



OA

OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION



Life beyond the Services

Impact Report
2014

OA

Since its founding as a charitable organisation in 1920, The Officers' Association (OA) has supported officers, former officers and their dependants in many ways, helping officers find employment, providing advice and, in cases of need, financial support.

“Having laid the foundations for change we are now building for the future.”

Lee Holloway, CEO

Building for the future

2014 was an important year for the Officers' Association. It was a year in which we began to implement the strategy agreed by the Executive Committee, in early 2013.

- The new IT system coupled with a thorough review of internal processes laid solid foundations for the future. These allow the organisation to deliver its services more effectively, as well as enable analysis on progress and impact.
- The Employment Department has seen significant changes. Its services were more clearly defined and tailored to individual needs with new offices opening in Leeds and Bristol.
- New methods of communicating to our employment clients were implemented. There has been a steady rise in the number of officers, serving and retired, registering with the OA.
- The Benevolence Department is in the first stages of enhancing support for its network of Honorary Representatives.
- We are also developing the department's ability to assess, more accurately, the value and impact of its services.
- We will focus on raising the organisation's profile further, to ensure that all those who qualify are aware of the services we provide.

Money

A common theme among applications indicates that through unforeseen circumstances many individuals lack savings or adequate pension provision. Our work is targeted at people who cannot afford an adequate standard of living. We aim to support them to live a more independent life. Our grants are wide ranging and include regular allowances, and one-off grants towards specific items.

How we helped:

443 individuals on low incomes with an allowance – *enabling them to maintain a socially acceptable standard of living*

283 people with one-off help towards individual items – *thereby helping with an essential need to lead a more normal life*

41 beneficiaries with help towards arrears and debt – *giving much needed relief and peace of mind*

2,000+ with information on benefits, maximising income, reducing costs and managing debt – *helping to keep their dignity*

CASE STUDY

Mr and Mrs B emigrated to Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, after WWII where they farmed for over 40 years. Mrs B nursed her sick husband until he died. Now living on diminished resources, she is helped by a number of charities to enable her to live with dignity.

93%

of our beneficiaries have valued the OA's help to **enable them to remain independent***



“Stunned is, I think, the appropriate word and even that does not really do justice to how I felt when I saw how generous you and the Royal Navy Officers’ Charity had been.”

Mrs B, widow of a former Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve Officer

Health & Wellbeing

We help officers and their families achieve independence through providing assistance towards adaptations to the home, purchase specialist equipment and help with transport costs.

"I cannot thank you enough for the stair lift. This means that I can continue to live in my own home. Moving was unthinkable and could never be the same."

Mr H, former RAF Officer



How we helped:

24 individuals to receive mobility and disability equipment – *enabling dignity and self esteem*

35 individuals with car and travel costs – *enabling continued independence and an ability to keep in touch with relatives and friends*

145 individuals abroad in 25 countries were visited and helped – *bringing comfort that they had not been forgotten*

CASE STUDY

When 93 year old former RAF Officer Mr H found he was unable to climb the stairs, the OA arranged for an Honorary Representative to visit him in his home. The Hon Rep recommended that he should have a grant towards a stair lift. The OA arranged for an Occupational Therapist to visit and assess Mr H's needs. Subsequently, and jointly with the RAF Benevolent Fund, Mr H was awarded a grant for the stair lift.

92%

of our beneficiaries stated that the help they received **gave them more confidence***

Living

The OA does not replace statutory benefits but does offer “top up” grants for Care Home fees along with a number of Service and civilian charities in the UK and abroad.

“My sincere thanks to the OA and ABF The Soldiers’ Charity for helping with the care home fees for my father. He is so settled, we are delighted he can continue to live there as the care is excellent. We are also relieved; it is a weight off our minds.”

Daughter of Mr J



How we helped:

36 beneficiaries received help to top up their Care Home fees – *enabling care in specialist homes and to be near loved ones*

170 people with home repairs and maintenance – *thereby remaining in comfort in their own home.*

9 beneficiaries with care in their own home – *making them feel safe and helping them to feel less alone*

CASE STUDY

Frail, 83 year old former Army Officer, Mr J, with numerous complicated health issues, was admitted to a Care Home as he lived alone, needed 24 hour care and could only be moved by two people at a time. The Care Home was close to his working daughter who was his only living relative. With the help of her husband, she was able to take him home at weekends.

Over **95%**

of our beneficiaries stated that the help received **increased their morale and gave them hope for the future***

Employment

The OA Employment Department's overarching aim is to enable former officers to achieve their 'outcome' of sustainable employment. The Employment Department therefore strives to develop knowledge (OA Insight); assist in building personal networks (OA Connect); and identify jobs from employers pre-disposed to employing former Servicemen and women (OA Appointments).



"The OA consultant I saw was friendly and professional and gave me the confidence and knowledge to apply for jobs, as well as astute comments on my CV."

Job seeker

OA CONNECT

Networking is key to enabling job seekers research potential sectors and roles; to access the hidden jobs market; and broaden their horizons throughout their working life.

How we helped:

The network contacts (former officers established in civilian life) have offered advice and guidance to over **4,200 job seekers** to help them expand their knowledge and seed their networks.

1,050

job seekers were given tailored advice from career consultants on CVs, networking and LinkedIn

"My experience of the OA has been nothing but positive. The Network Contact list has been a continually helpful resource. I would strongly recommend the OA to any officer looking for their next step in their career."

Job seeker

OA APPOINTMENTS

The OA works with specially selected employers to bring executive roles suitable for former officers. These are published on our Jobs Board, which is regularly accessed by those seeking civilian employment.

OA INSIGHT

Providing job seekers with knowledge to enable them to optimise their approach to the civilian jobs market is a key way to assist them achieving their outcome. A programme of webinars, workshops and symposiums was run covering a whole range of both sectors, roles and core transitional skills.

How we helped:

The OA worked with nearly **400 employers** bringing over **600 jobs** specifically tailored for former officers, which were promoted on the OA's Executive Jobs Board.

1,500+ job seekers accessed our Jobs Board each week.

How we helped:

The OA knowledge base is accessed by over **800 job seekers** each month. Over **1,600 individuals** viewed webinars (live or recording), with **81%** of those attending reporting they improved their knowledge.

Over **90 job seekers** attended our latest symposium with over **97%** indicating they would recommend the event to colleagues or friends.



"The roles on the Executive Jobs Board are interesting and diverse. It is great to know that quality employers are seeking ex-military people."

Job seeker

2,050

job seekers registered
with the OA to access
our services

Volunteers

The OA owes a debt of gratitude to its Volunteers, both the Honorary Representatives ('Hon Reps') who carry out work for the Benevolence Department and those on the OA Employment 'Network Contact List' who advise job seekers.

Over
10,000
hours dedicated
by Hon Reps and
Network Contacts

"I am writing to thank the OA for helping us move. My family is now settled and I am enjoying my new career. I want to pay particular thanks to your Honorary Representative who called on us in our married quarter with heartfelt understanding and sound advice."

Mr. W, former Army Officer

"What does success look like? Helping to place an officer in a job where he or she may succeed in a new, if initially unfamiliar, career."

Network Contact volunteer

"I have found the role to be interesting and worthwhile, but also rewarding, especially when one hears of the transforming effect which the OA's support can have on a beneficiary's life."

Hon Rep volunteer

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OA would like to thank personal donors, charities and companies who continue to support its work in the UK and around the world.

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