

## Tom's introduction

Welcome to the 2022 FiMT Impact Report. Those of you who are avid readers of this annual publication will notice that we have taken a different approach this year, following our <u>previous report</u> which looked back over the first decade of FiMT.

Unlike previous years where we produced a full, printed report, this year we are sharing a slimmed down, digital-only snapshot of some of the impact we achieved in 2022. This has the added benefit of reducing our paper consumption; in 2022 we signed the Funder Commitment on Climate Change, committing to improving on our impact and acknowledging that climate change is a problem we should all be working to tackle.

You'll see over the following pages some examples of our work and impact across the year. Another benefit of digitising this report is that it allows us to create links throughout, so if you are interested in finding out more about any of these projects, please do follow the links in each section to read more. Our Executive Team is also always happy to speak about these projects, their impact, and where we can go next, so you'll find contact details at the end of the report if you wish to get in touch.

2022 saw some changes in our team, with previous Chief Executive Mike Ellicock stepping down in the summer and our Chair, Hans Pung, reaching the end of his tenure in November.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank both for their work and support.

In late 2022 we also received the sad news that our exceptional Patron, Admiral of the Fleet Lord Boyce KG GCB OBE DL, had passed away. We are indebted to him for his support, both of Forces in Mind Trust and of the wider sector. The Armed Forces community has lost a tireless supporter. We welcomed our new Chair, Rear Admiral Jim Macleod CB CVO, at the end of the year. Jim has written a piece on page 10 about our vision for the Trust over the coming years.

In the following pages you'll read about some of the work our team has been busy with. But most notably, in 2022, we launched the new Forces in Mind Trust Research Centre, published the latest report in our ongoing body of work on the Armed Forces Covenant, and made further progress on understanding veterans' physical and mental health needs.



In last year's report we looked back at the impact we have achieved so far. This year, our focus is on looking forward as we set course into the second half of our mission and looking ahead to our legacy.

All that remains to say is a thank you to all of our partners, friends and collaborators. Once again, we proved the power of partnership and collaboration in 2022, and look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure those who have served in the Armed Forces can have a successful and sustainable transition to civilian life.

Tom McBarnet, Chief Executive

# 2022 at a glance



reports published



£ 1,746,000 funding awarded\*



projects funded



Signed **Funders Commitment** on Climate Change



projects completed



Launched
the new FiMT Research Centre

<sup>\*</sup> not including Research Centre

## A look back at 2022

We had a busy year at FiMT, as we and all our key partners and stakeholders moved forward from the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic and began to host and attend in-person events again.

Much of FiMT's work takes place behind the scenes: collaborating, convening and influencing changemakers; and building an evidence base for positive change so we can continue to support members of the Armed Forces Community as they transition from the military to civilian life. Here, you can read the headlines about some of our work in 2022.

## Improving delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant

In December, we published A Decade of the Covenant, the third report in our *Our Community, Our Covenant* series. It examines the impact



Speakers panel at the launch event of A Decade of the Covenant, Thomas McBarnet speaking

of the Armed Forces Covenant 10 years since its introduction, assesses current delivery, and provides resources and practical guidance for local authorities and other organisations to ensure that the Armed Forces Community is not disadvantaged as a result of their service.

2022 also saw the Government introduce a Statutory Duty for specified bodies to have due regard for the principles of the Covenant when exercising certain statutory functions across health, housing, and education. Recognising both our record of tracking the delivery of Covenant pledges and contribution to the formative stages of the legislation, our reports are referenced as a resource in the Statutory Guidance.





These reports are invaluable on so many levels, but most importantly of all, they give remarkable insights into how far the Covenant is being implemented and act as a signpost for where more focus may be needed in the future"

**Helen Helliwell** – Director Armed Forces People Policy at the Ministry of Defence

# Information and innovation in veterans' health

Our Mental Health Research Programme continues to fund innovative research to improve understanding, treatment and support for veterans experiencing mental health difficulties. In 2022, this included two apps. The Drinks:Ration app and the Mental Health Toolkit for Veterans, known as the MeT4VeT app, were both developed by the King's Centre for Military Health Research through funding from FiMT. These apps have both indicated that this technology can be useful to help, respectively, veterans reduce harmful drinking behaviours and overcome psychosocial barriers which prevented them from seeking help for mental health.

Making a significant addition to the evidence base on veterans' health, a major study from the University of Glasgow examined changes in the health of Scottish veterans over time, providing a wealth of information regarding trends in long-term health over nearly 40 years. Broadly, it concluded that many health outcomes for veterans are improving, although some challenges remain for certain age and service cohorts.

# Identifying veterans in healthcare settings

Research continues to tell us more about the health and wellbeing of veterans and how we can best target support and treatments, with consideration of the unique factors which may be significant and play a key role in delivering future success. In particular, when accessing healthcare in civilian settings, identifying veterans at the point of presentation is important, especially to help veterans and health providers to access the veteran-specific support or healthcare pathways they may be entitled to.

In 2022, two FiMT-funded projects investigated new ways to successfully identify veterans in healthcare settings. The first, from the University of Chester, saw veteran registration increase by 218% at the GP practices which took part in the research. Since publication, over 40 new GP practices have signed up to the NHS England and the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) veteran-friendly accreditation scheme as a result of the project. The researcher behind the project, Dr Rebecca Randles, also won the Research Excellence Award at the FiMT Research Centre Conference in recognition of the impact of the project.



Dr Rebecca Randles (left) receiving the Research Excellence Award at the FiMT Research Centre Conference

King's College London, with Combat Stress and South London and Maudsley NHS Trust, also developed a new automated tool, the Military Service Identification Tool, which successfully identifies veterans in electronic healthcare records. We also announced funding for further research on whether one of the world's largest electronic databases can be used to improve identification and understanding of the health needs of veterans accessing primary care through their GP.

## Leading the sector in veterans' research

In September, responsibility for running the FiMT Research Centre was awarded to a consortium of RAND Europe and the King's Centre for Military Health Research at King's College London. They have launched an accessible and informative new website, delivered their first research conference and are providing an accessible and authoritative evidence base on veterans, whilst fostering collaboration between those working in the fields of research and policy.

Dr Mary Keeling has been appointed as the Research Manager for the FiMT Research Centre.





Professor Nicola Fear presenting at the FiMT Research Centre Conference

We are excited to draw upon the expertise of this fantastic collaborative team, and will work to achieve the Research Centre's objectives and make a positive contribution to ensure military personnel and their families make a sustainable transition to life post service."

Dr Mary Keeling – Research Manager for the FiMT Research Centre

## Influencing the future of policy

An important area of our work is led by our Policy, Influence and Evaluation Team. The Trust funds and supports research to build an evidence base, which policymakers and service deliverers can use to inform their work, making real, evidence-based changes to the lives of veterans and their families. This work takes place in many ways, through meetings with thought leaders, policy authors, MPs, participation in roundtables and consultations, and targeting research and recommendations at policymakers.

In 2022, we were pleased to be consulted and contribute to the respective Veterans' Strategy Action Plans and Refreshed Action Plan, developed by the Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA) and the Scottish Government, the OVA's Data and Research Framework and the Ministry of Defence Families Strategy. We met with Welsh and Scottish Veterans Commissioners, Labour Friends of the Forces, Rachel Hopkins MP, Owen Thompson MP, Tobias Ellwood MP, Fay Jones MP and separately supported a UK-Israeli international conference, with the Minister Defence People and Veterans, on veterans support.



FiMT research is a great asset for an organisation like The Defence Medical Welfare Service. The life changing support we provide for the Armed Forces Community is only possible through funding. FiMT's impactful research allows us to evidence to our funders the need, which is pivotal in securing funding and in turn then delivers positive impacts for our beneficiaries.

**Paul Gaffney** – CEO of the Defence Medical Welfare Service

Seminar with Labour Friends of the Forces and FiMT – Lifting Our Sights: Beyond 2030

## And much more

We are continuing to see impact from other projects this year, such as:

■ The FiMT-funded No Homeless Veterans campaign, which has helped to inform the Government launching a total of £28.5m of funding to tackle the issue of veterans' homelessness.



Head of Policy, Caroline Cooke, speaking at the House of Lords for the launch of No Homeless Veterans campaign

- A report from the <u>Probation Institute</u> explored the reasons why a small number of ex-Service personnel commit serious crimes, setting out recommendations for policy and practice aiming to reduce the risk of harm to this vulnerable group.
- An <u>evaluation</u> of The Poppy Factory's newest programme found that it successfully

supports veterans with health conditions into employment. Working with NHS healthcare services, this programme offers veterans one-to-one employment coaching alongside prescribed care by GPs and mental health teams. During the pilot, NHS England agreed to fund the project for a further two-years.

■ Glasgow's Helping Heroes service, run by SSAFA in partnership with Glasgow City Council, has been shown to have delivered a tangible



NIVSO event panel discussion. From left to right: Danny Kinahan (Veterans Commissioner for Northern Ireland), Liz Brown, Thomas McBarnet, John Shivas and Meri Mayhew



Launch event at BMA House for <u>Lives in Transition: returning</u> to civilian life with a physical injury or condition report

social return on investment and savings to the City Council itself in support of vulnerable veterans, thanks to FiMT-funded research.

Research from the University of Central Lancashire in partnership with the University of Salford shed light on the inconsistent experiences of personnel who leave the military due to a physical injury or condition acquired in service. The report included a series of recommendations for the Government and NHS and led to the creation of an Expert Advisory Panel at a Personnel Recovery Unit to take the recommendations forward.

# Celebrating partnership and collaboration

We occupy a unique position, which can often enable us to bring together organisations and individuals across local and national government, the charity sector, academia and service delivery. The positive impact of this contributes and can lead to real-world improvements for veterans and their families.



Lifting our Sights: Beyond 2030 report

Impact Report 2011-2021

At our 2022 summer reception, where we shared our 2011-2021 Impact Report, we celebrated 10 years of FiMT and brought together the many stakeholders, colleagues and friends we work with.

As Chief Executive Tom McBarnet said at the event:

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It was wonderful to see so many friends and colleagues in person again. After we published our 10 year Impact Report, we wanted to get together to celebrate with many of the partners who contribute greatly to our work. Collaboration is at the heart of Forces in Mind Trust, which is evident in so much of the work that we do.

As we enter an exciting new period and the second half of Forces in Mind Trust's 20-year endowment, our brilliant staff team is busy working with partners to ensure that we can have an impact on the Armed Forces Community and work towards our mission to that all Service personnel and their families can have a successful transition to civilian life."





Summer Reception and the FiMT Executive Team

# A message from Jim Macleod CB CVO, Chair of Forces in Mind Trust

So far, you have read about the activities and impact of Forces in Mind Trust in 2022. Having joined as Chair only at the very end of the year, I have been struck, not only by the breadth and variety of the Trust's previous work, but also the reach and influence it has achieved. My reflections on 2022 are therefore very much from the standpoint of an interested observer. But I'm sure you will see the year as I do – an impressive and impactful body of work and a great foundation from which to continue to project the Trust's valuable work. What I am more qualified to comment on, as the new Chair, is what the future holds for FiMT. I'm delighted to be joining FiMT at this important time and would like to acknowledge all the work which has been done so far to get FiMT to where it is today, which you can read about in our previous Impact Report.

I see myself and my fellow directors as pivotal in ensuring that Forces in Mind Trust continues to be

a force for good, that it leaves a lasting positive legacy, and it continues to deliver on its purpose of enabling all ex-Service personnel and their families to make a successful and sustainable transition to civilian life. I recognise though the complexity and challenges of the contemporary environment in which FiMT works, and the pressures faced by those operating in the public and charity sectors. In such circumstances it is more important than ever for us to be a catalyser and collaborator in driving change, a cohering force for ideas, and act as an independent, respected, and evidence based voice across sectors and across all four nations of the UK.

The Trust provides an invaluable and unique role in this sector, and whilst the landscape has changed significantly since the Trust was set up in 2011, the need for what the Trust brings has not. Our independence in approach, our



ability to commission and support the generation of research evidence which can transform policy generation and service delivery, and our ability to support others within the sector who can leverage the work that the Trust has generated, is as important now as it was in 2011. We must continue to be good stewards of our remaining funds and spend them wisely over the coming years, whilst maximizing the impact of the investments we've made so far by utilising and sharing research to bring about change.

Amongst the many great things we undertook in 2022, a key achievement that stands out

is the launch of the new Forces in Mind Trust
Research Centre in partnership with King's
College London and RAND. This highly accessible,
free, authoritative, and comprehensive resource
promises to be a real asset in increasing
understanding of the Armed Forces Community
and families, supporting Government resource

planning, wider research and both media and public enquiry. Ensuring that this becomes a legacy of FiMT is a key priority for me.

I would like to thank the Directors and the talented and professional staff at the Trust for all the work they have done to make Forces in Mind as influential and effective as it is. I would also like to recognise my predecessor Hans Pung for a thorough and generous handover, and for the tireless work he has done over the last 6 years as Chair.

Jim Macleod CB CVO, Chair of Forces in Mind Trust



FiMT Board and Executive Team



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## **Contact Us**

fim-trust.org/contact-form





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