). However, since Mr B's original application, his care needs have greatly increased. As a result, Age UK supported him to complete a 'Looking again' application form. Mr B was awarded the higher rate care component of DLA, in addition to maintaining the higher rate mobility. Mr B expressed his appreciation for support in obtaining the higher rate care component of DLA, in addition to maintaining higher rate mobility, plus a back payment of £1000.

Mr BA is 92 years of age and was in the Army – National Service – REME.

He lives alone in a large 4 bedroomed bungalow with very large gardens and is in an isolated position. Mr BA owns his property and has lived there for over 60 years. He was burgled several years ago which has made him fearful of leaving his home and he does not go out of his property unless he is attending a hospital appointment. Mr BA does not have any close relatives however he has friends who visit him when they can. Mr BA health issues are as follows, hearing impaired wears 2 hearing aids, mobility issues uses walking stick and Zimmer frame. Mr BA is also diabetic with blood pressure issues. Mr BA receives a state pension, private pension and Attendance Allowance at the low rate. Mr BA has a cleaner who attends once a week and has a gardener fortnightly. His friends shop for him every week.

Age UK Leeds referred Mr BA to:

- the Befriending service. Mr BA now has a befriender who visits weekly and is trying to encourage him to leave his house and go out and about.
- the IT Digital Angels at Age UK Leeds who supported Mr BA to increase his confidence in using the internet and he now does his shopping on line.
- West Yorkshire Fire Service who fitted new smoke alarms and checked his property and gave him an evacuation plan in the event of a fire in his property.
- Crime Reduction team for a visit as Mr BA had concerns regarding the security of his property. They gave Mr BA suggestions regarding updating his security system and lighting. Mr BA felt reassured after their visit and installed new lighting which made him feel safer and secure in his own home.

Mr W is an 83 year old gentleman who lives in a house with his wife; Mrs W. Mr W was in the Army and carried out his National Service in Berlin.

Mr W was referred to Age UK by his son, JW. He advised that Mrs W was experiencing increased difficulty meeting Mr W's needs. He lives with Alzheimer's and has experienced a stroke. Due to arthritis, Mr W experiences increased pain when mobilising and dizzy spells resulting from COPD and asthma. As a result, he relies on a walking stick at all times to prevent falls. He is unable to access his local community without support. MR W was also experiencing increased difficulty moving around his home. Mrs W was supporting him using stairs by walking behind him, putting herself at risk, and struggled to support him to bathe.

Age UK supported Mr and Mrs W's son, JW to request an Assessment of Needs by Adult Social Care for Mr W. Age UK requested a prioritised referral for Mr W for Equipment and Adaptations from the council and within 2 weeks Mr W had received an Occupational Therapy assessment at home, resulting in a second stair rail, swivel bath chair, bed leaver and adaptation of front access steps. As a result, Mr W's independence has been increased, reducing the pressure on Mrs W in meeting his care needs. This includes reduced risk of falling when using stairs and font door access. Due to the equipment and adaptations in place, Mrs W advised she requires no further support from Adult Social Care.

Mr W was not receiving any disability benefits. Age UK supported Mr W to apply for Attendance Allowance, and also supported Mrs W to apply for Underlying Entitlement to Carers Allowance. Mr W has been awarded the higher rate of Attendance Allowance. Mrs W is waiting for the outcome of her application.

Mr L and his wife lived in a 2 bedroom bungalow. Mr L was 83 years of age and Mrs L is 82 years of age. They have been married for 60 years. Mr L did national service in the RAF.

Mr L had health and memory issues and was terminally ill with cancer of the prostate. Mrs L also had health problems, high blood pressure and anxiety. Mr L died while the project was supporting them.

Mr and Mrs L were very independent. Mrs L cared for Mr L and did their own cleaning. Family members take Mrs L to the supermarket on a weekly basis. Age UK Leeds supported them with a Blue Badge application, referred Mr L to a Prostate Cancer support group and Mrs L to Carers Leeds. Age UK supported Mrs L to join the local neighbourhood network, and she went out on outings with them which helped her during her bereavement. Age UK Digital Angels visited Mrs L, supported her to purchase a laptop and showed her how to use it. This gave her the confidence to use IT and she is now able to communicate with family members who live overseas.

Although they were both in receipt of State Pension and Mr L had a small private pension they were struggling financially. Age UK arranged for Welfare Rights to visit Mr and Mrs L and help apply for Attendance Allowance. Mr L's application for Attendance Allowance was successful and he received Attendance Allowance at the high rate. This made a great difference for them as they could afford to pay for taxis when they needed transport, also had funds to pay for help within their home. Mr L also received a Blue Badge which was helpful for when he and Mrs L went out with

family and friends. When Mr L died Age UK referred Mrs L back to Welfare Rights who supported her with her claim for Pension credits. Mrs L received extra money i.e. Pension Credit through DWP which improved her financial situation.

Age UK supported Mrs L to apply for a pendant alarm and arranged for Keysafe box to be installed. Mrs L said that this made her feel safe within her home. Age UK supported Mrs L to register for rehousing and she received a bidding number. However Mrs L decided not to pursue it at that time as she felt she needed to remain in her current home.

Mrs L is very pleased for all the support both she and her husband had received from Age UK. She said it had made a huge difference to their lives. It has supported Mrs L to avoid becoming isolated following her bereavement, and the increased finance has reduced her anxiety and enabled her to buy her laptop.

Mr P was referred by his GP as an (alcoholic related) dementia patient with a high risk of and history of falls and hospital admissions and an inability to look after himself properly.

He suffered from poor nutrition and did not take prescribed medication He was living on alcohol, falling over or going out and getting lost or losing front door key so being locked out, resulting in police involvement. He would not engage socially or participate properly in any assessment. He had little money and received no benefits.

Age UK arranged for Mr P to attend its Lunch Club and provided him with a support package with trained staff visiting 3 times a day to provide some structure to his life. Age UK supported Mr P to go for walks, with his housework, shopping, preparing meals to improve his nutrition to improve vitamin B levels depleted by alcohol abuse; reducing his alcohol consumption, ensure his medication was taken and accompanied him to GP appointments. Age UK arranged for a Keysafe to be installed, and ensured he was safely in his house at night, reducing his risk of falls to stop his frequent hospital admissions. Age UK supported Mr P to apply successfully for Attendance Allowance.

Mr P is now chattier and appears much more cheerful. He enjoys the Lunch Club where he is enjoying others' company and is less isolated. His weight and vitamin B levels have improved, as has his memory. He enjoys his accompanied walks. He has had no more falls or hospital admissions, needs to visit his GP less, and has had no further involvement with the police. The risk of Mr P requiring higher level social care has been reduced significantly.

Iris is 78 years old and lives with her partner Stan in social housing. She has lung cancer and severe breathing difficulties. Her husband Stan has Angina, tremors and very poor mobility himself.

They rely on each other for support and contacted our service as they were struggling to manage on their very limited income and were worrying about affording their heating bills. Our Independent Living Co-ordinator (ILC) visited the couple at home and discovered an number of issues affecting their wellbeing including; difficulties paying their rent, problems getting their rubbish bins out for collection, difficulties access local facilities and concerns that their home would not be suitable for them as their health deteriorated.

Our ILC visited the couple at home several times to link them up to appropriate support, including the assisted bin collection service, provided information on equipment to help them maintain their independence and completed a full benefit check and supported them both to apply for Attendance Allowance. Our ILC applied for underlying entitlement to Carer's Allowance, as they were caring for each other, which enabled them to apply for Pension Credit with our support.

Outcomes: Achieve Economic Wellbeing

- Applied for Attendance Allowance. They were both awarded higher rate Attendance Allowance increasing their joint income by £8,559.20 per annum
- Applied for underlying entitlement to Carer's Allowance which enabled us to apply for

Pension Credit. Pension Credit of £121.33 pwk was awarded increasing their joint income by £6309.16 pa.

- Applied for Housing Benefit to help cover the cost of their rent. This was awarded and their full rent is now covered by Housing Benefit (increasing their income by £2435.16 pa)
- Applied for Council Tax Support. This was awarded and they no longer pay council tax. (Increasing in their income of £720.20 pa)

Outcome of benefit awards - increase in annual income of £18023.72 pa enabling them to keep them home warm and pay for support services to help them maintain their independence

Outcomes: Stay Safe, Enjoy and Achieve

- Arranged for their rubbish bins to be collected reducing the risk of falls
- Completed registration with their Utility priority services to ensure their gas/electricity supply is not interrupted reducing the risk of a cold home
- Provided information on housing options and a housing support service to increase their knowledge on their housing options for the future
- provided information on equipment to enable Stan to carry and hold drinks without spilling them reducing the risk of burns
- Successful blue badge applications giving easier and safer access to local facilities improving their sense of wellbeing

George is 76 years old and lives alone in an adapted social housing property.

He has several long-term health conditions including; a hearing impairment, Asthma and Prostate Cancer which has spread to his bones. He has fallen trying to get to his mobility car. He contacted our service for help as he had lost confidence to go outside following his falls. Our ILC visited George at home several times and identified a number of barriers to his independence including: risk of falls getting up/down the kerb to his mobility car, unwanted equipment blocking the escape route in his lounge, nuisance sales calls, problems managing his incontinence effectively, inability to hear a smoke alarm in an emergency, difficulties accessing toileting facilities outside his home, worries around affording essential dental treatment, inability to get shopping without support and lost confidence to go outside his home.

Outcomes: Achieve Economic Wellbeing

 Completed a full benefit check to ensure customer was in receipt of the appropriate benefits and supported customer to organise confirmation of his benefit award to enable him to access free dental care

Outcomes: Stay Safe

- Support to secure landlord's permission to install a drop-kerb in car park to enable him to safely access his mobility to use local facilities reducing the risk of falls and social isolation
- Support to apply to four charities to obtain full funding for the drop-kerb installation costs (grant awarded of £780.00) to enable work to go ahead

- Support to liaise between the contractor, grant providers and the Local Authority to ensure correct permission were obtained in the timescales required and monies transferred into the contractor's account enabling the adaptation to the kerb to go ahead
- Completed registration with the Telephone Preference service to reduce nuisance sales calls and reduce the risk of scams
- Completed referral to South Yorkshire Fire Service for a home safety check to install vibrating smoke alarms to notify customer of any emergency situation
- Contacted Equipment provider to remove unused equipment to clear pathway to emergency exit in lounge. Reducing the risk of falls and delay exiting the property in an emergency
- Provided information on specialist equipment to enable easier and safer entry into his mobility car
 reducing risk of falls
- Provided information on disabled friendly toilet locations within Sheffield promoting confidence and reducing social isolation

Outcomes: Be Healthy

Supported him to contact the Continence
 Advisory Service to request more appropriate
 continence products to enable him to manage
 his continence difficulties, promoting his dignity
 and sense of wellbeing

Provided information on chargeable services that could support him with shopping and other tasks around the home promoting choice and control

Mrs H is a 95 year old woman who served in the ATS during WW2.

Mrs H is widowed and lives alone in a council property where she has lived for 64 years. Mrs H has a downstairs toilet and stair lift. Mrs H has family support that lives nearby. Mrs H has several health problems, including arthritis, is visually impaired and has hearing aids. Mrs H has also had several falls which resulted in broken ribs, nose and split lip. Mrs H has a walker and uses a wheelchair when she goes out with her family. Mrs H had been a keen gardener however the pathway outside her home at the front of the house and the back was very uneven with no support and Mrs H did not feel able to go out into her garden. Mrs H is very independent; she prepares and cooks her own meals. However Mrs H receives support from her daughter with cleaning and shopping.

Mrs H is struggling with her financial situation; Mrs H is in receipt of a state pension, small pension from her husband and pension credits. Age UK arranged for the Information and Advice team to visit Mrs H and help apply for Attendance Allowance. The application was successful and she now receives Attendance Allowance at the low rate. This has made a great difference to her as she can now afford to pay for taxis when she needs transport, and she has funds to pay for outings for herself and her family.

Age UK also contacted the charity The Forgotten Heroes who support carers of people who have served in the Armed Forces. They agreed to support Mrs H's daughter who is the carer for her mother. Mrs H's daughter requested the charity to help her with funds to pay for the pathway outside her mother's home and front of the house to be paved and made safe so her mother could go into the garden safely. The paving and handrails fitted in the garden of her house has made a positive impact on Mrs H being able to go outside of the house and feel safe and she can now enjoy her garden without the risk of falling.



Mr G is a WW2 Veteran aged 96. He lived on his own when he came to us initially and now lives in Residential Housing.

Mr G is in good health, apart from mobility issues which prevented him from leaving the house. He was not socialising and had always had a busy life previously. Due to his age, all of his friends are now deceased. His granddaughter saw an article in the local newspaper about the opening event for the Military Memories project and persuaded him to attend.

Since that initial YFA session, Age UK has supported Mr G, including with transport, to attend the Age UK Regional veterans' event in Leeds/Wakefield, the Golden Years film festival in Bradford, Big Screen lunch event in Bradford and a veterans' Christmas Party. His social life has improved and he has the opportunity to chat to other veterans. His isolation has been reduced. Mr G has also benefitted from Home visits in which his services history has been recorded for archive and his photographs have also been copied for archive / exhibitions and school work. Mr G enjoys his home visits.

Mr G is a proud man and being able to share his memorabilia and life story is important to him. "Thank you, I really enjoy coming to your events" Mr G. "Thanks for taking so much interest in my Grandad, I know he really appreciates it" Mr G's Granddaughter.

After being referred to Age UK for a benefits review, Mr A (above) was also put on the mailing list for future Aged Veteran Service (Military Memories) events. He enjoyed attending a Reminiscence Event, especially showing attendees and staff

his photos from his time serving in the Korean War. However, his star attraction was a portrait of himself signed by Walt Disney! Mr A was featured in the local newspaper's review of the event highlighting how much he enjoyed his time there. Mr A said 'it has been good to get out. I haven't been able to get out recently as I fell over. It has been great to chat to so many people.'Mr H

Former Chindit (South Staffs Regiment) Mr H (98) was referred to us via the Chindit Society who had heard about our project through press coverage.

There are only 12 Chindits alive in the UK now and Mr H is the only one in Yorkshire. Initially he was provided with a carer so that he could attend the Remembrance Parade in London and then we arranged for a newspaper interview in his home.

He really enjoyed the day in London and the following week with the journalist, myself and photographer. Mr H received media coverage highlighting his service story.

"Best day I've had for ages.

I can pass on my medals and I'll frame the Newspaper article and pass that on to my Grandson as well. Thank you."

Thanks

Armed Forces Covenant Fund; local Covenant
Partnerships, Armed Forces Charities and Veterans
Associations in our areas; Kelham Island Museum;
Yorkshire Air Museum; Pudsey Civic Hall Tea Dance;
the Second World War Experience Centre;
Yorkshire FIlm Archive; Bradford Film Festival;
Charlotte Graham Photography; Gary Lawson
Photography. All of the venues who supported our
huge range of activities across the region and the
Age UK staff, volunteers and everyone who made
this all possible; and of course all of the veterans,
who took part and shared their stories with us, and
their families and supporters who helped some of
our veterans take part.

Report author: Kevin Cooper, KHC Consulting Ltd. Designed by Debby Fulgoni.



To find out more about how you can get involved with Age UK visit www.ageuk.org.uk/support or call 0800 169 87 87

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