



# OA

OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION



Life beyond the Services



## OUR IMPACT

2016-2017



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

As Patron of the Officers' Association, it gives me great pleasure to continue the long association my family has had with this charity, beginning with my grandfather and carried on by my father.

I am pleased that the Officers' Association has continued over the years to be a source of advice and assistance to our former officers, both young and old, and their dependants.

The availability of such support for all who have held my commission in the Armed Forces, alongside the help offered by other charities, must be a great reassurance to many.

I send my very best wishes to the Presidents and Trustees of the Officers' Association for the year ahead.

ELIZABETH R.





# Our Support Remains Essential

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It seems hard to believe that I am coming to the end of my nine years as RAF President of the Officers' Association. During this time so much has changed both within the OA and with the ever-morphing needs of those who are supported by the Charity. But the generic tasks, Benevolence and Employment, remain every bit as essential and compelling as ever - **this is what we do.**

So I take this opportunity to thank all who have taken part in this most worthy endeavour during my time with you. The OA and those sister organisations, whose understanding and support remain crucial, should feel very proud of what we achieve.

I wish you all every success for the future.

Sir Clive Loader KCB OBE  
Senior President





Royal Navy personnel visiting the OA stand at Armed Forces Day, Liverpool

# Why We Exist

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We exist to help officers find employment and to provide advice and financial support to relieve hardship amongst those who have held a commission in the Armed Forces, their families and dependants.

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As the only Tri-Service charity working with the officer corps, we support serving, reservist and former officers to enable them to achieve a sustainable and fulfilling transition from Service to civilian life. We proudly champion the skills and qualities of the officer job seeker.

For former officers and their families, their widows/widowers and dependants, we provide advice and, where needed, financial support to ensure they are able to live with dignity and without hardship. We provide a confidential and impartial service to those who need our support.

During the past financial year we provided:



1,757

New job seekers registered with the OA, an increase of **10%** from last year



414

OA's 130 Honorary Representatives (Hon Reps) made **414** personal visits to beneficiaries in their own homes to offer support



4,782

Officers were supported with Employment Services, a **7%** increase from last year



373

People on low incomes were helped with a regular grant



1,107

Total number of beneficiaries provided with advice and financial support



52

People were helped with a mobility or disability aid grant

# The Events That Helped Shape Us

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1914 – 1918	The end of the First World War marked a period of great social change. For hundreds of former officers returning home, there were new challenges to face. <b>Having survived the hardships of war, many were left without jobs or access to the financial support available to other Service personnel. The impact upon them and their families was devastating.</b>
1920	The OA was set up in recognition of the need to provide benevolence and employment support to former officers and their families. His Majesty King George V became patron of the OA. The first volunteers, then known as 'Honorary Helpers', were recruited.
1921	The OA received its Royal Charter.
1922	The OA handed its fundraising organisation over to The Royal British Legion to form the basis of the Poppy Appeal.
1930s	The Great Depression caused havoc on the UK and world economy. <b>When originally set up, it was thought that the services of the OA would be needed for three to five years. Few were able to anticipate the consequences of the war and how it would continue to blight the lives of so many.</b>
1936	His Majesty King George VI became patron of the OA.
1939 - 1944	Second World War. Women officers were commissioned and the Royal Charter was amended in 1946 to allow them and their dependants to qualify for support.
1948	Despite the introduction of the welfare state and the National Health Service, the OA saw a rise in expenditure on cases.
1952	Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II became patron. Nearly 30,000 cases were dealt with that year, the highest total since 1927.
1967	Government grant in aid of re-settlement of commissioned officers ended.
1987	The OA supported a campaign to put right inequities in the Armed Forces Pension Scheme.
1992	The OA responded to the MOD Defence Review: Options for Change.
2014	The Veterans' Transition Review was published. <b>World events over the past 50-60 years, their after-effects and personal circumstances have meant that the support offered by the OA remains vital and continues to be shaped by the changing needs of the community we serve.</b>



Throughout its existence the OA has supported officers and their dependants in many ways, but it has consistently addressed helping officers find employment, providing advice and, in cases of need, financial support



# What We Do - Employment Services

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Transitioning from a military to a civilian career brings particular challenges. We support former officers through this change to help them achieve sustainable employment in a role that feels right and takes into account individual circumstances, aspirations and skills.

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Supporting Service leavers to find the right industry, company and role is what we do best. By providing the tools, insight and opportunities from employers, we enable officers to capitalise on the skills they developed while serving. We assist them to plan, manage and succeed in their transition to civilian employment.

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Clients accessed OA  
Employment Services  
90,924\* times

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**We recognise that leaving the Armed Forces is just the start of a transition journey.**

It's a decision no officer takes lightly. We offer support by providing impartial, practical advice and knowledge each step of the way.

**780 career consultations were delivered last year.**

**We understand that productive engagement with the OA community works.**

Employers, OA Alumni and supporters each contribute to help job seekers gain valuable knowledge and advice which contributes to help job seekers build their own networks.

**1,532 jobseekers attended our knowledge based networking events.**

**We aim to deliver core services in a format that are accessible to all.**

We launched our Employment App in 2016 and deliver webinars, online careers fairs and remote access consultations to registered job seekers.

**1,945 officers downloaded our Employment App. 20,600 webinar views.**

**We champion the skills and qualities of the officer job seeker.**

We de-mystify preconceptions around the officer job seeker and aim to provide parity as opposed to priority with employers in the recruitment field.

**900 plus jobs were posted throughout the year on the OA Executive Jobs Board – jobs geared to the officer job seeker.**

\*Access for 2016-17 includes: registering to use the OA website, career consultations, attending webinars (live and recorded), workshops, networking and symposia events, visiting the OA Executive Jobs Board.



Serving and former officers attend a 2017 OA Employment Symposium

# Success Stories

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## Angus's Story

**"My advice is don't jump into the first job that comes along, think carefully before committing to a new role, seek support and try to gain as much varied experience as possible.**

I spent 18 years in the Royal Horse Artillery as a field gunner, leaving as a Major in 2002. While serving I was seconded to various training roles, including as a platoon commander at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

I enjoyed the Armed Forces but reached a point where I could continue to progress in the Army, or start a new career. Due to securing a job on leaving the Army, I didn't make full use of resettlement training and I lacked the skills to choose the right role.

It was at this stage that I registered with the OA and had a free career consultation. I saw on the OA Executive Jobs Board that HSBC were looking for relationship managers. At first I dismissed the role, thinking that banking was not for me. However, I was encouraged to speak to the recruiter and realised I would be a suitable candidate.

After applying, I got an interview and was offered the job. I'm still working for HSBC 14 years later."



## Neil's Story

**"Thanks to the OA Career Consultant advice and support, I understood my career options and identified the job roles I wanted.**

In 2009 I joined the Royal Marines and served for eight years. In that time I completed a tour of Afghanistan, was part of the Lead Commando Group and became head of Tactical Development at 3 Commando Brigade HQ. I enjoyed being in the Armed Forces, but when my wife became pregnant I decided to prioritise my family and left in 2017.

At this time I was unsure of my employment options, but I then met an OA business development manager who directed me to the OA for a career consultation. The consultants encouraged me to network and helped me to identify business management as my preferred career.

Via my network I met the owner of a private investment business who wanted to start a recruitment agency. I felt the role was ideal and after interview I was hired. I am now the CEO of Crucial Group.

It's exciting to start a new business, but also a little daunting. However, the OA helped me to realise that many skills I gained in the Royal Marines are valued in the private sector."

# Vix's Story

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Vix joined the RAF in 2005 and enjoyed a 10 year career in a variety of roles, one of which saw her qualify as an Intelligence officer in 2007.

She began to consider her career ambitions outside the military whilst undertaking War Studies at King's College London. She contacted the OA and met for a face to face careers consultation to discuss her next steps. Vix was then referred by the OA to a specialist in interview techniques, who helped her to learn how to demonstrate her skillset to potential employers.

After leaving the RAF, Vix realised she no longer wanted to work in defence and security. International development appealed, but it was initially challenging to find the right opportunities.

Vix applied for a military internship at Goldman Sachs, and the International Citizenship Scheme (ICS) with the Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO). After being offered both opportunities she contacted the OA once again for support in helping her choose the right role and subsequently chose ICS.

“The OA really helped me to understand my career options. I felt more confident in my decisions, knowing I could ask for advice.”

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After the programme Vix worked in a couple of freelance roles, before becoming Head of Programmes for Social Development Direct. After two years, Vix decided that she wanted more variety and autonomy in her career and now works in a number of capacities on gender equality.

Vix joined a start-up incubator programme and is launching a business to transform the mental health of women and girls.

“When I left the RAF, I never imagined I would work in gender equality and mental health, or become an entrepreneur. It's been a real adventure since leaving the RAF; it's not always been smooth or easy, but I have loved every minute of it.”

# Working with Employers

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We engage with employers so that they understand how to recruit veterans and are able to recognise the business case for doing so.

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Last year we delivered a programme of workshops and forums, supported by research and insight, to connect employers with Service leavers. Every activity undertaken by employers, including military employment activities, will have associated costs and benefits, challenges and considerations. We work with employers to help them develop the business case for employing veterans.

Here is how we work with employers to help them recruit veterans:

## **Attraction**

We help to create and deliver sustainable recruitment pipelines. Working with employers to raise their profile as well as promoting employment opportunities in order to attract the best military talent.

## **Selection**

We contribute to the recruitment selection process by helping to translate military skills into business attributes that make sense in the civilian recruitment space. We interpret CVs and help to review HR frameworks: adapting assessment process and advising HR professionals.

For example, we support Wellington Wealth Management to help them deliver bi-annual 'insight into finance industry' events which provide Service leavers with access to HR professionals, CV skills advice and networking opportunities.

A recent attendee said:

**"The Insight Day was immensely valuable and showcased a culture rarely seen in such a fast paced financial services firm. All staff involved in the event were engaged and personable. The relationship between OA and Wellington really works and these events should be repeated regularly."**

## **Transition**

We provide essential support for job seekers through their transition journey by organising opportunities to meet and network with employers. **300+ Service leavers attended OA training workshops and Employment Symposia last year.**

## **Development**

We provide organisations with a network and toolkit to develop their own military engagement frameworks. We have seen an increase in the number and variety of employers developing support for veterans.

With Business in the Community (BITC) we delivered a pilot workshop to help employers develop their own military engagement strategy. We aim to deliver more of these workshops across our employer network next year.



The OA worked with Tesco to promote their military engagement programme. Through webinars, newsletters and social media we reached **42,000** people to highlight the Tesco insight day and their **35** vacancies. As a result, **30** officers were invited to attend the head office Insight Programme.

# Military is Good for Business

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Our employer-led campaigns aim to highlight the benefits and value of employing veterans. We challenge employers to look beyond rigid hiring criteria and recognise the value Service leavers can bring to their business.

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We work to help employers recognise the value of employing ex-military personnel and to assist them in building the business case so that they can capitalise on this talent pool. With our overall 'Military is Good for Business' campaign, we aim to create a long-term impact which is both sustainable and replicable. This approach aims to provide the best opportunities for our veteran community.

This year we worked with Deloitte and The Drive Project to highlight the key findings of our published research, *Veterans Work*. We created three short, unique films using a combination of celebrities, business leaders and veterans to challenge stereotypes and perceptions of veterans.

View the films at: [www.veteranswork.org.uk](http://www.veteranswork.org.uk)

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The films have brought to life the key messages of our campaign and have been well received:

- Over **9,000+** video views to date
  - National and regional press coverage
  - An initial reach of over **43,000** users on Facebook (within 72 hrs of launch)
  - Strong social sharing and high levels of engagement across all social media channels:
    - Over **968,000** users reached on Twitter
    - Tweets from some of the celebrities involved
    - Over **45,500** impressions on LinkedIn
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# Employment 2016-2017

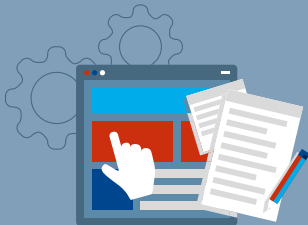


**900+**  
Jobs posted onto  
the OA Executive  
Jobs Board

**1,945**  
Registered job  
seekers have  
downloaded the  
Employment App



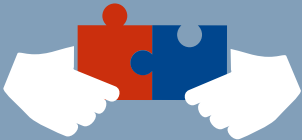
**4,782**  
Clients accessed  
Employment  
Services



**1,757**  
New registrants  
to Employment  
Services during  
the year.  
**An increase of  
10% from last year**



**780**  
One to One Career  
Consultations



**600+**  
Registered OA Network  
Contacts able to offer  
industry and networking  
advice to job seekers



**20,600**  
Webinar views – both  
live and on-demand

# What We Do - Benevolence Services

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Life can be tough, and anyone can quickly find themselves in a distressing situation. We are here for former officers, their families and dependants in those challenging times, to help make the pressures more manageable.

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## **We provide impartial advice**

Our Benevolence Team provides confidential and impartial advice to those in need of help. We have dealt with **1,107 cases** in the last year, providing welfare advice, signposting to other organisations and accessing financial support.

“I survive because  
of your help.”

Thomas Morgan

## **We offer financial support**

We award grants for beneficiaries needing financial support, which can be one-off or regular payments, and quite wide-ranging, depending on the person's needs. Over the last year, we have paid out **£1,369K** in grants. Regular grants can go towards the general cost of living, as well as financing care support. Our one-off payments have covered many costs, including car repairs, funeral costs, rent arrears and white goods.

## **We work with other charities**

Beneficiaries' needs can often be complex, requiring the support of multiple organisations. We work with other charities to deliver the best possible results for beneficiaries. Over the last year, **30%** of all grants paid to beneficiaries came from funds provided by other charities. This co-operation helps us to work efficiently and maximise the grants available to beneficiaries.

“As far as I am concerned, the  
OA services have  
been outstanding.”

Judy Daniel

## Help when Needed

Any marriage breakdown is difficult but being a military wife brings its own unique challenges and becoming homeless in the event of such a break-down, by no longer being entitled to live in military accommodation, is particularly hard, especially when children are involved.

One of our beneficiaries found herself in this situation.

Having separated from her husband, and with two young children, she moved in with her parents for support. She was finally offered a house by the local housing association and needed our help with the rent deposit. The OA provided a grant to a total of £2,215.

She is now happily settled in her new home.



“It’s not just what you’ve done for me, it’s the fact you’re still there for me.”



# Bryony's Story

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“The OA has helped me in so many ways. The main thing to me is that I can stay in my own home. My children, they can come for love, not duty; that is so important.”

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## About Bryony

Bryony was one of the first female officers to graduate from RAF College Cranwell, and was stationed around the world. She left after getting married, which was the regulation at the time. Bryony is an avid horse-rider and active fundraiser for the Royal Air Forces Association (RAFA).

## Her accident

Bryony slipped on the stairs at home and fell, breaking her back, neck and spinal chord. She lay paralysed on the floor for 30 hours before receiving medical treatment. Bryony spent 12 weeks in the Intensive Care Unit followed by nine months recovering on a spinal injury ward.

After a year Bryony returned home but with permanent mobility issues, and has to use a walking frame or wheelchair. She wanted to stay living in her home, but the stairs and remote location made it difficult. Simple tasks like going to the shops and visiting family were challenging.

The accident also negatively impacted on Bryony's children's university studies. Her daughter left university and her son struggled with exams, because they both worried about their mother.

## How the OA helped

Bryony contacted the OA, having first heard of the charity through her mother, who was a WRAF officer during the Second World War. An OA Hon Rep visited Bryony at home, and assessed her needs. This information was sent to the Benevolence Team, which awarded Bryony two means tested grants and organised:

- A stair lift
- A new lightweight electric wheelchair
- Garden maintenance
- A TV in her bedroom, because she is sometimes bedbound.

Bryony receives a quarterly Standard Allowance grant, to be used at her discretion. She also receives a Bills grant for household bills and unexpected expenditure.

## The impact

The grants and equipment have enabled Bryony to live a full, active life. She has been able to stay living in her home, and goes horse riding again with assistance. Bryony continues to fundraise for RAFA, and has completed a sponsored skydive. Her daughter returned to university, and her son retook his exams. Both graduated and are now in full-time employment.

Watch Bryony's story at:  
[www.officersassociation.org.uk](http://www.officersassociation.org.uk)

# Our Honorary Representatives

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Our network of volunteers, the Honorary Representatives (Hon Reps), provides a crucial link with beneficiaries. They help us assess people's needs so that we can provide the best possible support.

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The Hon Reps visit applicants in their home, across the UK and overseas, to help understand their situation. The opportunity to speak confidentially to an Hon Rep in the comfort and familiarity of their own home is appreciated by those needing our support. The information gathered is then passed to the Benevolence Team in London which assesses their needs and organises the support required.

Where a grant has been awarded, the Hon Rep will visit to complete an Annual Review. This measures the impact of the support provided and assesses whether further assistance is required.

Many Hon Reps have a personal connection with the Armed Forces and volunteer because they want to actively contribute to the officer community. This includes Tim Craven, who served in the Army for more than 40 years, rising from the ranks to leave as a Lieutenant Colonel in 2010.

"The Hon Rep is there to help discover their needs.

The Officers' Association provides the beneficiary with a release from whatever pressure they are under."

Tim Craven

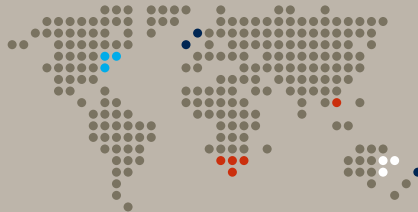


Tim Craven

# Benevolence 2016-2017



**£1,369,000\***  
The total amount paid out in grants this year



**118**  
Of the **668** people we look after, **118** of them live overseas in **27** different countries



**668**  
People have been supported through one-off or regular grants



**3,766**  
Total number of financial transactions paid during the delivery of our services to beneficiaries, charities and suppliers

**414**  
Hon Rep visits to beneficiaries in their homes



**1,107**  
Total number of beneficiaries provided with advice and financial support



**30%**  
Of all grants paid out this year came via co-operation with other charities



**28**  
People assisted with top-up grants to help with care home fees and a further **6** people have been assisted with the cost of receiving care at home

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



# Our Year At A Glance

Some of our activities, events and highlights during 2016-2017



**November 2016**  
Launch of the Veterans Work report with partners Deloitte and FIMT



**December 2016**  
OA Employment App launched. Downloaded by **1,945** officers



**March 2017**  
Launch of Regional Hon Reps Roadshows



**March 2017**  
Demographic Research report offering a profile and insight into the serving and former officer community



**March 2017**  
Our project management workshop in London was just one of many OA employment events held throughout the year



**June 2017**  
OA attend Armed Forces Day, Liverpool. OA launches pilot online careers fair with Salute My Job with over **311** job seekers registering



**July 2017**  
Officers' Association Inter Services Triathlon takes place



**December 2016 & June 2017**  
Employment Symposia in London and York attended by over **200** serving, transitioning and former officers



**September 2017**  
Filming starts on the three Veterans Work films. Work completes on filming of Bryony's story (see page 20-21)



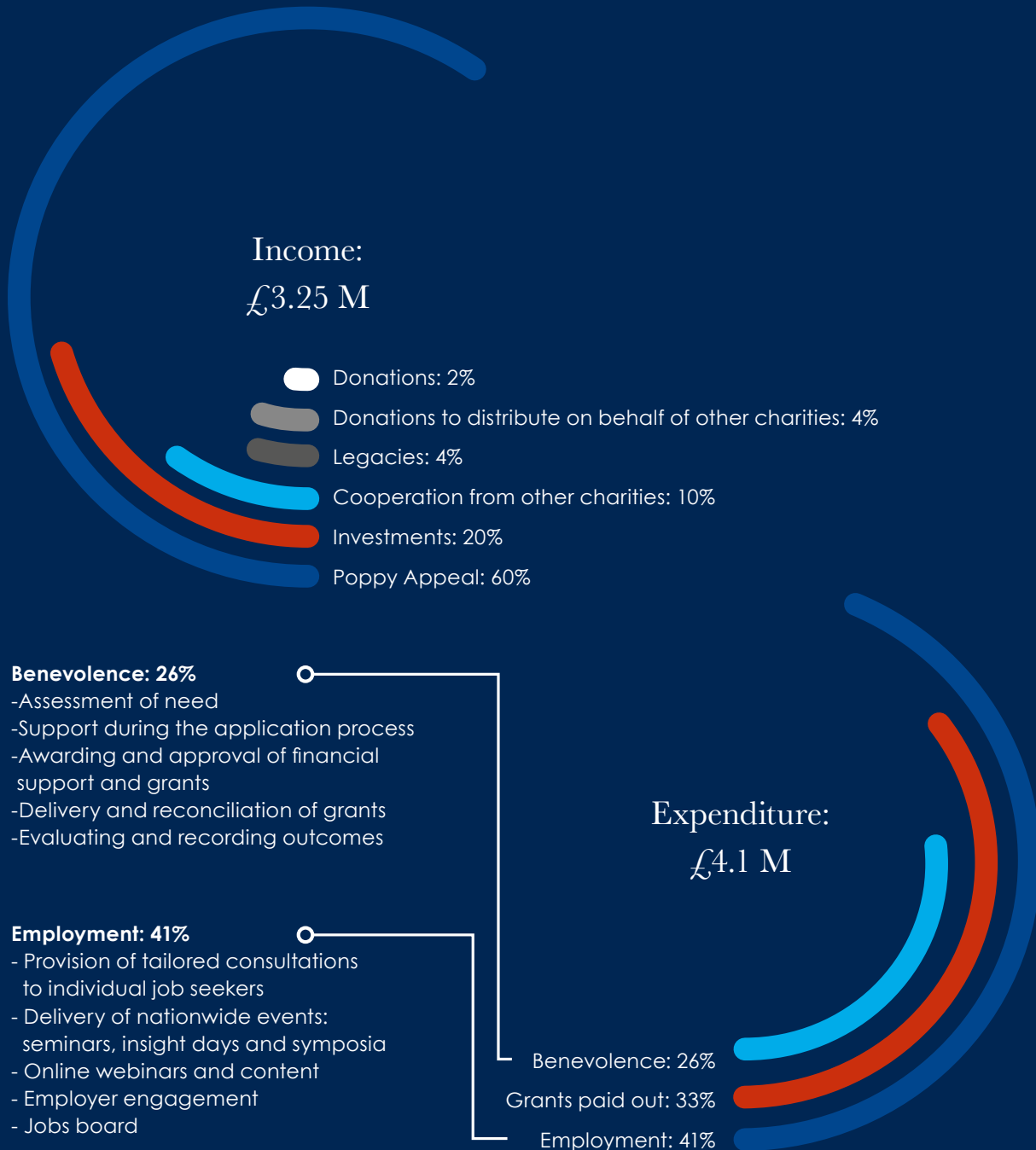
**September 2017**  
OA attends Meet & Greet (Families Day) at Shrivenham Defence Academy



**October 2017**  
OA Presidents and Trustees dinner to celebrate 'Military is Good For Business.' Attended by over **70** organisations committed to employing veterans



# Income and Expenditure



# Collaborating With Other Charities

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Our commitment and co-operation with other charities remains strong. By sharing resources, the military charity sector helps more people, more effectively.

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Co-operation on individual cases amounted to **£317K** last year. Many of the charities we work with provide us with block grants to ensure we reach beneficiaries quickly. Last year we received **£87K** in this way.

Of the **403 new cases** we dealt with last year, **42%** came via the Casework Management System (CMS), a computer-based system that allows details of cases to be exchanged between 115 military charities. The remainder came either from self-referrals or directly from other charities.

We work with Haig Housing to support the residents of the Disabled Officers' Garden Homes in Watford.

Our support and impact goes beyond funding.

**"I am totally overwhelmed by the generosity of the OA and Royal Naval Officers' Charity (RNOC). I was crying so much my daughter had to read the letter to see what was going on! This kindness towards me will make the world a brighter place. Once again, thank you."**

OA Beneficiary



Lee Holloway and Charles Byrne

**"The Royal British Legion and the OA have an established partnership that works to support our Armed Forces community. Both organisations are committed to developing the relationship to ensure this vital support continues as the challenges faced by our beneficiaries evolve."**

Charles Byrne  
Director General  
The Royal British Legion



## The Royal British Legion

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



Supporting  
officers  
and their  
families  
for life

# Our Focus Next Year

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We want to maximise the extent of our support by reaching more people. To help us do this, we will continue to raise our profile so that families and the wider military community understand how we can support them.

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We want people to know about our core services and how to access them. Our video stories and a new, mobile friendly website will give access to information and updates.

“Attending a careers consultation with the OA allowed me think seriously about my resettlement.

I am a continued supporter of the OA and have been active within my civilian workplace, using the OA as a conduit to reach out to Service leavers thinking about a career in aerospace.”

Richard Jones  
Former Royal Air Force Officer

The OA's social media communities, which we have considerably developed in the last year, will maintain our online engagement as we continue to post our news, knowledge and events.

We want job seekers to have easy access to our full range of Employment Services, and will extend the tools available on our Employment App, to keep it up-to-date and relevant.

We are working to increase our insight into the needs of different groups of job seekers. This year we will undertake a study into the employment challenges and issues faced by Service leavers aged 50 plus.

Under our 'Military is Good for Business' campaign, we will continue to champion the skills and training Service leavers gain as they move from military to civilian employment. We are committed, with our Employment partners, in delivering further initiatives to help give veteran employment the focus it deserves.

We want to be more than 'just grant givers.' We will continue to adopt a holistic approach to helping individuals, looking at their overall wellbeing – health, mobility and loneliness. We are developing our own impact assessment tools to help us evaluate the effect of our support.

To help us do this, we will continue to support our Hon Rep network. We will further develop our training and a series of communication workshops is already underway.

# Thank You

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This year I was delighted to have the opportunity to meet serving and former officers at a number of OA events. Once again I was reminded of the talent, energy and drive the officer corps offers in their commitment to our Armed Forces. They deserve the very best support the OA can give.

What we provide could not be delivered without our invaluable volunteer networks. We are indebted to our Honorary Representatives, the volunteers who provide that key link between beneficiaries and staff. Without their continued efforts we would not reach as many people as we do, nor so effectively.

Similarly, we are grateful to those former officers who, having successfully moved into civilian employment, are ready to give their time to those about to do so.

We are proud of our continued partnership with The Royal British Legion and are committed to maintaining our collaborative relationships with other military and civilian charities and organisations.

If you would like to work with us, or need our support and advice, do get in touch with us.

Lee Holloway  
Chief Executive Officer



OA staff. February 2018

# Contact Us

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To arrange a career consultation at your nearest OA office please call 0117 906 3580 or email: [client.admin@officersassociation.org.uk](mailto:client.admin@officersassociation.org.uk).

Register for OA Employment Services via [www.officersassociation.org.uk](http://www.officersassociation.org.uk).

To speak to us about our Benevolence Services please call 0207 808 4175

## London

Mountbarrow House  
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SW1W 9RB

020 7808 4160

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## Bristol

Argentum House  
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0117 906 3580

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## York

Room 1.23  
The Innovation Centre  
Heslington  
York  
YO10 5DG

01904 435 160

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Join our growing social communities





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