

Evidence into **IMPACT**

Forces in Mind Trust
Impact Report, 2011 - 2021

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In the pages that follow we will provide a few examples of the remarkable impact this small team has had over the past decade.

Mike Ellicock, Chief Executive

Welcome

This is my first Impact Report as Chief Executive of Forces in Mind Trust, having taken over from Ray Lock halfway through 2021. It is a privilege to lead an organisation that has spent the past decade working hard to ensure that all who served and their families have a successful and sustainable transition into civilian life. As a former Captain in The Parachute Regiment, the withdrawal from Afghanistan has also provided a poignant backdrop to my first few months in the role.

The team and I have decided to take the change in leadership as an opportunity to do something different with our Impact Report. It has been 10 years since the Trust was established and it is also the midpoint of the 20 year spend down of our endowment from the National Lottery Community Fund. In the pages that follow we will provide a few examples of the remarkable impact this small team has had over the past decade. I hope you enjoy reading these examples and I look forward to working with you all in the coming years as, collectively, we seek to build upon these achievements and continue to turn Evidence into Impact.

Mike Ellicock, Chief Executive

Who we are

Forces in Mind Trust was founded in 2011 with a £35 million endowment from the National Lottery Community Fund to improve transition to civilian life for the 15,000 people who leave service each year.

Our **VISION** is for all ex-Service personnel and their families to lead fulfilled civilian lives.

Our **MISSION** is to enable successful and sustainable transition to civilian life.

We deliver our Mission by working collaboratively with others to:



Identify the barriers to successful transition



Find out what works to address these barriers



Use this evidence to bring about change that has an impact on the ground.

This means that we:

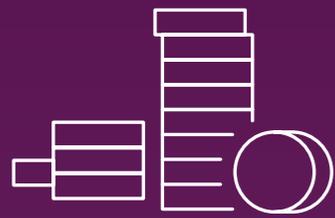
- 1** Fund work that builds collective knowledge of the barriers to successful transition and the evidence of what works to address them
- 2** Influence stakeholders to help to bring about change on the ground
- 3** Collaborate to bring about change and provide leadership to do so
- 4** Fund capacity building for our sector.

We use robust evidence and work in partnership with others to drive change, particularly as a member of Cobseo, the Confederation of Service Charities. Our mission is delivered by a small and expert staff team led by Chief Executive Mike Ellicock and an experienced and diverse Board of Directors led by Chair Hans Pung.

Our seven programmes cover the full span of life domains for ex-Service personnel and their families:

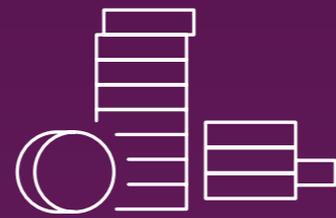
Health	Employment	Housing	Finance	Relationships	Criminal Justice System	Enabler

10 years of Forces in Mind Trust at a glance



£24.3m

Total funding awarded



84

Projects

Identifying the barriers to a successful transition



41

Projects

Finding out what works to address these barriers



51

Projects

Using evidence to bring about change that has an impact on the ground

Total funding by ways of delivering our Mission



£11.7m

Identifying the **barriers** to a successful transition



£9m

Finding out **what works** to address these barriers



£3.5m

Using **evidence** to bring about change that has an **impact** on the ground

Reflecting on a decade of Forces in Mind Trust

When the Forces in Mind Trust was established in 2011, it was in a very different environment to the one in which we operate today: troops were still on the ground in Afghanistan, unemployment rates for ex-Service Members were high, PTSD and mental health incidence was concerning, and there was a huge evidence gap which meant policymakers and delivery organisations struggled to know where and how to best support Service leavers. Since then, and thanks, in part, to the work of the Forces in Mind Trust team over the past decade, we now have a far better understanding of the issues and challenges faced by Service leavers and by veterans who have already made the transition to civilian life—and some appreciation of how better to support them.

“

We now have a far better understanding of the issues and challenges faced by Service leavers and by veterans who have already made the **transition to civilian life.**

Hans Pung, Board of Directors

Our first task was to identify the barriers to a successful and sustainable transition across the different elements of civilian life: employment; housing; relationships; health; finance and (for some) the criminal justice system. We then focused our efforts and grant-making activities on generating the knowledge and evidence base to enable policymakers to make the necessary changes to address these barriers—starting to drive change that has a real impact on those on the ground.

The timeline which you will find on the next page could not, and therefore does not, contain everything that we have done so far. Instead, it highlights a few key milestones on the journey that we have been on and



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the evolving wider context in which we have been operating. In the following pages, you can read in more depth about some of these activities and the impact they have had.

As a Board we were fortunate to have Ray Lock CBE lead the Trust as Chief Executive from soon after establishment until June 2021. He should take tremendous credit for building the organisation into what it has now become. Mike Ellicock took over in June 2021 and now has a fantastic opportunity to ensure that our relatively small charity continues

to punch above its weight in using knowledge and evidence to drive impact in the coming years.

As I reflect on the Trust's work over the last ten years, I am grateful for the many partners who have worked with us to help achieve positive change for our ex-Service personnel and their families; and I look forward to seeing what more we can do together over the next ten years.

Hans Pung, on behalf of the Board of Directors

Timeline of Forces in Mind Trust

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<p>Strategic Defence Review triggers a wave of redundancies</p>	<p>End of UK military operations in Iraq</p> <p>Armed Forces Covenant published</p>			<p>British combat mission in Afghanistan ends</p>	<p>Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust established</p>				<p>Office for Veterans' Affairs is established</p>	<p>Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy</p> <p>Armed Forces Bill</p>		<p>Veterans' Strategy Action Plan published</p>
<p>Bid for Forces in Mind first submitted to Big Lottery Fund</p> 	<p>Funding was approved and Forces in Mind Trust was founded</p>	<p>Forces in Mind Trust becomes a registered charity</p> <p>Ray Lock appointed Chief Executive</p>	<p><i>Future Horizons</i> report published One of our first funded projects</p>  <p><i>Transition Mapping Study</i> published see page 12</p>	<p><i>Sector Insight</i> published The start of our partnership with Directory of Social Change see page 14</p>	<p>Veterans & Families Research Hub established at Anglia Ruskin University</p>  <p>Mental Health Research Programme established</p> <p>First in the <i>Call to Mind</i> series of reports see page 16</p>	<p>First <i>Our Community, Our Covenant</i> report see page 20</p> <p>Hans Pung appointed Chair</p>	<p>Forces in Mind Trust Research Centre established see page 22</p> 	<p>Head of Policy Meri Mayhew seconded to the MOD as Charity Adviser to the Veterans' Strategy</p>  <p>New programmatic approach and strategic change to focus on impact</p> <p><i>Lifting the Lid on Transition</i> published Research on Armed Forces families</p>	<p>#NoHomeless-Veterans campaign</p>  <p><i>Sanctions, Support and Service Leavers</i> published see page 18</p>	<p>Forces in Mind Trust works to support the sector during the Covid pandemic</p>	<p><i>Lifting Our Sights</i> is published see page 26</p>  <p>Mike Ellicock is appointed Chief Executive</p>	<p>Forces in Mind Trust Impact Report, 2011-2021 published</p>

Understanding the transition journey

Enabling all relevant stakeholders to have a better understanding of the barriers to a successful and sustainable transition for Service leavers and their families has been central to delivering our mission over the past decade. This work began with us commissioning The Futures Company to produce a comprehensive review of the processes and the experience of transition from Service to civilian life.

Building evidence

The first Transition Mapping Study was published in 2013 at a major event in Whitehall attended by senior political and charity leaders and was covered extensively in national and specialist media. The report identified factors that affected transition and the costs of poor transition and made a series of recommendations to improve the transition journey. Subsequent work assessed where progress had been made and where further improvements were necessary.

Impact

The impact of the first Transition Mapping Study was far-reaching and is still felt today. Internally, it helped us develop a theory of change, and to cement the foundation of our grants programme and our programmatic approach. Externally, it provided a common understanding of the landscape and lexicon around transition which were gradually adopted by Government, academia and the charity sector. The findings of this and subsequent research continue to be acted upon—most recently in the Government's Veterans' Strategy Action

Plan—and it had a significant influence on sector thinking. The true impact on past and future Service leavers is immeasurable: but it is both positive and substantial.

“

We learned so much from this project—from where we needed to target our work and funding over the following years, to the more mundane but essential skills of how to commission research, and how to organise effective and influential events. **The whole of our decade was built on its foundations.**”

Ray Lock CBE, former Chief Executive of Forces in Mind Trust

“

As we continue on our journey to make the United Kingdom the best place in the world to be a veteran, **I commend FiMT on their continued partnership with government to provide us with this invaluable insight.**”

Leo Docherty, Minister for Defence People and Veterans



Informing the sector

Our strategy includes strengthening the *Armed Forces charities sector through collaboration and leadership, and by building its capacity.*

Since the Trust was established, we have worked extensively with Cobseo, the Confederation of Service Charities, and in collaboration with many other partners. We have funded more than 100 places on Clore Social Leadership and Windsor Leadership Trust programmes to strengthen and inform the sector; celebrated and encouraged collaboration by

sponsoring the FiMT Working Together Award at the Soldiering On Awards; and supported the Contact Group which brings together organisations that deliver mental health support to the Armed Forces Community. Some of our most impactful and long-term work supporting the sector has been through our partnership with the Directory of Social Change (DSC).



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Building evidence

Since 2014, we have worked with the DSC to provide information on and for the sector. To date, this partnership has resulted in 11 reports, providing policymakers, funders and beneficiaries with an unbiased and independently researched source of information. The findings are now available to explore on an accessible, interactive database.

Impact

- The reports and the information they provided have been used by charities to support funding bids and provided evidence to inform services and strategies.
- The MOD used the information to inform their own consultation report, and it helped shape the Strategy for our Veterans, as well as being cited in multiple government-led reports.
- The reports helped to secure millions of pounds in government funding for Armed Forces charities across the UK during the pandemic.



“

DSC and FiMT's partnership is, at its core, dedicated to providing insightful and independent evidence in an accessible way. **Together, we have established the definitive evidence-base on charities which serve the Armed Forces community.** Our work provides a footing from which policymakers, practitioners, and government alike can base strategic thinking and understanding around Armed Forces charities.

Debra Allcock Tyler, CEO – Directory of Social Change

Providing mental health support for veterans

Our Mental Health Research Programme, established in 2015, remains one of our most significant programmes. Following our 2012 commission reviewing the mental health of serving and ex-Service personnel, we sought to understand the needs of, and support for, those who required mental health and social care support, and where improvements were required.

Building evidence

In 2014, we commissioned the first UK-wide review of the mental health and social care needs of veterans and their families and the support services that existed. This led to a series of reports: *Call to Mind*—England, followed by *Call to Mind*—Scotland and Wales in 2016 and *Call to Mind*—Northern Ireland in 2017. This work transformed local health authorities' support for veterans and their families.

The reports highlighted common issues, including gaps in service provision and areas of good practice in meeting the mental and related health needs of veterans and their family members across each nation.

Impact

□ The first report led to NHS England investing an extra £10 million into developing a dedicated crisis service, including the Transition, Intervention and liaison Service (TILS) and the Veterans' Mental Health



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Complex Treatment Service (CTS). These became the foundational services eventually leading to the recent Op COURAGE service which received 4,900 referrals in 2020/21.

□ Funding also influenced work to better identify veterans accessing health services, and the roll-out of more than 1,110 veteran-friendly general practitioner surgeries. This is backed up by the NHS's Veteran Covenant Healthcare Alliance in over 100 hospitals as part of efforts to make sure veterans can access specialist help when needed.

□ The series of reports influenced NHS England to commission six Armed Forces Criminal Justice System pathfinder projects.

□ The reports informed NHS Scotland's 10-year mental health strategy.



FiMT was key in enabling an approach which had Lived Experience at the core and as a result influenced and changed the face and commissioning of Armed Forces mental health services and the £multi-million provision of veterans' mental health services across England.

Kate Davies, Director of Health and Justice, Armed Forces and Sexual Assault Referral Centres, NHS England

Supporting veterans navigating the benefits system

Anecdotal evidence suggested Service leavers faced difficulties navigating the complex benefits system and that Job Centre Plus staff did not understand their specific needs.

Previous research had raised concerns about the financial hardship faced by some Service leavers who face additional challenges as a result of serving. While specific allowances were available for Service leavers in the benefits system, it was not known whether adequate and appropriate support was being provided.



Building evidence

In 2016, we worked with the University of Salford on the first major study investigating the impact of the benefits system on veterans and their families. Led by Professor Lisa Scullion, the final report, titled *Sanctions, Support and Service Leavers*, found that ex-Service personnel were struggling to navigate the benefits system. The report included a series of recommendations to improve the process.

Impact

The research shed light on a previously unknown issue to key stakeholders including the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the Ministry of Defence, the House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee and various Ministers.

The evidence has led to a significant increase in support for veterans who require help from the UK benefits systems. As a result of the research:

- The government announced up to £6 million funding for more than 100 Armed Forces Champion posts at the DWP to support ex-Service personnel
- A new Armed Forces 'marker' was introduced to identify veterans accessing Universal Credit
- A new training module was developed to help assess specific health issues related to service
- The DWP and MOD now work more effectively together to ensure that guidance on the benefits system is provided as a routine part of resettlement support for Service leavers.



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“

Our aim was to provide evidence to inform policy and practice to better support veterans and their families trying to navigate the benefits system – and we are really proud to have achieved this. It has been gratifying to see how much change and improvement the research has helped support, with a real difference being made on the ground today. We are really pleased to continue our positive engagement with the DWP and are currently working on a follow-up study with FiMT to examine the impact and to continue to capture the experiences of ex-Service personnel during this period of welfare reform.

Professor Lisa Scullion

Delivering the Covenant

The Armed Forces Covenant was published and the principles enshrined in UK law in 2011, the same year FiMT was founded. It pledges that those who serve in the UK Armed Forces are to be treated fairly and face no disadvantage compared to other civilians in accessing support and services.

Building evidence

In 2016, we commissioned a report with the Local Government Association (LGA) to examine how local Covenant pledges were being delivered across the UK and to identify ways to support and improve local delivery of the Covenant. This led to further commissions, each aiming to establish the effectiveness of the Covenant and share best practice. The *Our Community, Our Covenant* reports included specific recommendations for how to improve delivery of the Covenant and provided a practical toolkit.

Impact

□ Local authorities across the UK have used the toolkit to improve their provision.

- The reports directly supported the work of the Ministry of Defence, leading to the creation of the MOD Covenant Community Action Group which we co-Chair, and which still helps to support local authorities to deliver the Covenant today. Recommendations helped to form the MOD Covenant Team's objectives, and we gave evidence to a House of Commons Select Committee on what was working well and less well in practice.
- We have provided additional funding to support delivery of the Covenant and implement best practice across the UK, including projects with Veterans Scotland and the Black Country Chamber of Commerce.
- The work is ongoing, with the third *Our Community, Our Covenant* report due to be published in 2022, examining the effectiveness and overall impact of the Covenant across all four nations of the UK.

“

An Armed Forces Champion from South Lanarkshire who attended one of our events identified that the Council could and should improve its delivery of the Covenant. Using the toolkit, they have adopted a guaranteed interview scheme for veterans, offered a free gym membership to those referred from Community Mental Health Teams and launched a website to provide crucial information for veterans. **They have seen a huge improvement across the region in awareness and understanding of the issues the Armed Forces Community may face.**”

Jim Wilson, Veterans Scotland



The FiMT Research Centre

As we continued to grow our body of evidence on the barriers faced by veterans and their families, it became apparent that there was a need for a research hub to ensure that the research we funded, as well as the wider evidence base, were free and easy to access. This led to our single biggest project to date.

Building evidence

In partnership with Lord Ashcroft and Anglia Ruskin University, FiMT funded a Veterans' Research Hub Project Director post for a 2-year period to manage the construction of a new online searchable and interactive knowledge repository of veteran research. The new FiMT Research Centre was launched in September 2017. It is now an accessible and authoritative source of UK and international research, resources and literature on veterans and their families.

Impact

- There are now more than 2,700 entries of research and related content on the website
- There have been more than 160,000 visits to the VFR Hub's website
- The Research Centre has reviewed, evaluated and given guidance on more than 150 reports
- A series of snapshots, bulletins and animations have been created to present findings in a clear and accessible way, visited 3,500 times each year

- Three national conferences have been held, bringing together academics, policymakers and practitioners from across the world to collaborate and share information in-person and online.

“

The FiMT Research Centre, of which I have been Patron since its inception, grew out of the Veterans & Families Research Hub—itsself a core output of the Veterans' Transition Review which I conducted for the government 8 years ago. **The Research Centre, with the Hub at its heart, has delivered accessible support and knowledge from its home at Anglia Ruskin University to the widest audience across the UK and overseas, informing discussion, research and policies from the local to international level.** I am pleased that the FiMT is to continue to fund this key capability for a further 5 years.”

Lord Ashcroft KCMG PC



Supporting Armed Forces families

The families of serving and ex-Service personnel often feel overlooked, yet they play a vitally important role in the successful transition from military to civilian life.

It is not just a Service leaver who must adjust when they leave the military; often their families also experience significant upheaval and they can, in some instances, face disadvantage because of their family member's service. We have sought to address this issue through much of our work over the last decade. We funded Blesma to explore the impact of limb loss on families; King's College London to understand the experiences of intimate partner violence and abuse perpetrated by military personnel; and worked with the Army, RAF and Naval Families Federations to engage the families' perspective of the transition process from military to civilian life.

Building evidence

Some of our most recent and impactful work to support families began in January 2019, when Andrew Selous MP was commissioned by the Defence Secretary to conduct an independent review into the needs of, and support for, Armed Forces families. The research team, led by Professor Janet Walker OBE, visited military bases and spoke to stakeholders and serving personnel and their families, across the UK.

We saw that this was an important opportunity to hear the voices of families and to influence real change based on their evidence, so we provided funds to support the research team and for the launch of the report. In parallel, we supported the MOD's comprehensive consultation with stakeholders in preparing its new UK



Armed Forces Families Strategy 2022-32 and led a series of workshops to consult with Armed Forces charities on the new Strategy.

Impact

Living In Our Shoes is an extensive and seminal report, which has influenced government strategies and policy towards Armed Forces families. We hosted a launch event in January 2021, in which more than 300 people watched the Secretary of State for Defence, The Rt Hon Ben Wallace MP and Chief of Defence People, Lieutenant General James Swift speak alongside the report authors and acknowledge the vital role of Service families.

The Government has fully responded to all 110 recommendations in the report and accepted all but three. The report's findings are at the core of the Armed Forces Families Strategy 2022-2032.

“

When I was asked by the Secretary of State for Defence to undertake an independent report on what more could be done to support Armed Forces families the Forces in Mind Trust immediately came to offer advice and support. This was enormously welcome, and we could not have achieved everything we did without the assistance of the Trust. I am enormously grateful and Armed Forces families will be the beneficiaries of this kind support.”

Andrew Selous MP

Preparing for 2030

In the 10 years since Forces in Mind Trust was founded, the factors influencing transition for Service leavers have changed significantly. Our work and grants programmes have adapted to meet these changing needs.

As we approached the midpoint in the Trust's lifetime, we took the opportunity to commission a report that would help the sector to better understand what the world might look like in 2030 and how this could impact the Armed Forces Community.



Building evidence

We commissioned Future Agenda, who employed a mix of foresight and ethnographic research to produce *Lifting Our Sights*—the first research project to explore how future trends could affect the Armed Forces Community. It strives to shine a light on the changing nature of UK society, and identify the trends that are likely to be most relevant to members of the Armed Forces who will undergo transition over the next decade.

Impact

□ This is a recent piece of work; the real impact is yet to happen. As organisations use the *Lifting Our Sights* report and toolkit to inform their future planning, we will see a sector better prepared for the challenges future Service leavers, veterans and their families will face.

□ Since the launch, we have spoken to government ministers, MPs, journalists, charity leaders and others in our sector who have read and used the report. We have met with the APPG on the Armed Forces Covenant, the Welsh Government Armed Forces Expert Group, the Office for Veterans' Affairs (OVA),



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the Minister for Defence People and Veterans, the Secretary of State for Defence and a host of MPs and parliamentarians across all the main parties.

□ The report also identified priority action areas which will now inform our work over the next decade. Many of these correlate with the recently published Veterans' Strategy Action Plan.

□ In the meantime, and using the insights from *Lifting Our Sights*, we continue to work alongside the OVA, other national and local government departments and the charity sector to help the Government reach its ambition of making the UK the best place in the world to be a veteran.

“

FiMT has been a longstanding supporter of the Office for Veterans' Affairs. Their research outputs have helped us understand more about veterans' needs and their experiences transitioning into civilian life. I look forward to continuing our work with FiMT to support the implementation of the Veterans' Strategy Action Plan and our wider efforts to ensure we have a thriving veteran community.”

Jessie Owen, Director for the Office for Veterans' Affairs

Our work in 2021



28

Projects
completed



13

Reports
published



11

Projects
awarded*



68%

Increase in media
coverage**

* Projects awarded: We announced funding for 11 new projects on subjects ranging from ex-Service personnel in the Criminal Justice System to non-UK Service personnel and their families and creating a roadmap to end veterans' homelessness to encouraging small businesses to employ veterans.

** with an 'opportunity to see' increase from 20.5m to 46m.



Attendees at a FiMT strategy away day 2022

...and where are we going?

The diagram on page 6 illustrates the distribution of our spending in the past decade across supporting work to identify the barriers to a successful and sustainable transition; projects that focus on identifying what works to address these barriers; or activities that use this information to make change happen. This is an impressive body of work. I see there being three primary elements to my, and my team's, work in the coming decade:

- 1** Doing all we can to ensure that that policy and practice are informed by what we already know.
- 2** Commissioning new work to inform policy and practice where there are gaps in our current knowledge, perhaps because the external environment has changed substantially.
- 3** Working to support implementation; enabling change to happen on the ground.

I therefore see the balance of our spending looking rather different in the coming decade—as is appropriate for the second decade of our work to convert Evidence into Impact.

Mike Ellicock, Chief Executive of Forces in Mind Trust



Thank you

Forces in Mind Trust would not have achieved the impact it has without the support of our partners. By design, the Trust relies on: grant holders to undertake research, or to build capacity; specialist teams to help exert influence; those who do hold levers of power to make the changes that will improve the lives of ex-Service personnel and their families. During my time as its first Chief Executive, the number of people and organisations with whom we worked would fill an entire Impact Report—and deservedly so. Any success is owed to the many who willingly collaborated with and supported us in the move from nascent enthusiasm to mature thought leadership. The reader may not know them all; but I do, and I put on record here the thanks of everyone at Forces in Mind Trust.

Equally true is that the Trust itself is more than the sum of its individual parts—staff, volunteers and service providers. But each individual also deserves

thanks, and again I want to record my indebtedness to all current and former members of staff (that only totals 20), and also to those to whom were outsourced finance and influence functions.

There is a special place at the Trust for the charities and leaders who helped us navigate an unfamiliar environment, and who continued to listen as well as guide throughout the decade. They will know who they are, civilian and ex-military alike, and I hope they will glow in the warmth of this anonymous gratitude.

Finally, the Trust would not exist, literally, without the voluntary, unpaid commitment of Directors and Committee Members. And it is to those extraordinary people, past and present, that I offer my final thank you on behalf of us all.

Ray Lock CBE was the Trust's Chief Executive from 2012 to 2021.

Executive Team

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Mike Ellicock
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Nicholas Lambert
Katy Sawyer
Tom Wipperman

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Louisa Dominguez
Samuel Freston
Professor Neil Greenberg
Alan Higgins
Vips Hirani
Air Vice-Marshal Grahame Jones
Air Vice-Marshal Ray Lock CBE
Professor David Lyon
Daniel Levy
Sophie Lucas
Meri Mayhew
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DSO KStJ
Tina McKay
Dr William Milroy
Michael Morley
David Murray CVO OBE DL
Air Marshal Christopher Nickols
CB CBE FRAeS DL

Jonathan Palmer MBE
Lt Gen Sir Andrew Ridgway KBE CB
Robert Robson OBE
Maj Gen Martin Rutledge CB OBE
MA FCMJ
James Scott
Dennis Treleaven
Melanie Waters
Maj Gen Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter
KCVO OBE DL

Mental Health Research Programme chairs

Prof Sir Simon Wessely
Dr Sarah Hughes

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During my time as its first Chief Executive, the number of people and organisations with whom we worked would fill an entire Impact Report—and deservedly so.

Ray Lock CBE



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 the-forces-in-mind-trust

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