



# OA

OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION



Life beyond the Services

## Impact Report 2016





BUCKINGHAM PALACE

I am pleased to maintain my family's association with the Officers' Association, having followed my father and grandfather as Patron of the Charity. Their tenure saw the consequences of the First and Second World Wars and the work that the Officers' Association did to help those in need following those conflicts.

I am very much aware of the continued dedication of the members of our Armed Forces and the sacrifices they and their families make. It is of comfort to me to know that charities such as the Officers' Association are there to provide support and assistance.

I congratulate the Presidents and Trustees on the Association's good work on behalf of former officers and their dependants. I wish the organisation well for the future.

ELIZABETH R.





## People still need and rely upon us

**Every charity should be judged by the impact that it makes on the lives of those it aims to help - this is the only reason any charity exists.**

The Officers' Association is no exception. As always, our report aims to answer honestly and fully that critical question, "What difference have we made?" Only then can all interested parties be reassured that we have made the best possible use of our precious income.

Throughout the years we have enjoyed the patronage of our monarch, and we continue to be most grateful to Her Majesty The Queen for her support. Just as Her Majesty represents a golden thread of continuity in our country, so the need for advice, support and sustenance (as met by the Officers' Association) has remained essentially unchanged for almost a century. People still need and rely upon us.

Please continue to draw upon our services and support networks and also spread the word about how we can, and do, support so many who have served our nation. By doing so, you will help us to continue to flourish.

**Sir Clive Loader KCB OBE**  
**Senior President**  
**Officers' Association**



# Our heritage



Admiral of the Fleet Earl Beatty



Field Marshal Earl Haig

Marshal of the Royal Air Force  
Viscount Trenchard

**Our founding story is one of sacrifice. On demobilisation after the First World War, hundreds of former officers found themselves in desperate circumstances.**

Having served their country and survived the hardships of war, many came home to find they were without a job and with no financial help available to them. The impact upon the individuals and their families was devastating. Many were left destitute.

Recognising the great sacrifice these men had made, Earl Haig galvanised support from within the City of London. He, together with Admiral of the Fleet Earl Beatty and Marshal of the Royal Air Force Viscount Trenchard, set about creating a new charity dedicated to the needs of officers.

In the early days of the Officers' Association (OA), many believed the need for assistance would be limited to three to five years. Few were able to anticipate the after-effects of the war and how it would continue to blight the lives of so many.

The distress wrought by the flu epidemic of 1918 and the consequences of the Great Depression meant that the support provided by the OA remained vital. Throughout the conflicts of the following century and their aftermath, the work of the OA has continued.

The Officers' Association was formed in February 1920 to relieve distress among those who had held a Commission in any of H.M. Forces, and their widows and dependants, and to aid and assist and promote the interests of all such persons.

*Extract from The Officers' Association: The Story of the First Fifty Years. 1970.*

# Our support and work continues



**Sir Philip Jones**  
First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff

**Sir Nick Carter**  
Chief of the General Staff

**Sir Stephen Hillier**  
Air Chief Marshal and Chief of the Air Staff

“ The Armed Forces are a tight-knit community, particularly for those serving together at sea. Returning to civilian life can be difficult, and our men and women deserve continued support.

I am hugely grateful to the OA for all that they do to assist officers leaving the Service to establish new and fulfilling careers, and to support those who find themselves in less fortunate circumstances, together with their families, wherever in the world they may be.”

“ The OA provides an invaluable bridge to civilian life. A firm proponent of the value of our officers, the OA continues the investment in the talent developed during their service.

They help to hone skills for a different kind of battle - to compete in a complex and ever-changing careers market. Thank you for giving our veterans the confidence to navigate this new territory and for helping the outside world understand the potential that our veterans have.”

“ By smoothing the transition from Service to civilian life, the OA plays an important role in supporting officers and their families through what can be a troubling period of change.

Their close co-operation with other service charities ensures that whatever financial or other difficulties arise, help is always available. I am very thankful to the OA for all their support.”

“ I ask also for your active assistance to open the gates of useful employment to these men to whose past exertions we owe our liberties if not our lives.”

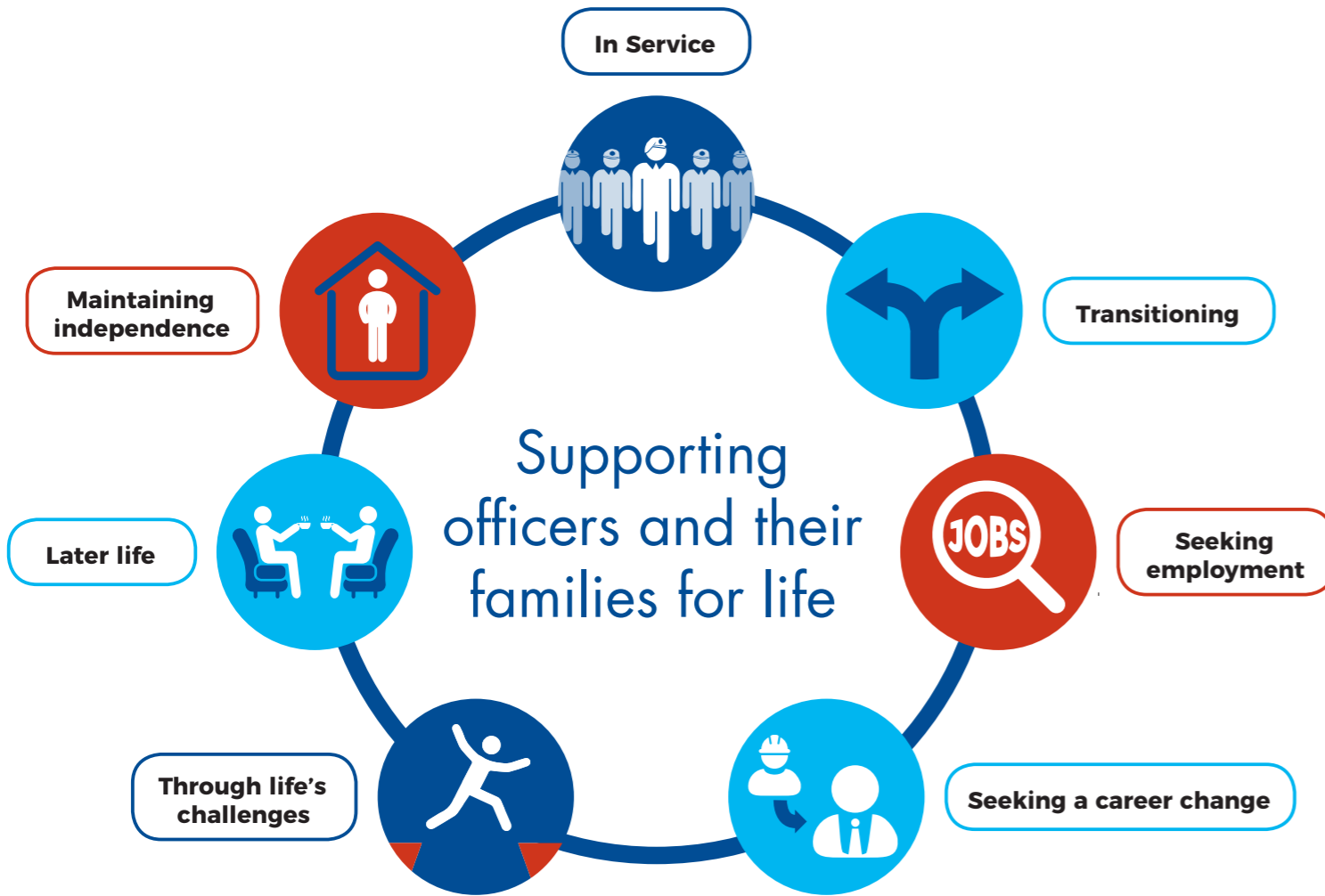
Field Marshal Earl Haig

# Our purpose today

**We work with both serving officers and reservists of the Armed Forces and their families.**

We are here to help support any officer who has held a commission in the Armed Forces. Most often the starting point is any officer looking to transition from their service life and career into civilian life.

For former officers and their spouses or widow/widower, we are able to provide support and advice based on their own individual circumstances to help them continue to live independently and with dignity.



“I would like you to know that the Officers' Association's generosity has been of immeasurable help at a time of my life when I felt that everything was crashing around me. Thank you so very much.”

Widow of an Army Officer

# How we support and assist



## Our services start to be most relevant when the decision is made to leave the Armed Forces...

The aim of any career transition is to achieve a fulfilling and sustainable career. A role that feels right and takes into account individual circumstances, aspirations and skills. We help to make this happen.

### OA Insight

Building knowledge by delivering a choice of tailored workshops, webinars and symposia, all supported by our online content: blogs, career tips and case studies.

### OA Connect

We offer connections through combined practical networking opportunities, as well as one to one introductions to former officers who have successfully transitioned.

### OA Appointments

We highlight roles from employers who value the benefits former officers can bring to their organisations.

**We continue to look after you into your second career and beyond. And our support does not stop there.**

We provide financial support and advice where needed to officers and their dependants.

### OA Personal Touch

We have a dedicated team of 165 volunteers, the OA's Honorary Representatives. They visit those who need support, often in their own homes, and work alongside our permanent staff to seek the best possible outcomes. Where possible, the same staff will continue to support people through their journey with us.

### OA Understanding Needs

To understand the changing needs of the officer community, we undertake research to be able to offer a wider range of services.

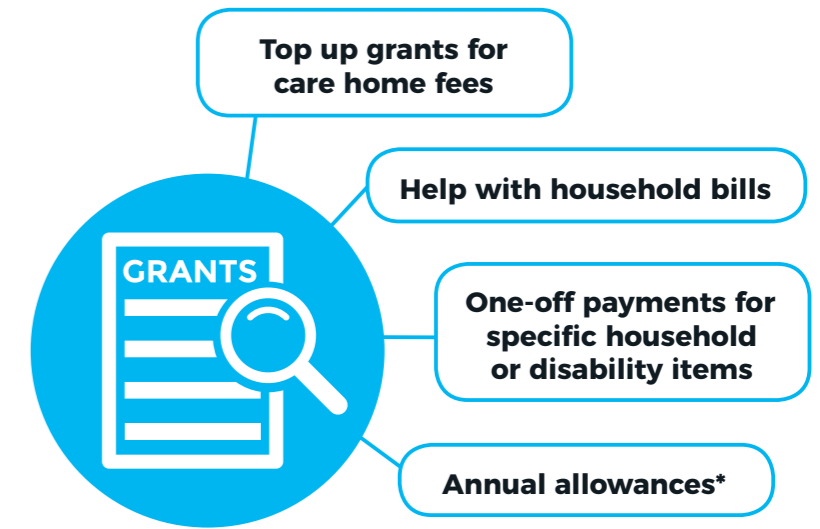


## Seeking Employment

Whether you are still serving, in transition, or a former officer looking to change careers, we aim to provide professional, impartial and practical advice on all aspects of transition and employment.

## Seeking Grants/Allowances

Our priority is to offer financial support to those who need it. We provide a caring and prompt approach to those who reach out to us, whether it is on behalf of an officer or dependant.



## Seeking Advice

Often we act as a first port of call to provide advice and assistance on the challenges life throws our way - we collaborate with other organisations in a bid to ensure we can help or advise on the next step.

\*All our grants and allowances are means tested so that aid is given to those who need it most.

# How we build opportunities for Service leavers

**Our OA Employers Network promotes jobs and other opportunities to our officer community. We work with employers to create or refine military recruitment programmes.**

We aim to create an environment for Service leavers to thrive in the commercial world.

In 2016 we built on our existing relationships with UK employers by creating new initiatives around the theme of 'Military is Good for Business'.

We hosted the first OA Employers Forum held in London. This event gave military-friendly employers a platform to promote best practice in the attraction, selection, recruitment and development of ex-Service personnel.

## How we work with employers:



## Veterans Work: Recognising the potential of ex-Service personnel

The OA worked closely with Deloitte and Forces in Mind Trust to conduct pioneering research into the employment of former Service personnel.

The report: "*Veterans Work: Recognising the potential of ex-Service personnel*", was launched in November 2016 and explored the potential of Service leavers to contribute to the civilian workforce. It received national media attention which helped to raise the

issue of military resettlement with an even wider audience.

One of the key findings of this employer-led report states that 72% of organisations with active ex-military recruitment programmes would recommend employing veterans.

The report is available to download via the OA website: [www.officersassociation.org.uk](http://www.officersassociation.org.uk).





# Employment highlights



**80,436**

Total number of times clients have accessed OA Employment Services



**520**

Clients attended OA Connect regional networking events

↑ increase of 30% on last year



**16,000+**

Clients accessed live and on demand webinars

↑ increase of 131% on last year



**828**

Clients attended OA Insight events

↑ increase of 107% on last year



**4,468**

Clients accessed employment services

↑ increase of 26% on last year



**700+**

The number of employers we worked with to post jobs and develop military programmes



**900+**

Jobs posted onto OA executive jobs board

**1,599**

New registrants to OA Employment Services during the year



**580**

Members of the OA Network Contact List

“I found the career consultation extremely beneficial; it provided me with some useful signposting and career options I had not previously considered.

An impartial and independent second opinion on my CV and LinkedIn profile was equally useful.

Thank you, OA; first class.”

Job seeker

# Helping those in need



Vic Riley



Robert Ellis



'Rose'

## The work of our benevolence team continues to focus on providing financial support and advice to former officers and their dependants, no matter where they live.

Requirements for support vary case-by-case, with each case dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner. Last year we supported 576 people with a total of just over £1 million in grants.

Our research has led us to focus not only on providing financial support, but also on advice that covers a range of related concerns including legal issues and loneliness.

We're now working in partnership with Age UK and their 'Call in Time' telephone friendship service and with Silver Line, the charity set up by Esther Rantzen to help combat loneliness.

We have also linked up with Law Express, who provide telephone advice on legal issues.

Location is not a barrier to our support, which extends overseas. Last year we assisted people in 27 countries.

Vic served in the Royal Air Force during WWII as a navigator in 517 Squadron. Today he lives in an annexe specifically adapted to his needs. The OA funded the widening of his bedroom doorway so he can manoeuvre his wheelchair in and out. It means he can continue to live as independently as possible.

- Vic Riley

Robert, a former Royal Air Force officer, lives on his own in a retirement flat. The OA provided him with an electric armchair to enable him to live more comfortably. We worked with the Not Forgotten Association to enable Robert to attend a Royal Garden Party. He told us afterwards he had an amazing day, meeting up with old friends.

- Robert Ellis

Rose is 92 years old and is an Army widow who had fallen into financial difficulties. The OA provided a standard allowance grant and secured additional help through two other charities. She is financially secure and now benefits from Age UK's 'Call in Time' Service.

- 'Rose' - not her real name

# Benevolence highlights



**989**

Total number of beneficiaries provided with information and guidance in relation to their needs

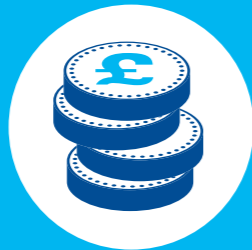
**£488k**

Total amount allocated to beneficiaries in co-operation with other charities



**576**

576 people have been supported financially through one-off or regular grants



**£1,082,000**

The total amount of money we have approved\* in grants to people this year



**40**

32 people received a combination of care home top-up fees and we helped a further 8 people by funding carer's fees



**4,066**

Total number of financial transactions paid out in the delivery of our services to beneficiaries, to other charities and to suppliers



**138**

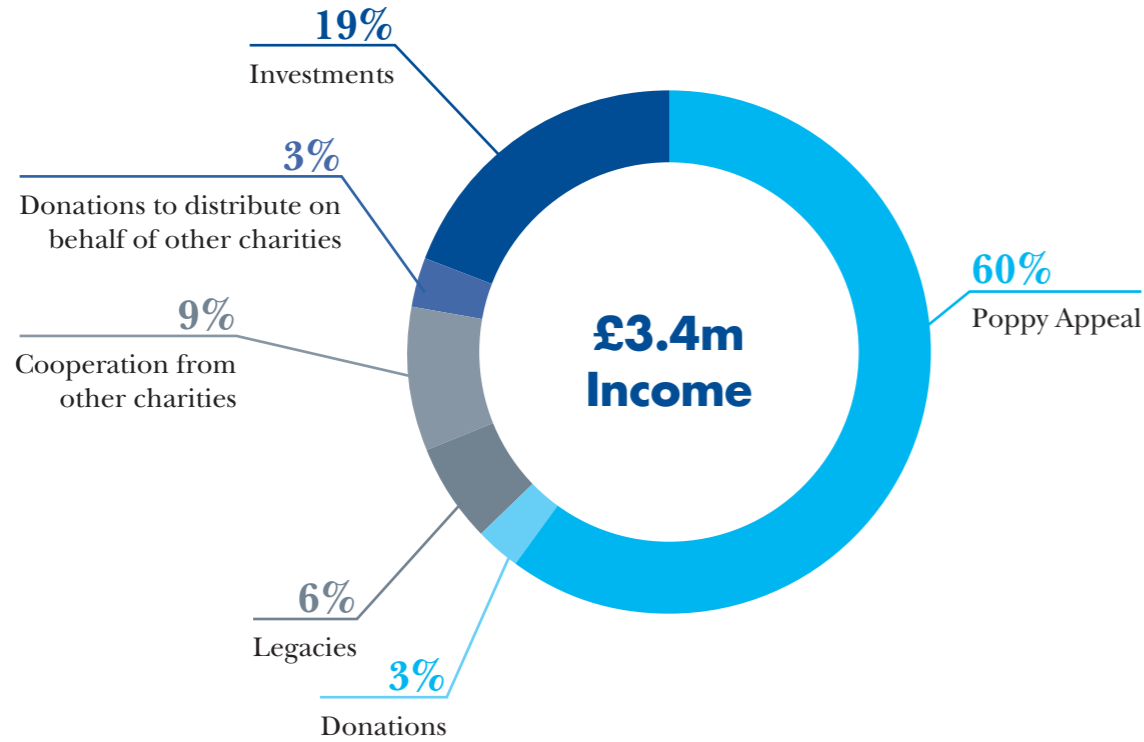
Of the 576 people we look after, 138 of them live overseas in 27 different countries

\* Money committed might not be paid in the same reporting period

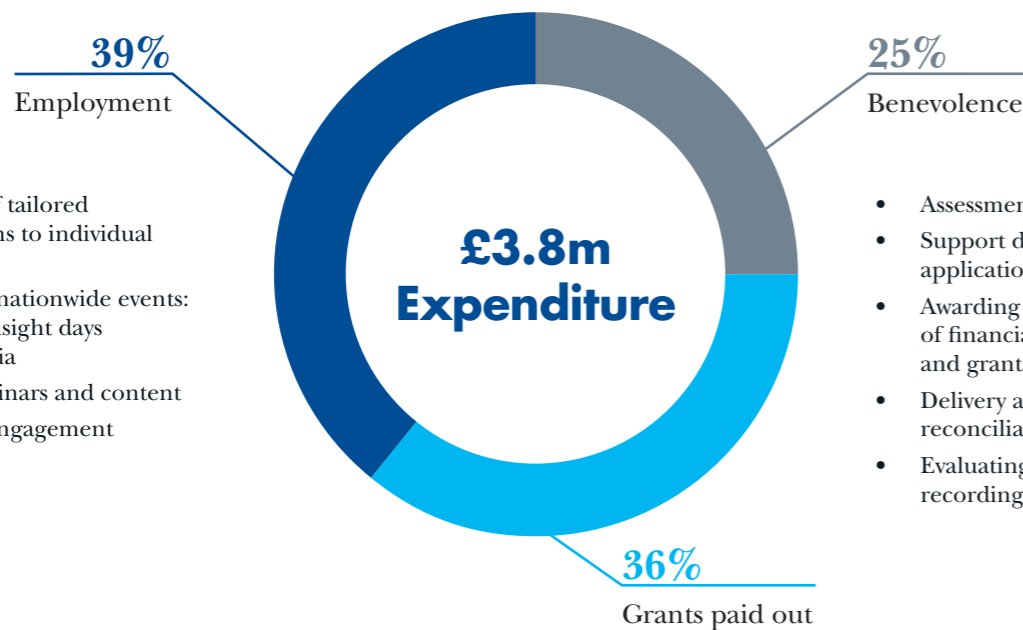
“I would like to thank the Officers' Association for all the help and advice they have given me in the past years. I am particularly grateful for the way my case has been handled. Your representatives have been charming and at no time have I felt uncomfortable talking about my financial affairs to them.”

Retired Naval Officer

# Income and expenditure 2016



**£3.4m  
Income**



**£3.8m  
Expenditure**

- Provision of tailored consultations to individual job seekers
- Delivery of nationwide events: seminars, insight days and symposia
- Online webinars and content
- Employer engagement
- Jobs board

- Assessment of need
- Support during the application process
- Awarding and approval of financial support and grants
- Delivery and reconciliation of grants
- Evaluating and recording outcomes



**1,599**

### Job Seeker Engagement

Additional 1,599 new registrants to the OA website took the number of officer job seekers to 4,468 accessing our employment services



**8,048**

### Followers on Facebook

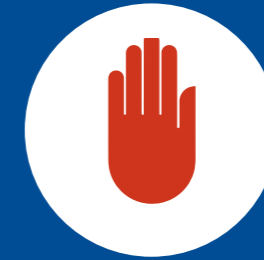
Launched July 2016



**307**

### Star Reports

Over 300 Star Reports were completed providing a better application of beneficiaries needs and the impact of our support. We also ran 14 briefings for OA Hon Reps nationwide



**745**

### Volunteers

580 OA Network contacts + 165 OA Hon Reps = 745 volunteers working to support our officer community



**900+**

### Employer Engagement

Deeper engagement with employers has shown an uplift in the number of jobs posted. **↑ 15% increase**

Events led by employers show immediate impact. 278 Service leavers attended the 18 information days run by the NHS. 132 requested placements and 5 of these applied directly for employment



**13,000+**

### Raising our Online Profile

Over 13,000 followers across OA social media channels

Over 14,000 video views on YouTube

**1,015**

### Beneficiary Engagement

Total of 1,015 beneficiaries received support in the form of financial help and pro-active support to help their case



**16,000+**

### Increased Digitalisation

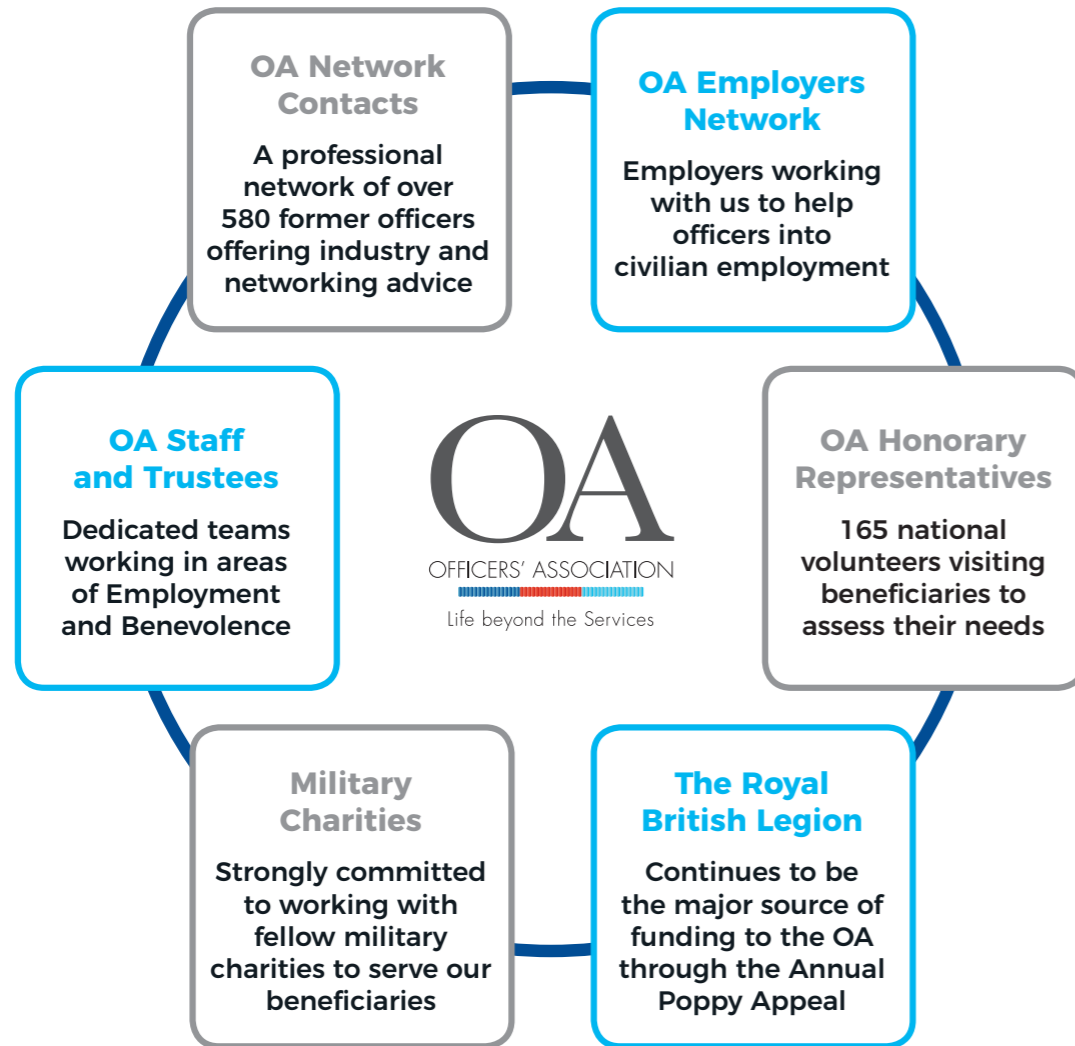
Over 16,000 job seekers have accessed OA webinars, an increase of 131% from last year. The launch of the dedicated OA Employment App will help us to continue to deliver our services

# How we work together

**Working collaboratively with other Service and non-Service charities and with volunteers is important.**

We secured £428k in funds\* from 52 different organisations last year and a further £90k in restricted funds for distribution to beneficiaries.

We work closely with volunteers across the military charity sector as well as having our own dedicated team of Honorary Representatives.



“ The Royal British Legion congratulate the OA on their achievements in 2016. The OA and the RBL are both part of that wider national network that supports our Armed Forces community and we look forward to continuing to work with the OA so that our organisations can work together to serve those we support. ”

Charles Byrne  
Director General  
The Royal British Legion

\* In co-operation and almonisation

## Working with other charities



### Our commitment to effective co-operation with other charities and organisations who share an interest in the welfare of our beneficiaries remains strong.

Proactive engagement and joint case-work with other service and civilian charities helps us to generate augmented payments and enables us to meet the complex requirements of some of our beneficiaries. Last year we distributed £428K in co-operation with 52 different charities, all working to help support our beneficiaries.

Caseworkers from the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA), The Royal British Legion (RBL), the Royal Air Force Association (RAFA), the Royal Commonwealth Ex-Services League (RCEL) and Zimbabwe A National Emergency (ZANE), amongst others, have visited beneficiaries.

We partner with Haig Housing Trust to support the residents of the Disabled Officers' Garden Homes.

#### The Royal British Legion

The OA continues to have a unique and strong relationship with The Royal British Legion, which remains a major source of funding, donating 7.5% of the Annual Poppy Appeal street collection.



## Thank you

We owe our thanks to a number of organisations and individuals who continue to support our work and the officer community.

We are very grateful to employers who have demonstrated their support of veterans, including Deloitte, Carillion, Nationwide and Network Rail. We value their commitment to employing ex-Services personnel.

Many volunteers give up their time to help support former colleagues. Our 'Hon Reps' play a key role in visiting and investigating the circumstances of potential beneficiaries to ensure they receive the support they need. Without their continued energy and commitment we would not be able to offer the same level of support.

The input of our prized OA Network Contacts and OA Employer Network is invaluable to our employment events and activities. They offer their insight and own experiences to former colleagues and job seekers treading the path to transition.

We are proud of our continued co-operation with other charities and organisations; our longstanding and historic relationship with The Royal British Legion is worthy of particular mention. We will maintain and develop working relationships that can help any officer or their dependant, when in need.

If you would like to work with us, or need our support, please get in touch with us. You will find our contact details at the back of this report.

**Lee Holloway**  
Chief Executive Officer



# Join our growing social communities

The Officers' Association  
work closely with:



WELLINGTON  
MANAGEMENT®



**5,064**

followers on LinkedIn



**8,048**

followers on Facebook



**1,821**

followers on Twitter



**14,036**

video views

Figures: January 2017

Front cover image courtesy of RMAS. Page 26 image © Crown

## Get in touch

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The Officers' Association is a registered charity in England and Wales (no. 201321). The information used in this report is taken from the audited Annual Report 2016 unless otherwise specified. Copies are available upon request or via [www.officersassociation.org.uk](http://www.officersassociation.org.uk).

