

# BROMLEY JOINT STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT

2025



## Armed Forces

For more information visit [www.bromley.gov.uk/JSNA](http://www.bromley.gov.uk/JSNA) or contact  
[JSNA@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:JSNA@bromley.gov.uk)

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# Executive Summary

The Armed Forces Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) chapter presents a comprehensive profile of UK Armed Forces veterans residing in the London Borough of Bromley (LBB), drawing on data from the 2021 Census, Ministry of Defence pension and compensation records, LBB Children and Adults Services and local service data from OXLEAS NHS. It highlights key demographic, social, health, and economic characteristics of the veteran population and identifies service engagement patterns for tailored support.

## Key findings

### Population and demographics:

- Bromley has one of the highest veteran populations in London (2.5% of residents aged 16+), despite not hosting active military units, which is likely influenced by the presence of 43 married quarters.
- Veterans are predominantly male and older, with the highest representation in the 85-89 and 90+ age groups.
- The religious profile is more Christian leaning (69%) than in London or England, and more veterans in Bromley identify as Christian, compared to 54% of the general population, reflecting historical service patterns and Bromley's older demographic.

### Housing and family structure

- Bromley has the highest number and proportion of veteran spouses and children living in the same household in Southeast London, including many adult children aged 25+.
- Veterans are more likely to own their homes outright (60.5% for single-veteran households), with low reliance on council housing (3%) and a strong presence in housing associations (41%) and private rentals (47%).
- The number of service children in schools has remained stable, with 34 recorded in 2024.

### Health and wellbeing

- In 2021, most veterans reported "Good" or "Fair" health, though around 11% (750) reported "Bad" or "Very Bad" health. Bromley veterans are more likely to report poorer health than the general population, with only 61.5% reporting "Very good" or "Good" health compared to 83.4% of the general population.
- When compared to the general population (6.1%), Bromley veterans are over twice as likely to report severe activity limitations due to disability (16.1%), potentially suggesting a higher disability prevalence among veterans.
- Despite having the highest veteran population density in Southeast London, Bromley had the lowest number of referrals to OXLEAS NHS services between 2021 and 2024.

## **Education, employment, and income**

- Compared to the general population, Bromley veterans were more likely to work in higher-skilled roles, including management, and technical occupations but are less represented in professional occupations (20.9%) compared to 26.8% in the general population.
- 31.0% of working-age veterans hold a Level 4+ qualification, above the national average but below London. However, veterans in Bromley are nearly twice as likely to have no formal qualifications (24.5%) compared to the general population (13.5%), indicating a notable educational attainment gap and potential barriers to employment or training.
- Veterans in Bromley are generally well-integrated into the workforce, with 95.0% of working-age veterans in employment a rate higher than both London (89.7%) and England (93.9%). Bromley veterans not in employment are considerably more likely to have not worked in the last 12 months (87.8%) compared to the general population (64.1%), and far less likely to have worked recently.
- As of March 2023, Bromley had a moderate share of Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) recipients (7.9% veterans). Compared to London and England, as well as other Southeast London boroughs, Bromley had the highest proportion of War Pension Scheme (WPS) recipients (39.6%) and war widow(er)s (5.6%), indicating a significant older veteran population receiving long-term financial support.

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

According to the Armed Forces Covenant, the Armed Forces Community (AFC) includes all individuals who serve in Armed Forces, both regular and reserve, as well as veterans and their families [1]. The Armed Forces Covenant was introduced in 2012, following the Armed Forces Act 2011 [2]. The covenant places responsibility across various government departments to ensure that members of the AFC are treated fairly and receive the support they need. Throughout this chapter the term 'AFC' refers to all members of the Armed Forces Community.

The policy and legislative framework underpinning this report is grounded in several key documents. The Armed Forces Act 2011 established the legal basis for the Armed Forces Covenant. The Covenant sets out the nation's commitment to ensure that members of the AFC, including serving personnel, reservists, veterans, and their families, are treated fairly and receive appropriate support. The Statutory Guidance on the Armed Forces Covenant Duty further reinforces this obligation, particularly for public bodies such as local authorities and healthcare providers, by requiring them to understand and respond to the specific needs of the AFC. Additionally, the cross-government strategy for our Veterans (2018-2028) provides a long-term vision for supporting veterans across six priority themes. Locally, the LBB Armed Forces Covenant, signed in 2013 and renewed in 2023, supported by a refreshed action plan, commits the council to embedding AFC considerations into strategic planning, including the JSNA.

Service members sacrifice certain civilian freedoms, face dangers, and sometimes endure serious injury or death. Families play a crucial role in maintaining the operational effectiveness of the Armed Forces. Consequently, local authorities have a moral obligation to support and treat fairly the members of the Naval Service, Army, and Royal Air Force, along with their families.

The AFC includes:

- Active-duty members and reservists
- Veterans (those who have served at least one day in the armed forces)
- Spouses, children and families of current or former service members

The Statutory Guidance on the Armed Forces Covenant Duty emphasises that healthcare bodies and professionals must understand the healthcare needs of their local AFC [3]. Without this understanding, the AFC may encounter difficulties in accessing healthcare or receiving the appropriate type of care.

Currently, the oldest veterans are those who served in World War II and subsequent conflicts up to the early 1960s, either as conscripts, volunteers, or through National Service. Nearly half of the UK's veterans are over 75 years old. Another group includes those who served voluntarily from the early 1960s to the early 1990s, and a third group comprises veterans who joined after the Cold War ended in the early 1990s, also by choice. This younger generation of Veterans, many of whom have faced multiple conflicts, will have different needs and expectations compared to their predecessors.

Medical advancements have enabled Service personnel with injuries that would have been fatal a few years ago to survive, introducing new uncertainties about the long-term development of physical and mental injuries as veterans age. The society they are re-entering has evolved, with cultural norms increasingly diverging from those of the Armed Forces. Employment trends are shifting towards more flexible, portfolio-based careers. While public support for veterans remains high, there is some misunderstanding of military life compared to when many families had members who served in World War II or did National Service.

The 2018-2028 cross-government strategy for veterans addresses the needs of all Veteran demographic groups, aiming to support both older veterans and the wider AFC up to 2028 [4]. It also sets the foundation for empowering and supporting veterans for the next century. Although the future of warfare is uncertain, the experiences and appearance of the Armed Forces will likely change, with technological advances shifting the focus from physical to mental strain as operational decisions become more complex. The UK Armed Forces will continue to diversify by recruiting from the general population and globally.

The strategy outlines the six priority themes affecting the AFC.

1. Building healthy relationships and integrating into their communities.
2. Obtaining appropriate employment and career development opportunities.
3. Leaving the Armed Forces with sufficient financial education, awareness, and skills to be financially self-supporting and resilient.
4. Experiencing positive physical and mental health and wellbeing, enabling them to contribute to wider aspects of society.
5. Access to a secure place to live, whether through buying, renting, or social housing.
6. Leaving the Armed Forces with the resilience and awareness to remain law-abiding civilians.

Healthcare for full-time service personnel is jointly managed by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the NHS. The rest of the AFC typically receives healthcare through the NHS. There are a few exceptions, such as veterans with specific service-related healthcare needs who may access specialised support services, and military families living abroad who receive healthcare through Defence Medical Services (DMS). Not everyone within the NHS, at both national and local levels, fully understands the specific health needs of the AFC or the implications of the Armed Forces Covenant. Additionally, some Armed Forces families face difficulties in obtaining the appropriate care and support, which can lead to further challenges.

LBB signed the Armed Forces Covenant in April 2013 and renewed its commitment to the AFC in 2023 [5]. As part of this, a refreshed action plan was agreed, and an Armed Forces Covenant Working Group established. Action plan commitment 2.5 aims to ensure that the JSNA by Council/Public Health and Wellbeing Departments take consideration of the AFC and sets out the intention to deliver a JSNA Chapter focused on the AFC [6].

## 1.2 Aims and objectives

This chapter aligns with the Armed Forces Covenant Duty, which requires specified public bodies to have due regard to:

- The unique obligations and sacrifices made by the Armed Forces,
- The principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising from service,
- The principle that special provision may be justified because of service life [3].

The specific objectives are:

1. To describe the demographic characteristics of the AFC in Bromley,
2. To assess the needs of the AFC, particularly in the areas of healthcare, education, and housing, as outlined in the Covenant Duty.
3. To provide an overview of existing services available to the AFC
4. To outline any unmet needs and recommendations for future support.

Note: Most of the data presented in this JSNA refers specifically to veterans, i.e. individuals who have previously served in the UK armed forces. However, some sections also include information on veteran family members, such as spouses, children, and carers, where relevant data is available.

## 1.3 Methodology

This chapter will primarily involve descriptive and comparative analysis of secondary data. Detailed information on the AFC at the local authority level is scarce. Data from the Census 2021 provide levels of granularity which vary between datasets; in some cases, only national-level data is available, while in others it has been disaggregated to the local authority level. A mapping of known data sources is shown in Table 3 of Appendix 1. Data source limitations are also highlighted in Appendix 1.

The primary data sources used in this report include:

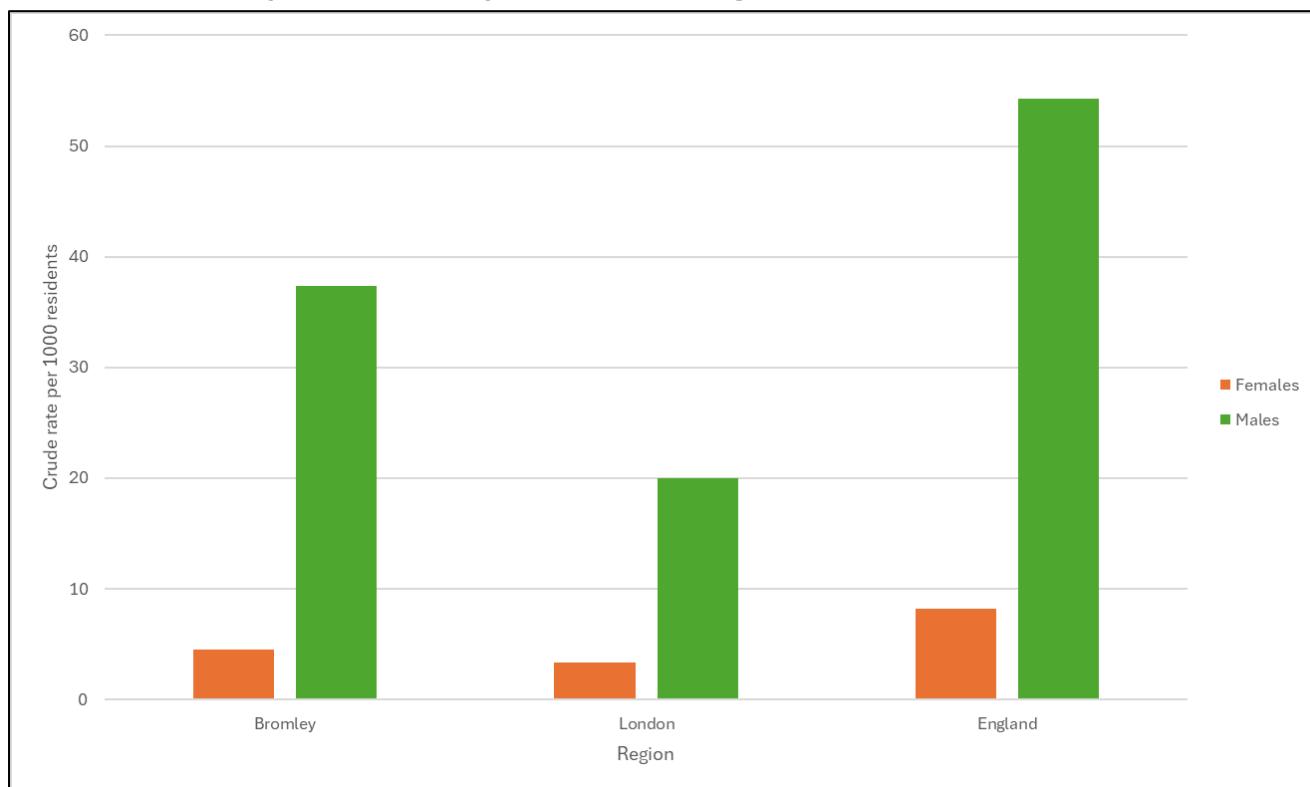
- Census 2021 (England and Wales): The first national census to include a question identifying UK armed forces veterans, providing unprecedented insight into the size, distribution, and characteristics of the veteran population at local authority level.
- Ministry of Defence (MoD) Pension and Compensation Data (2023): Administrative data from the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) and War Pension Scheme (WPS), offering insight into financial support received by veterans and their dependants.
- OXLEAS NHS Foundation Trust (2021-2024): Local service data on referrals and admissions of veterans and their families to health services.
- Local authority records: Including school data on service children and families, as well as housing tenure information.

## 2. Population profiles

### 2.1 Demographic profile

In the 2021 Census, 1,853,112 individuals in England and Wales reported previous service in the UK armed forces, accounting for 3.8% of residents aged 16 and older. The London Borough of Bromley (LBB) does not host any military units, but it has strong veteran presence in its population (6,675 veterans). There are 43 married quarters within and just beyond the borough's borders, contributing to a high number of service children in local schools. However, multiple reserve units in neighbouring boroughs recruit locally from Bromley, enhancing the Armed Forces presence in the area and Bromley hosts various cadet force units, including Sea Cadets, Army Cadets, and Air Cadets [7]. There are 49 service pupils, and 543-armed forces pension claimants in the borough.

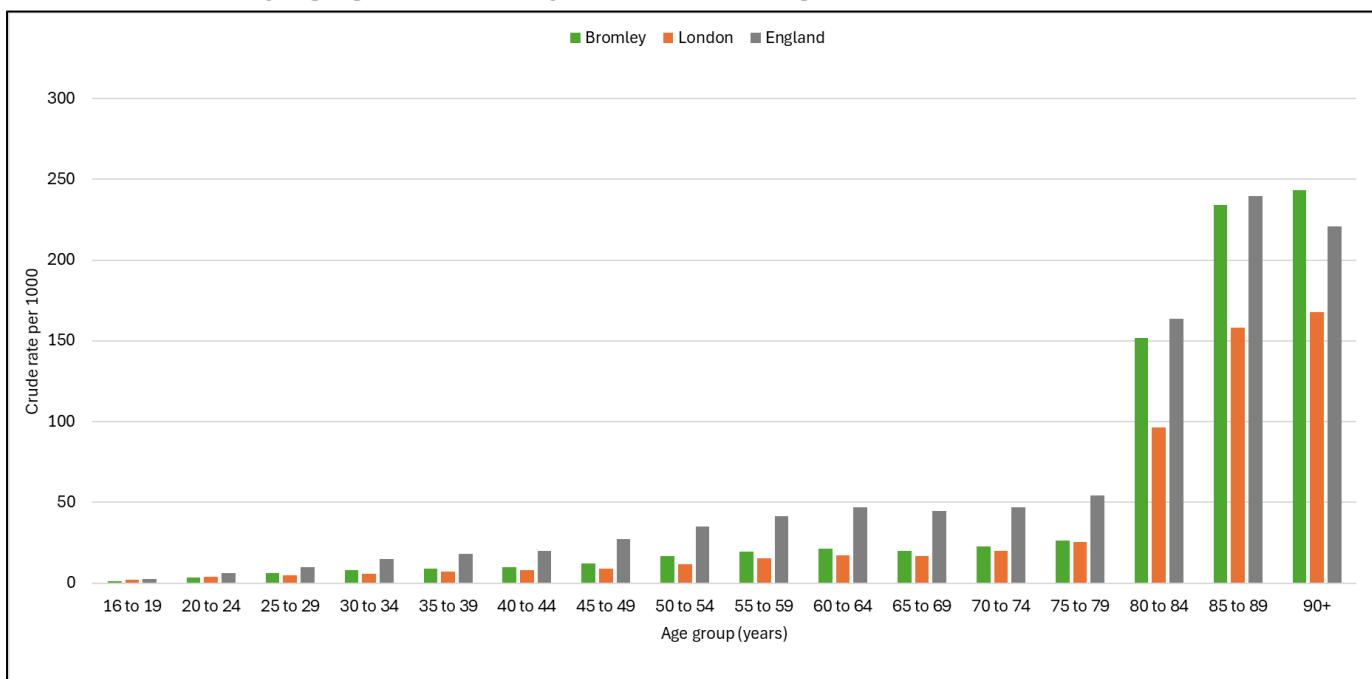
**Figure 1: Crude rate per 1000 of usual residents aged 16 years and over that previously served in the UK armed forces by sex in Bromley, London and England**



**Source: Census, 2021**

Figure 1 shows the crude rate per 1,000 residents aged 16 and over who previously served in the UK armed forces, broken down by sex across Bromley, London, and England. At local, regional and national level, males have higher rates of prior military service than females. In Bromley, the rate for males is 37 per 1,000 residents, compared to 5 per 1,000 residents for females. London shows lower overall rates, with 20 per 1,000 residents for males and 3 per 1,000 residents for females. England has the highest rates overall, with 54 per 1,000 residents for males and 8 per 1,000 residents for females. This pattern reflects broader historical trends in military service, where men have traditionally made up most of armed forces personnel. Bromley's male veteran rate is notably higher than London's but still falls below the national average, while female rates remain low across all regions, highlighting the gender disparity in historical military participation.

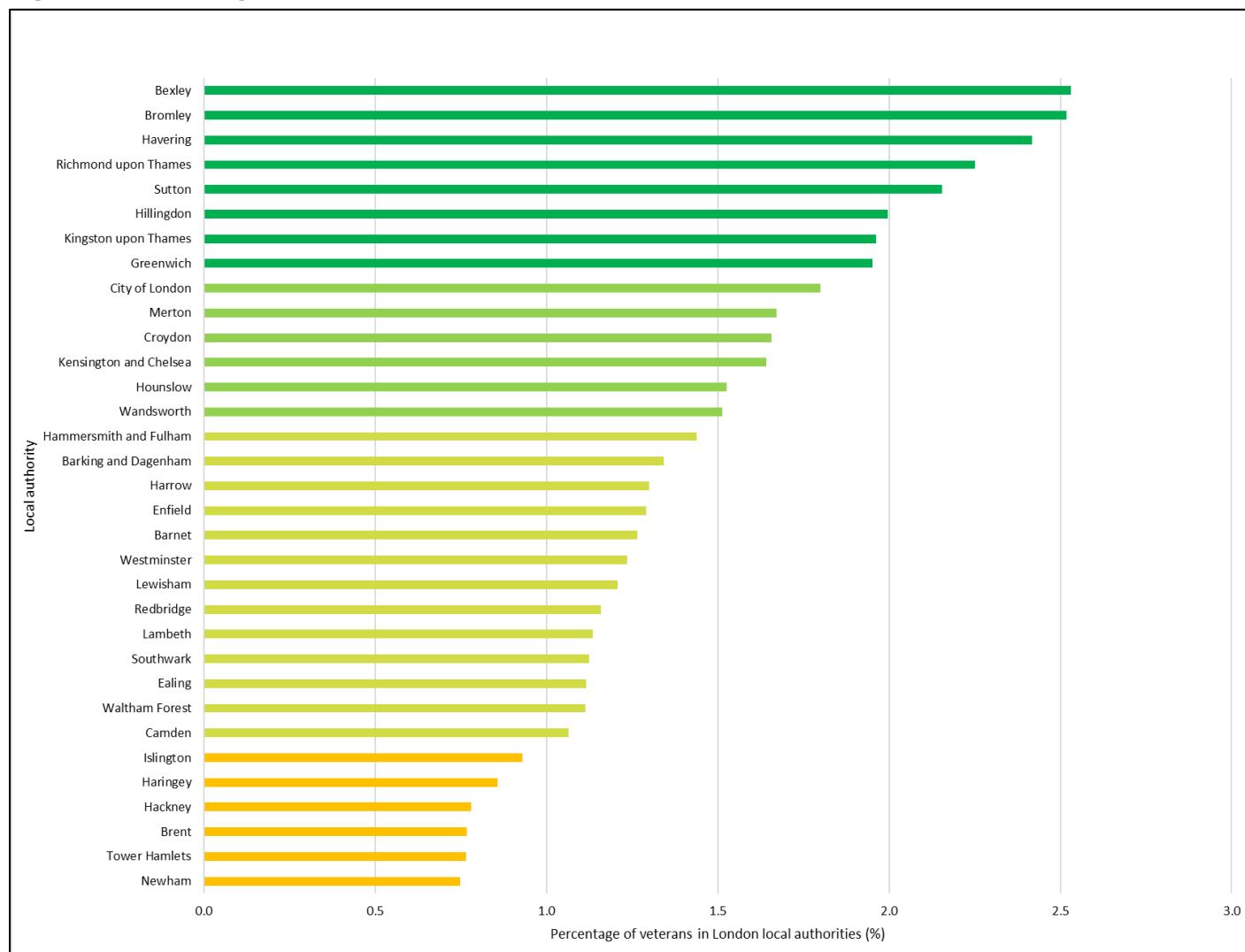
**Figure 2: Crude rate per 1000 of usual residents aged 16 years and over that previously served in the UK armed forces by age group, Bromley, London and England**



**Source: Census, 2021**

Figure 2 shows the crude rate per 1,000 of usual residents aged 16 years and over that previously served in the UK armed forces by age group in Bromley, London and England. Veterans in older age groups show the highest rates of former armed forces personnel across all regions. For instance, in the 85- 89 age group, Bromley records a rate of approximately 234 per 1,000, compared to 239 in England and 158 in London. However, in younger age groups (under 50), Bromley's rates remain significantly below the national average, suggesting fewer recent veterans reside in the borough or a potential decline in military service participation in recent decades. England consistently had the highest rates across nearly all age groups, followed by London, with moderate rates. In 2021, there were higher rates of Bromley veterans aged 90+ years (243 residents per 1,000) compared to England veterans (221 residents per 1,000). The data suggests a generational shift in military service, with older generations more likely to have served.

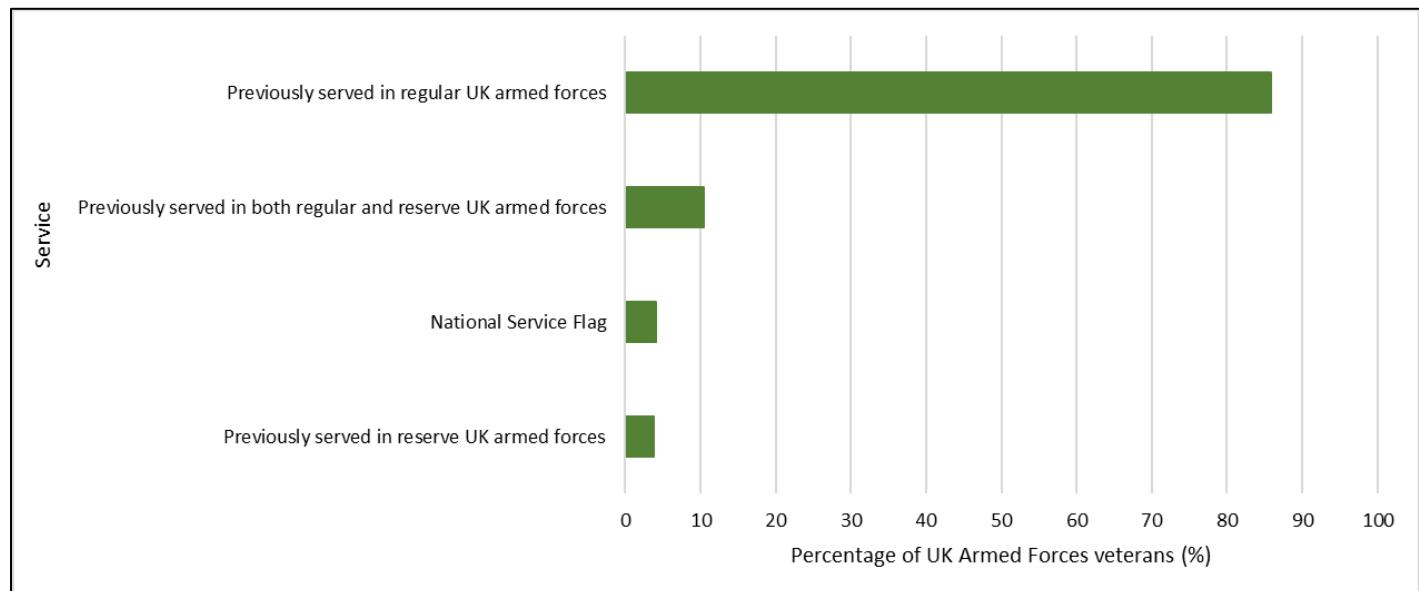
Figure 3: Percentage of veterans in London local authorities, 2021



**Source: Census, 2021**

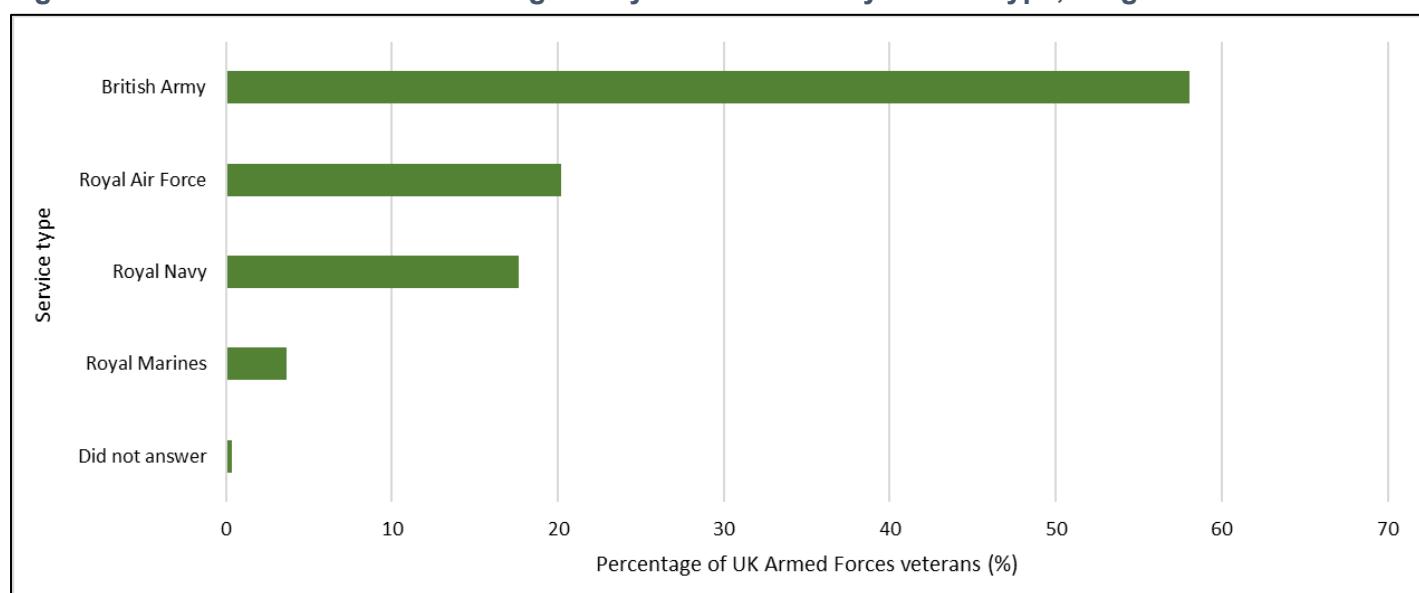
In 2021, Bromley had one of the highest proportions of UK armed forces veterans among London local authorities, with 2.5% of its population identified as veterans. This places Bromley at the top end of the distribution, alongside Bexley, and considerably above the London average, where many boroughs such as Newham, Tower Hamlets, and Brent reported veteran populations below 1%. Bromley's relatively high percentage compared to the rest of London local authorities suggests a stronger historical or residential connection to military service compared to most other parts of London.

**Figure 4: UK armed forces veterans aged 18 years and over by service, weighted estimates**



Source: Veterans' Survey, 2022

**Figure 5: UK armed forces veterans aged 18 years and over by service type, weighted estimates**



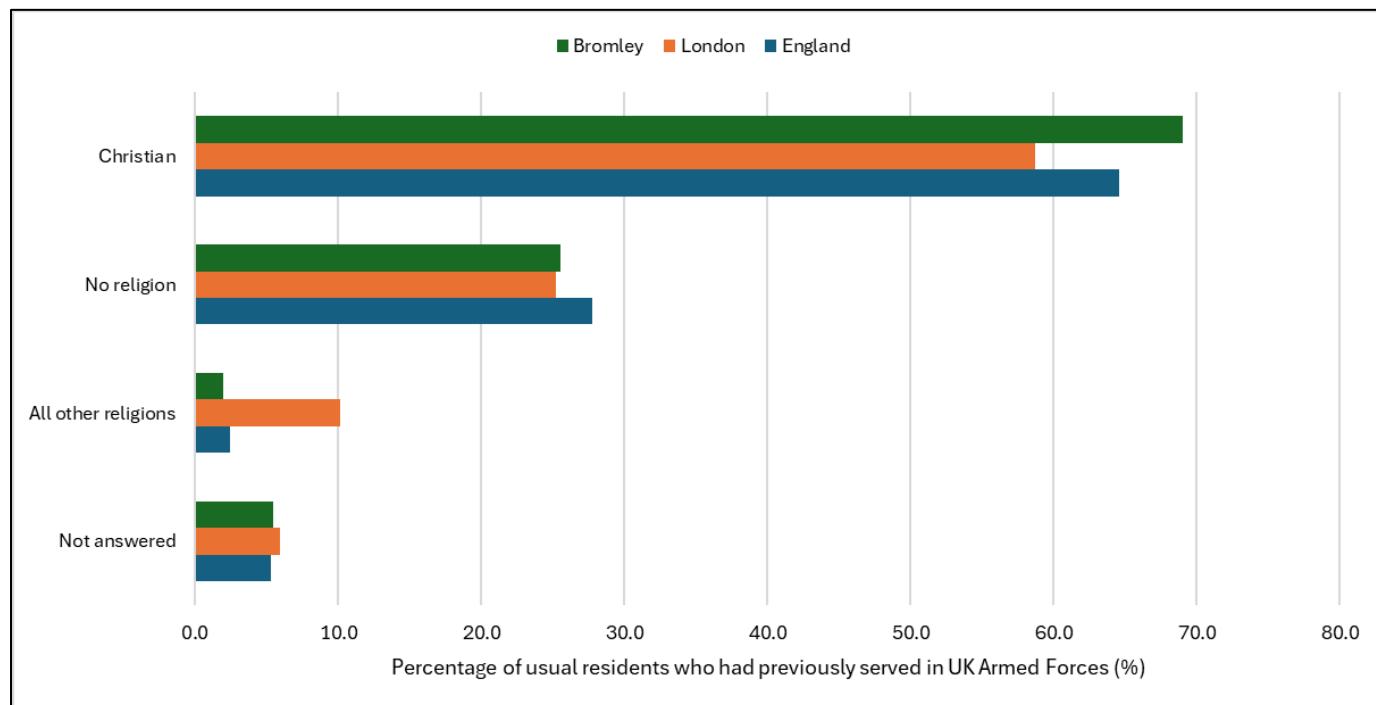
Source: Veterans' Survey, 2022

Figure 4 shows that most veterans (85.9%) served in the regular UK armed forces, with smaller proportions having served in both regular and reserve forces (10.4%), or exclusively in reserve forces (3.8%) or under the National Service Flag (4.1%). Figure 5 breaks this down further by branch of service, revealing that most veterans served in the British Army (58.1%), followed by the Royal Air Force (20.2%), Royal Navy (17.7%), and a small proportion in the Royal Marines (3.7%). Together, these figures highlight that UK veterans predominantly come from regular service backgrounds, with the British Army being the most common branch, reflecting historical recruitment patterns and the structure of the UK armed forces.

## Religion:

The religion people connect or identify with (their religious affiliation), whether they practice or have belief in it. This question was voluntary, and the variable includes people who answered the question, including “No religion”, alongside those who chose not to answer this question. The Census data dictionary outlines definitions for all religious characteristics used in this analysis [8].

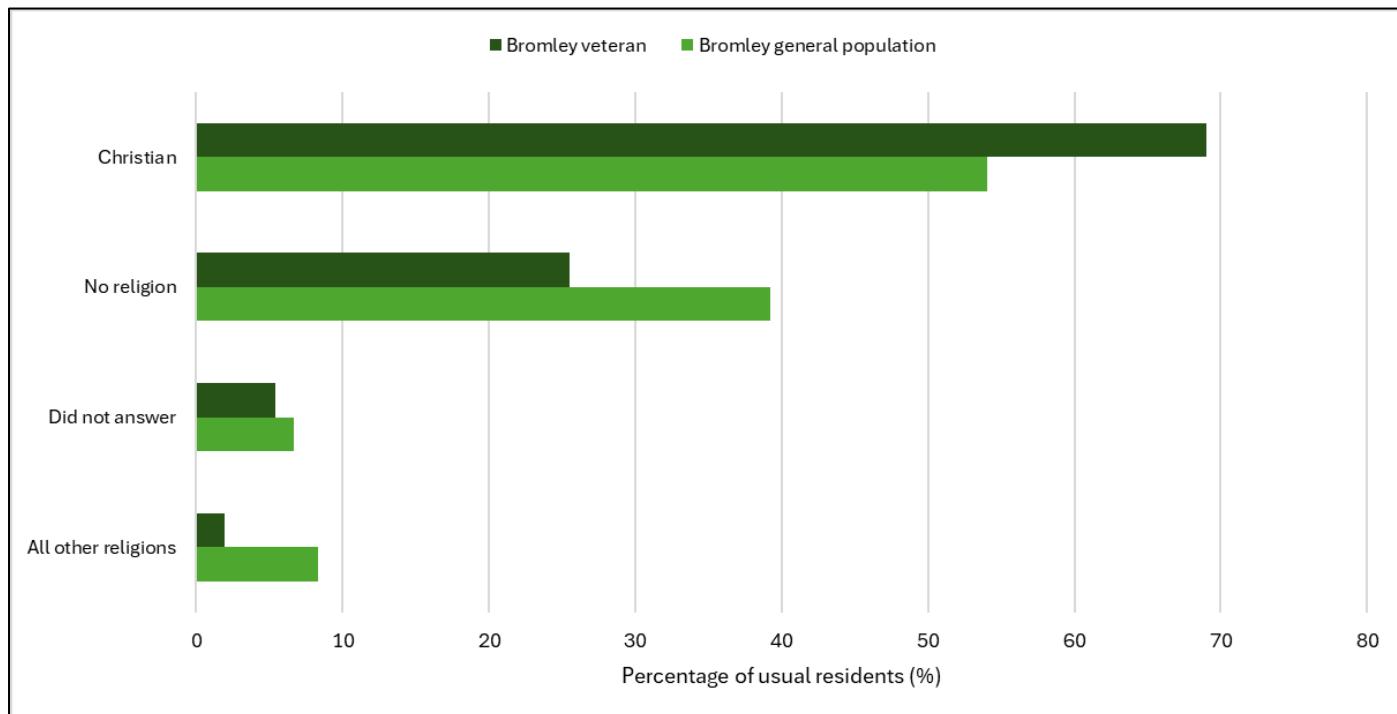
**Figure 6: Percentage of usual residents aged 16 years and over by previous service in the UK armed forces, by religion in Bromley, London and England**



**Source: Census, 2021**

In Bromley, London and England, most of residents who previously served in the UK armed forces identify as Christian. Among Bromley residents aged 16 and over who previously served in the UK armed forces, approximately 69% identify as Christian (4,515 individuals), which is higher than London and England levels. Christians making up around 59% of veterans in London and 65% in England (Figure 6). Those with no religion form the second-largest group, with a higher proportion in England than in London and Bromley. All other religious groups (Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, and Sikhs) have relatively low representation, with London having the highest percentage of 10%, compared to local and regional levels. The high Christian veteran population in Bromley possibly reflects Bromley's older and less religiously diverse demographic profile, which aligns with national patterns of military service being more common among older, predominantly Christian generations. The predominantly Christian and secular composition of the veteran population in Bromley is likely influenced by the age and historical context of military service. Many veterans are older, having served during times (such as the mid-20th century) when Christianity was more culturally dominant in the UK and religious affiliation was more common. The growing number of veterans with no religion reflects more recent societal trends toward secularism, especially among younger or more recently discharged service members

**Figure 7: Religious affiliation of Bromley veterans compared to Bromley's general population aged 16 and over**



**Source: Census, 2021**

Figure 7 shows that Christianity is more prevalent among veterans (69%) compared to the general population (54%) and the proportion of individuals with no religious affiliation is higher in the general population (39%) than among veterans (26%), confirming a stronger religious identity among the veteran community in Bromley.

## **Key findings from the demographic profile**

- In the 2021 Census, 1,853,112 individuals in England and Wales reported previous service in the UK armed forces, representing 3.8% of residents aged 16 and over.
- UK veterans predominantly come from regular service backgrounds, with the British Army being the most common branch.
- Although Bromley does not host any active military units, it has a notable veteran population due to the presence of 43 married quarters located within or just beyond its borders.

### **Gender distribution**

- Across Bromley, London, and England, males are more likely than females to have served in the armed forces.
- In Bromley, 37 out of every 1,000 male residents aged 16 and over are veterans, compared to just 5 per 1,000 female residents.
- This pattern is consistent with broader historical trends in military service, where men have traditionally made up most armed forces personnel.

### **Age distribution**

- The proportion of veterans increases with age across all regions, reflecting the historical nature of military service.
- The highest veteran rates in Bromley are found in the 85-89 age group (234 per 1,000 residents) and the 90+ age group (243 per 1,000 residents), with the latter exceeding the national average.
- Bromley has lower veteran rates among residents under the age of 50, suggesting fewer recent veterans or a decline in military service participation in recent decades.

### **Geographic distribution**

- According to the 2021 Census, 2.5% of Bromley residents aged 16 and over are veterans.
- This percentage places Bromley on the lower end of the national spectrum, where the range spans from 0.4% to 11.1%, but the second highest in London.

### **Religious affiliation**

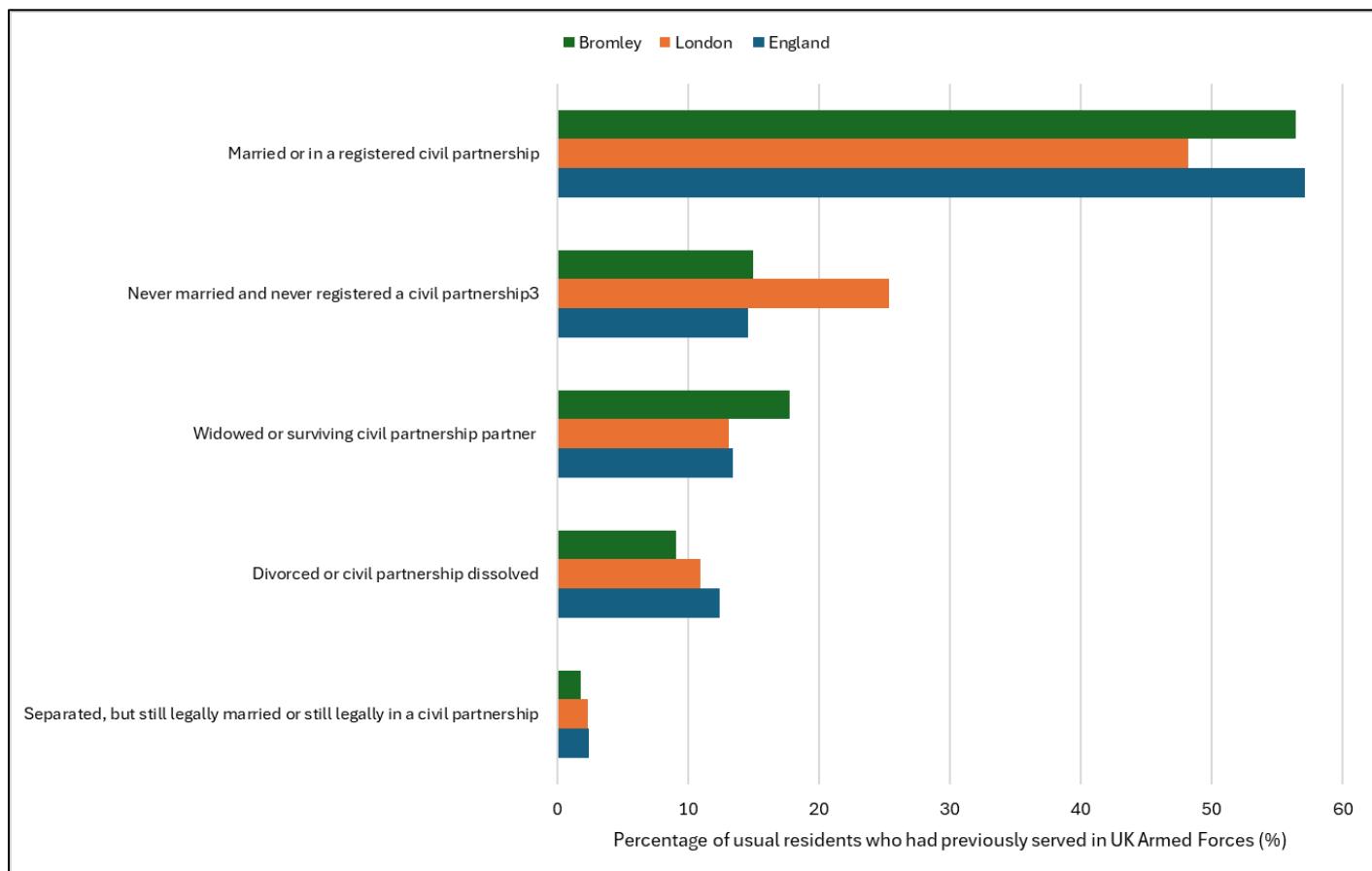
- Among Bromley residents aged 16 and over who previously served in the armed forces, 69% identify as Christian, 25% report having no religion. 5% did not state their religion and only 1% belong to other religions combined.
- More veterans in Bromley identify as Christian, compared to 54% of the general population, highlighting a stronger Christian affiliation among veterans.
- This religious profile likely reflects the older age of many veterans and the cultural dominance of Christianity during the periods in which they served.

## 2.2 Family and housing profile

### Legal partnership status:

Legal partnership status classifies a person according to their legal marital or registered civil partnership status on Census Day 21 March 2021. In Census 2021 results, "single" refers only to someone who has never been married or in a registered civil partnership.

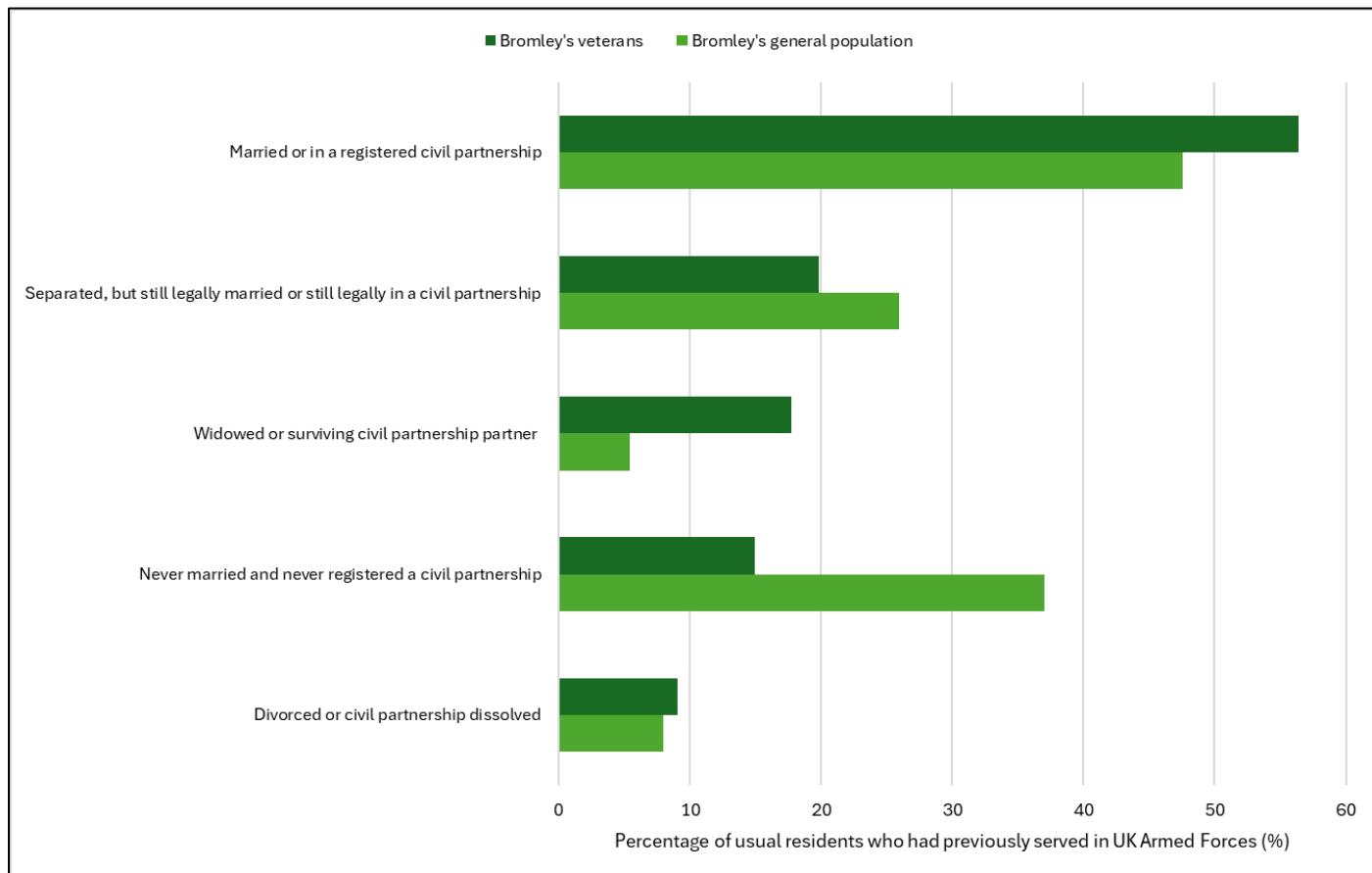
**Figure 8: Percentage of usual residents aged 16 years and over that previously served in the UK armed forces by legal partnership status, Bromley, London and England**



**Source: Census, 2021**

Figure 8 shows that the highest percentages of veterans are consistently found among those who are married or in a registered civil partnership, particularly in England (57.1%), followed closely by Bromley (56.4%), and then London (48.2%). Bromley also has a higher percentage of widowed veterans (17.8%), surpassing both London and England. Interestingly, London has a considerably higher proportion of veterans who have never married or registered a civil partnership (25.4%), more than 10 percentage points above Bromley (15.0%) and England (14.58%). This suggests a distinct demographic pattern in London, possibly reflecting broader urban social trends. Conversely, those who are separated show the lowest percentages across all regions, with Bromley at the bottom (1.80%), compared to London (2.32%) and England (2.46%). These patterns reflect different relationship status distributions among veterans in Bromley compared to broader regional and national trends.

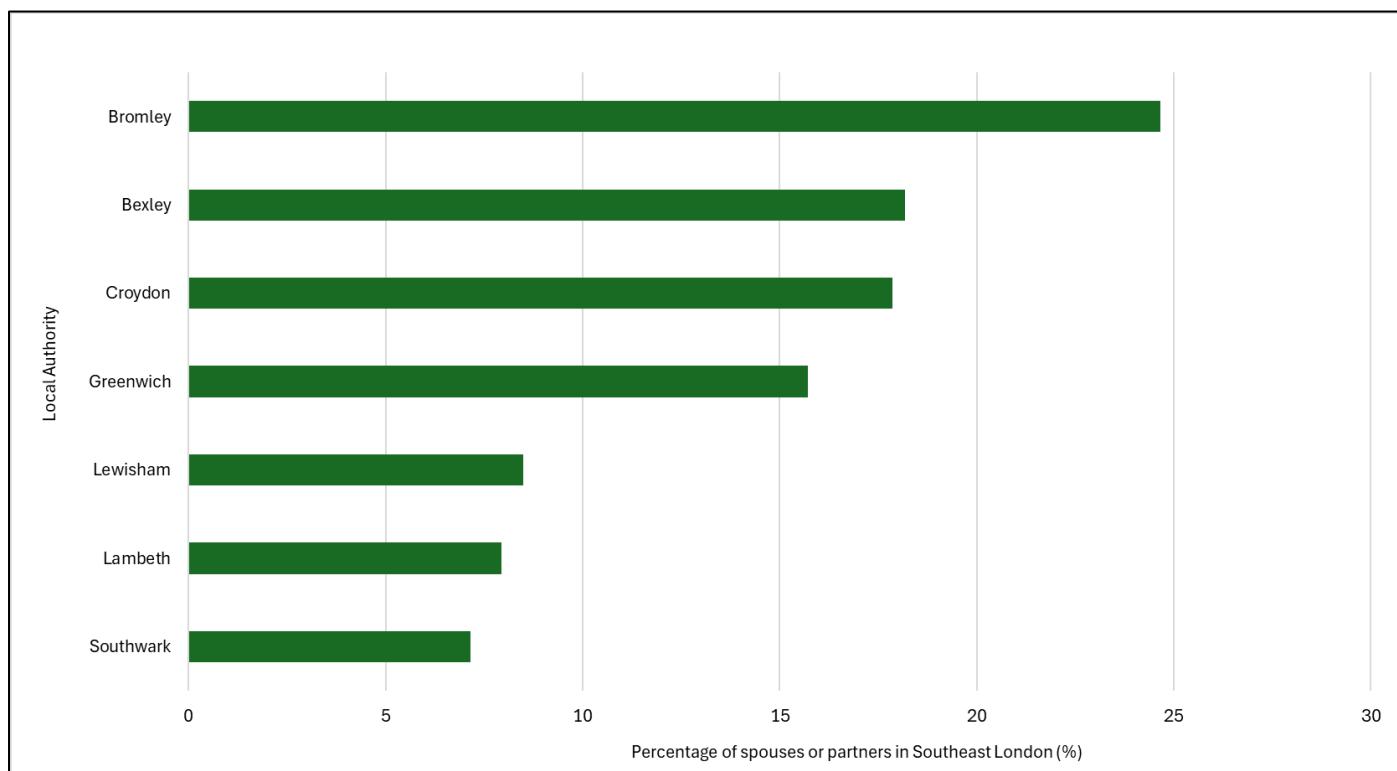
**Figure 9: Legal partnership status of Bromley veterans compared to Bromley's general population aged 16 and over, 2021**



**Source: Census, 2021**

Figure 9 displays a higher proportion of Bromley veterans that are married or in a registered civil partnership (56.4%) than the general population (47.5%), and they are also more likely to be widowed (17.8% vs. 5.4%), reflecting an older demographic. Conversely, only 15% of veterans have never married, compared to 37% of the general population, suggesting that veterans are more likely to have entered formal relationships. Divorce and separation rates are slightly higher among the general population, but not dramatically so. Overall, veterans in Bromley tend to have more traditional and long-term marital histories.

**Figure 10: Spouses or partners of usually resident UK armed forces veterans that lived in the same household in Southeast London**



**Source: Census, 2021**

Bromley has the highest number (4,150) and percentage (24.7%) of spouses or partners of UK armed forces veterans that lived in the same household, amongst the Southeast London boroughs (Figure 10). Bexley and Croydon follow closely with similar proportions (approximately 18%). In contrast, inner London boroughs like Southwark, Lambeth, and Lewisham show noticeably lower figures, suggesting fewer veteran households or more dispersed family arrangements in these areas.

The data referenced is derived from the Autumn school census, which is the only census period during which this metric is collected. The data exclusively covers Bromley maintained schools and Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs), excluding private, voluntary, and independent schools. It is based on pupil premium downloads provided to the London Borough of Bromley (LBB) Adult Services' Armed force service children in schools

**Table 1: Number of British Armed Force Service Children by Autumn year, 2020 to 2024**

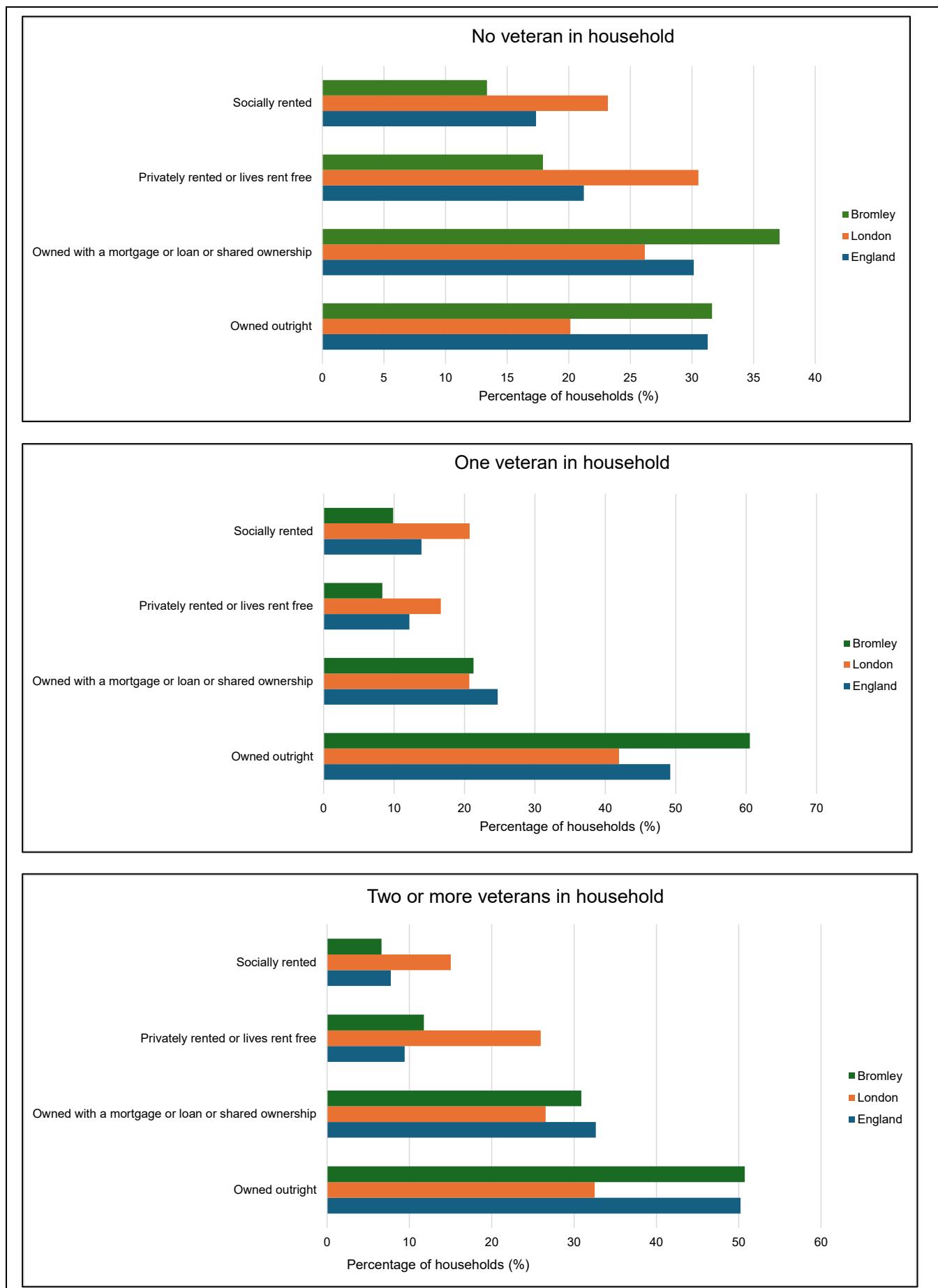
Autumn year	Number of AFC service children
2020	31
2021	27
2022	37
2023	38
2024	34

**Source: London Borough of Bromley (LBB) Adult Services, 2025**

## **Housing:**

This section examines the living arrangements and tenure types of UK armed forces veterans, as recorded in the national census. It includes data on homeownership, renting, and landlord types, offering insight into the stability, affordability, and quality of housing among the veteran population. The 2021 Census provides detailed information on housing tenure, such as owning outright, owning with a mortgage, or renting. For the AFC, housing is a key indicator of post-service integration, financial security, and access to support. Understanding these patterns helps identify potential vulnerabilities and informs local planning for housing services and veteran support initiatives.

**Figure 11: Percentage of working age UK Armed Forces veterans in Bromley, London and England, by Location and Housing Tenure, 2021.**



**Source: Census, 2021**

Figure 11 shows that households in Bromley with one veteran were the most likely to own their home outright (60.5%), considerably higher than both London (41.9%) and England (49.2%). Households with two or more veterans in Bromley also showed strong homeownership (50.7%), while non-veteran households lagged at 31.6%. This suggests that veteran households in Bromley, particularly those with one veteran, are more likely to be older or financially secure. When it comes to ownership with a mortgage or shared ownership, non-veteran households in Bromley led at 37.1%, compared to 30.9% for households with two or more veterans and 21.3% for one-veteran households. This may reflect younger families or individuals still paying off their homes.

Private renting or living rent-free was least common among one-veteran households in Bromley (8.3%), compared to 11.8% for multi-veteran households and 17.9% for non-veterans. In contrast, London showed much higher rates of private renting across all groups, highlighting affordability challenges in the capital. Social renting was lowest among Bromley households with two or more veterans (6.6%) and one veteran (9.9%), compared to 13.4% for non-veterans. These figures suggest that veterans in Bromley are more likely to live in stable, owned housing and less reliant on rental or social housing than their counterparts in London and England.

## **Key Findings: Family and housing profile**

### **Legal partnership status**

- Veterans in Bromley are more likely to be married (56.4%) and widowed (17.8%) than the general population (47.5% married, 5.4% widowed), reflecting a more traditional and older marital profile.
- Most veterans in Bromley are married or in a registered civil partnership, like England (57.1%) and higher than London (48.2%).
- London shows a higher share of single veterans (25.4%) compared to Bromley (15%) and England (14.6%), possibly due to urban social dynamics.

### **Households and family members**

- Bromley has the highest number and proportion of veteran spouses or partners in Southeast London (4,150 individuals, 24.7%), indicating a strong presence of veteran households.
- Inner London boroughs show lower figures, suggesting more dispersed or non-traditional family arrangements.

### **Service children in schools**

- The number of British Armed Forces service children in Bromley's maintained schools and Multi-Academy Trusts has remained relatively stable, ranging from 27 in 2021 to 38 in 2023, with 34 recorded in 2024.

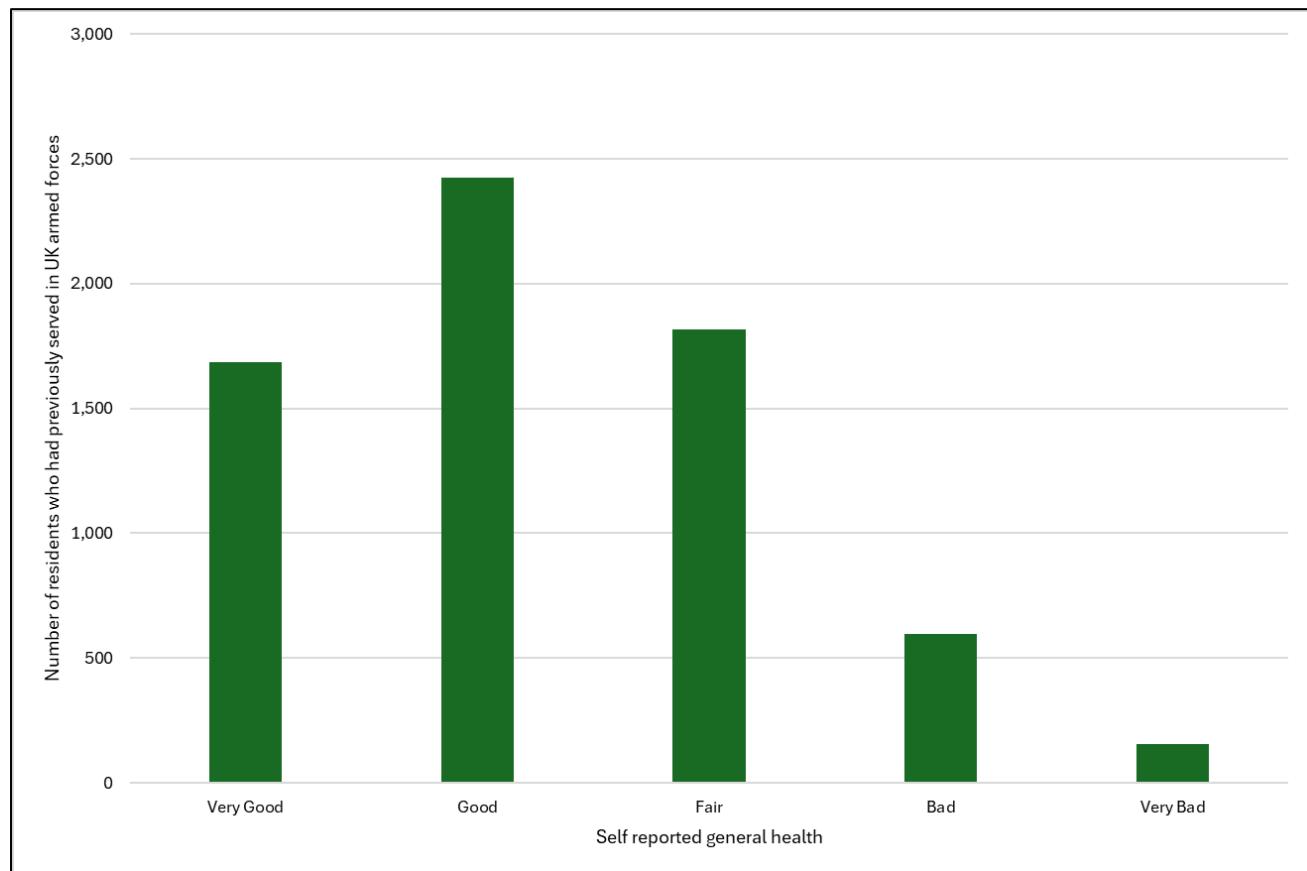
### **Housing tenure**

- Veteran households in Bromley are more likely to own their homes outright (60.5% for single-veteran households), considerably above London (41.9%) and England (49.2%).
- Multi-veteran households also show strong homeownership (50.7%), while non-veteran households remain lower (31.6%).
- Private renting and social housing are less common among veterans, suggesting greater financial stability and older age profiles.

## 2.3 Health and wellbeing profile

The health and wellbeing profile refers to self-reported measures of general health status and activity limitations, as captured in the national census. In the 2021 Census, individuals were asked to rate their general health as "Very Good," "Good," "Fair," "Bad," or "Very Bad." These indicators provide insight into the physical and mental health of the population, including veterans, and help identify patterns of need across age groups and geographic areas. For the AFC, this profile is essential in understanding the long-term impacts of service on health and in planning appropriate support services.

**Figure 12: Number of Bromley residents aged 16 years and over that previously served in the UK armed forces by self-reported general health**

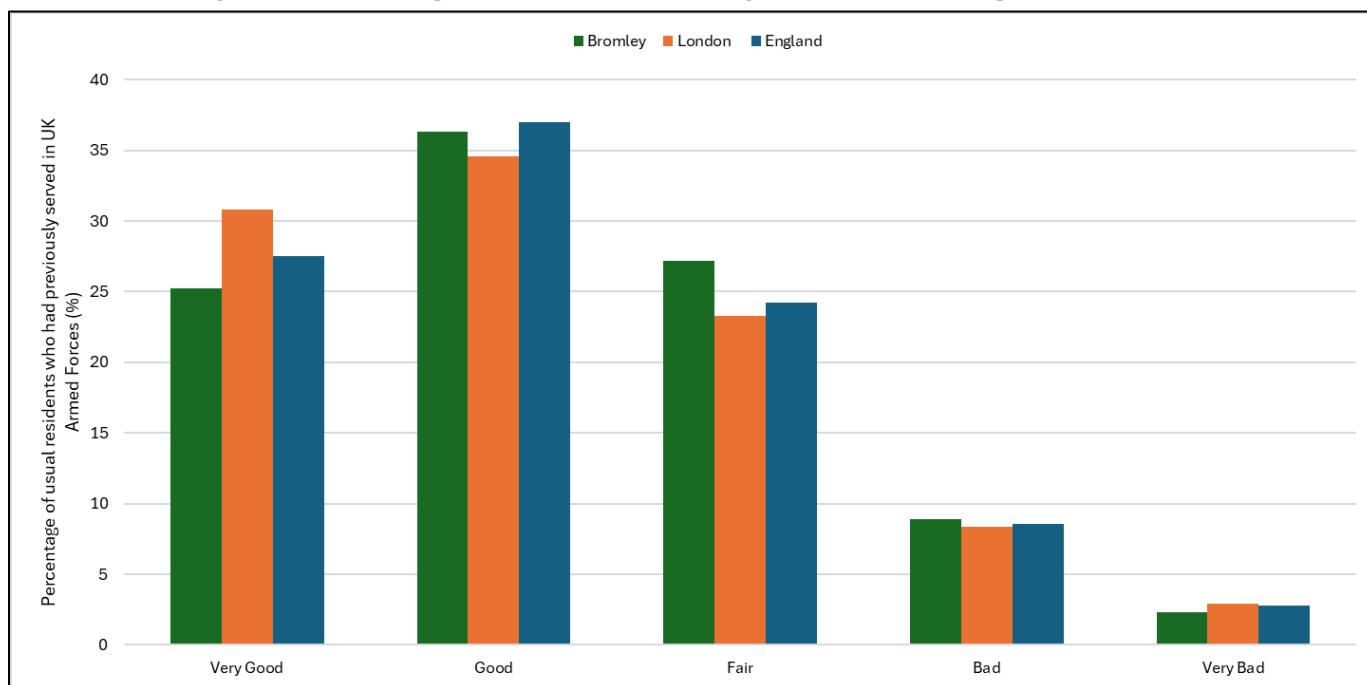


**Source: Census, 2021**

Figure 12 shows the number of Bromley residents aged 16 and over who previously served in the UK armed forces, categorised by their self-reported general health. The largest group reported their health as "Good" (2,425 residents; 36.3%), followed by those reporting "Fair" health (1,815 residents; 27.2%). A smaller number, 1,685 residents, reported "Very Good" health (25.2%). Meanwhile, 595 residents described their health as "Bad", and 155 residents as "Very Bad". This distribution suggests that while most veterans in Bromley perceive their health as at least fair or good, a large portion (around 750 individuals; 11.0%) experience poor or very poor health, highlighting the importance of targeted health and wellbeing support for this group.

Note: Veterans tend to be older and predominantly male. Failing to account for these differences can lead to misleading conclusions, especially for characteristics such as health that are closely linked to age and sex.

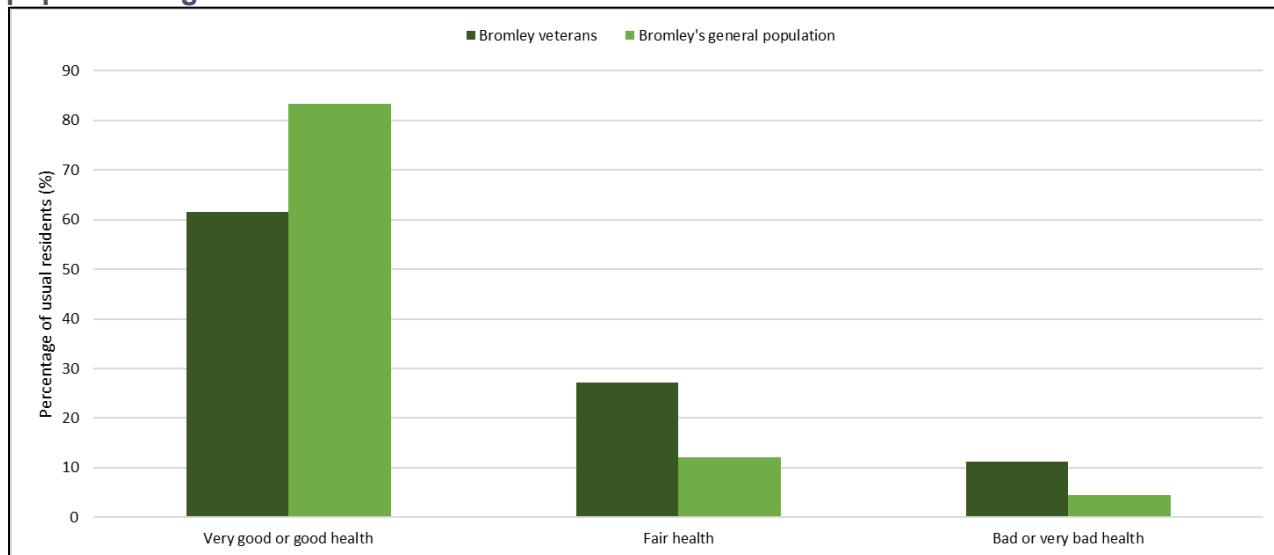
**Figure 13: Percentage of usual residents aged 16 years and over that previously served in the UK armed forces by self-reported general health, Bromley, London and England**



**Source: Census, 2021**

Figure 13 compares the percentage of usual residents aged 16 and over who previously served in the UK armed forces by self-reported general health across Bromley, London, and England. The highest proportions of veterans in all three regions are found in the "Good" and "Very Good" health categories, with England leading in "Good" health (37.0%), followed by Bromley (36.3%) and London (34.6%). London has the highest percentage of veterans with "Very Good" health (30.83%), ahead of England (27.5%) and Bromley (25.2%). However, Bromley shows the highest percentage in the "Fair" health category (27.2%), compared to London (23.3%) and England (24.2%). This may reflect Bromley's older veteran population, as age is closely linked to self-reported health status. The pattern of health outcomes appears to align with the age distribution across the three areas, with younger populations (like London's) more likely to report better health.

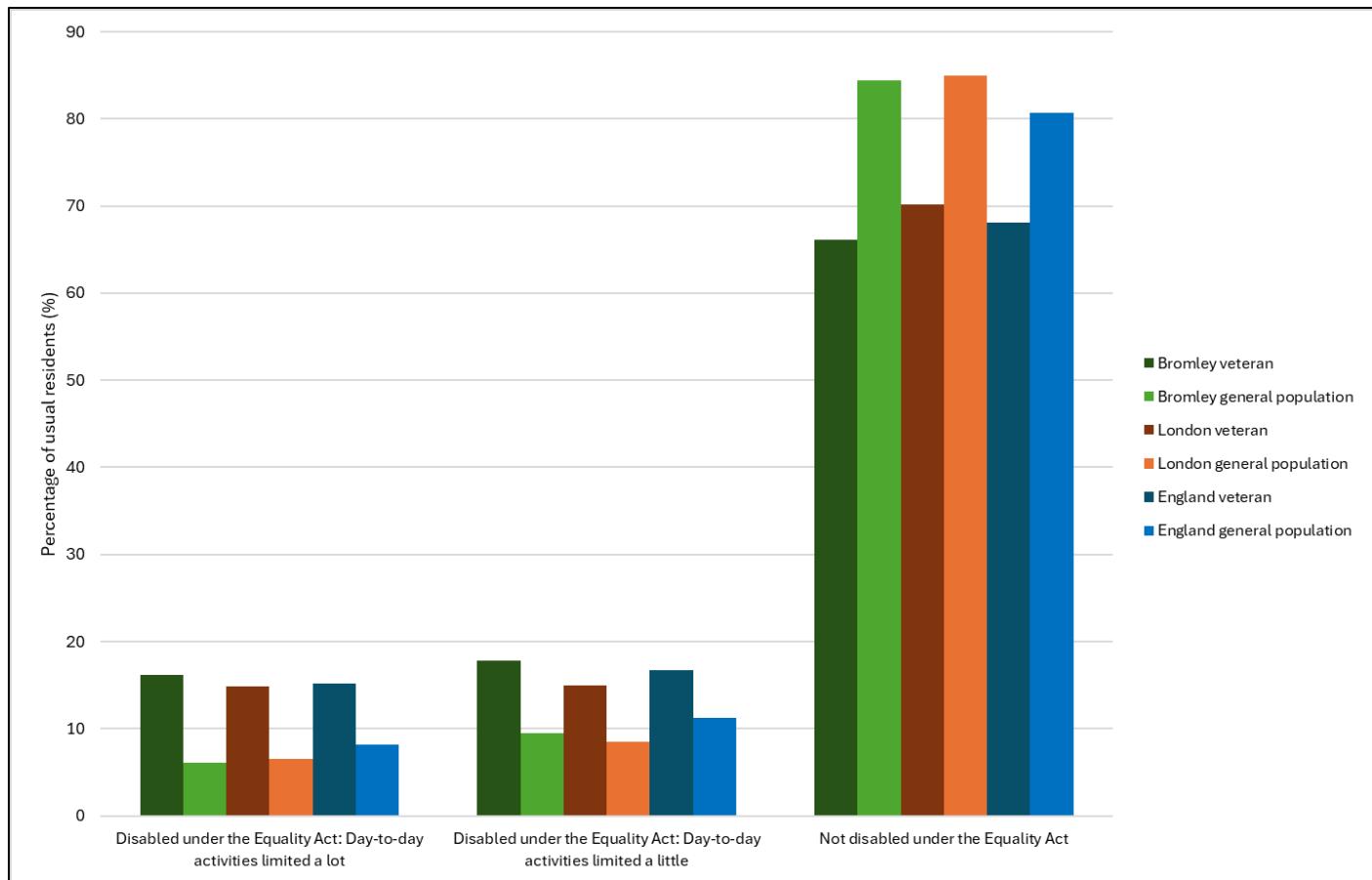
**Figure 14: Self-reported general health of Bromley veterans compared to Bromley's general population aged 16 and over**



**Source: ONS, 2021**

Figure 14 shows that Bromley veterans report poorer health outcomes compared to Bromley's general population aged 16 and over. 61.5% of veterans describe their health as "Very good" or "Good," compared to 83.4% of the general population and 27.2% of veterans report "Fair" health, which is more than double the rate in the general population (12.1%). Additionally, 11.3% of veterans report "Bad" or "Very Bad" health, which is also more than twice the rate seen in the general population (4.4%). These disparities suggest that veterans in Bromley may face greater health challenges and could benefit from targeted health and wellbeing support.

**Figure 15: Disability in veterans compared to the general population aged 16 and over in Bromley, London and England, 2021**



**Source: Census, 2021**

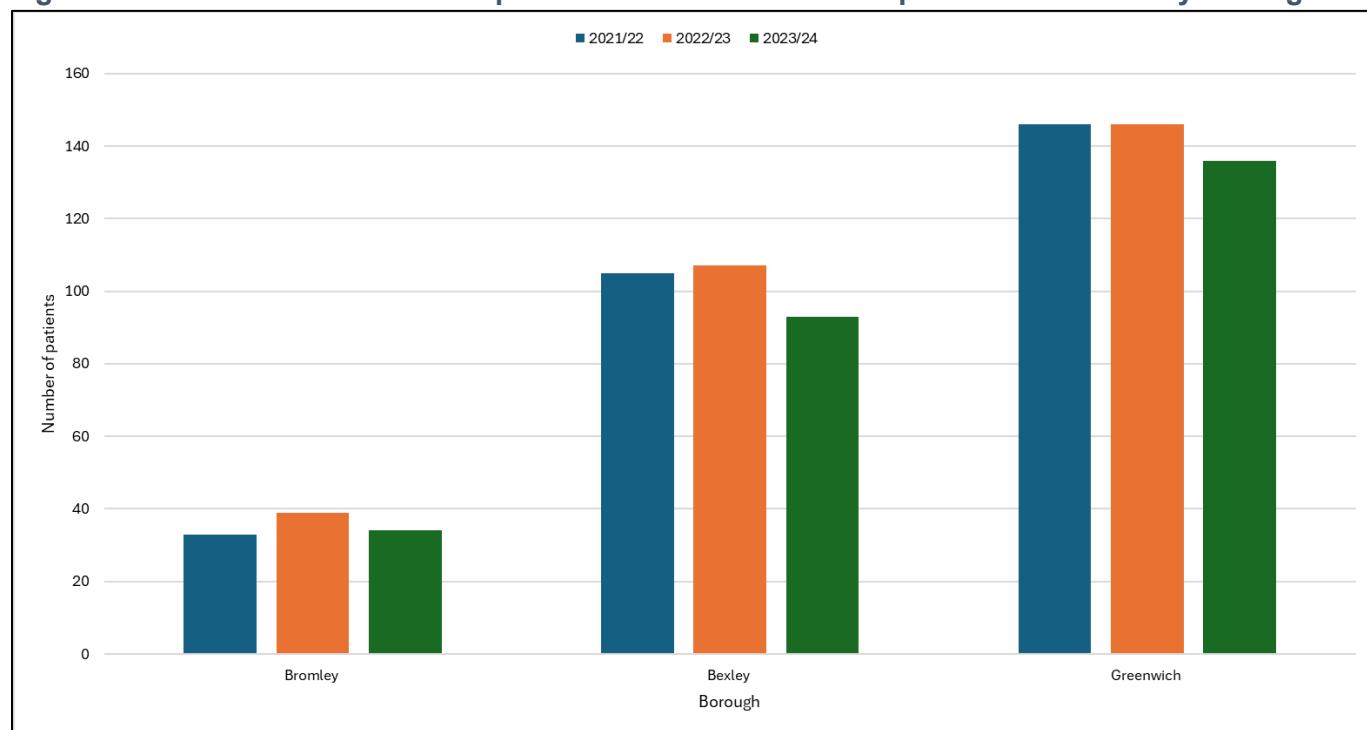
Figure 15 shows that Bromley veterans are more likely to be classified as disabled under the Equality Act compared to the general population. Specifically, 16.1% of veterans report that their day-to-day activities are limited a lot, and 17.8% report they are limited a little. This is more than double the rates seen in the general population (6.1% and 9.4%, respectively). Only 66.1% of veterans are not disabled under the Act, compared to 84.5% of the general population. This pattern is consistent across London and England, indicating that veterans generally experience higher levels of disability than non-veterans, likely reflecting the long-term physical and mental health impacts of military service.

## Access to mental health services:

This section summarises the findings from OXLEAS NHS Foundation Trust's analysis of British Armed Forces (BAF)-related patients who accessed mental health services via referrals and admissions between April 2021 and March 2024. The dataset, approved for use in this JSNA, includes 349 distinct patients and provides insight into the mental health needs of veterans, reservists, and their families. It focuses on service engagement across Bromley, Bexley, and Greenwich, the boroughs where OXLEAS operates. The data is broken down by financial year, borough, directorate, service team group, and BAF group (Veterans, Family/Carers, and Reservists), offering a snapshot of how members of the AFC interact with local mental health services.

To ensure consistency, only referrals and admissions that occurred within each financial year were included, with service team and ward locations used as proxies for patient boroughs. While this enabled timely analysis, it may introduce minor inaccuracies in borough-level attribution. Additionally, the row-wise and column-wise subtotals in Table 2 may not equal the sum of individual figures, as some patients had multiple referrals or admissions spanning more than one financial year and/or borough. All referrals were mapped to OXLEAS' updated directorate structure introduced in late 2021. The data is anonymised and summarised for external use, with patient identity excluded. Overall, this dataset provides valuable evidence to support targeted mental health service planning for veterans and their families in Bromley and neighbouring boroughs.

**Figure 16: Number of BAF- related patients referred to OXLEAS per Financial Year by borough**



**Source: OXLEAS NHS, 2024**

Figure 16 shows that across three neighbourhood boroughs, Bromley consistently has the lowest number of BAF- related patients referred to OXLEAS when compared to Bexley and Greenwich. In Bexley and Greenwich, more patients were referred in the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years compared to the most recent year in 2023/24, whereas in Bromley, the difference in referrals is minimal over the years. The highest numbers of referred patients were in Greenwich, followed by Bexley. These patterns suggest that Bromley may have a smaller veteran population interacting with local health services compared to neighbouring boroughs.

**Table 2: Number of BAF- related patients referred to OXLEAS per Financial Year by Borough and BAF Group**

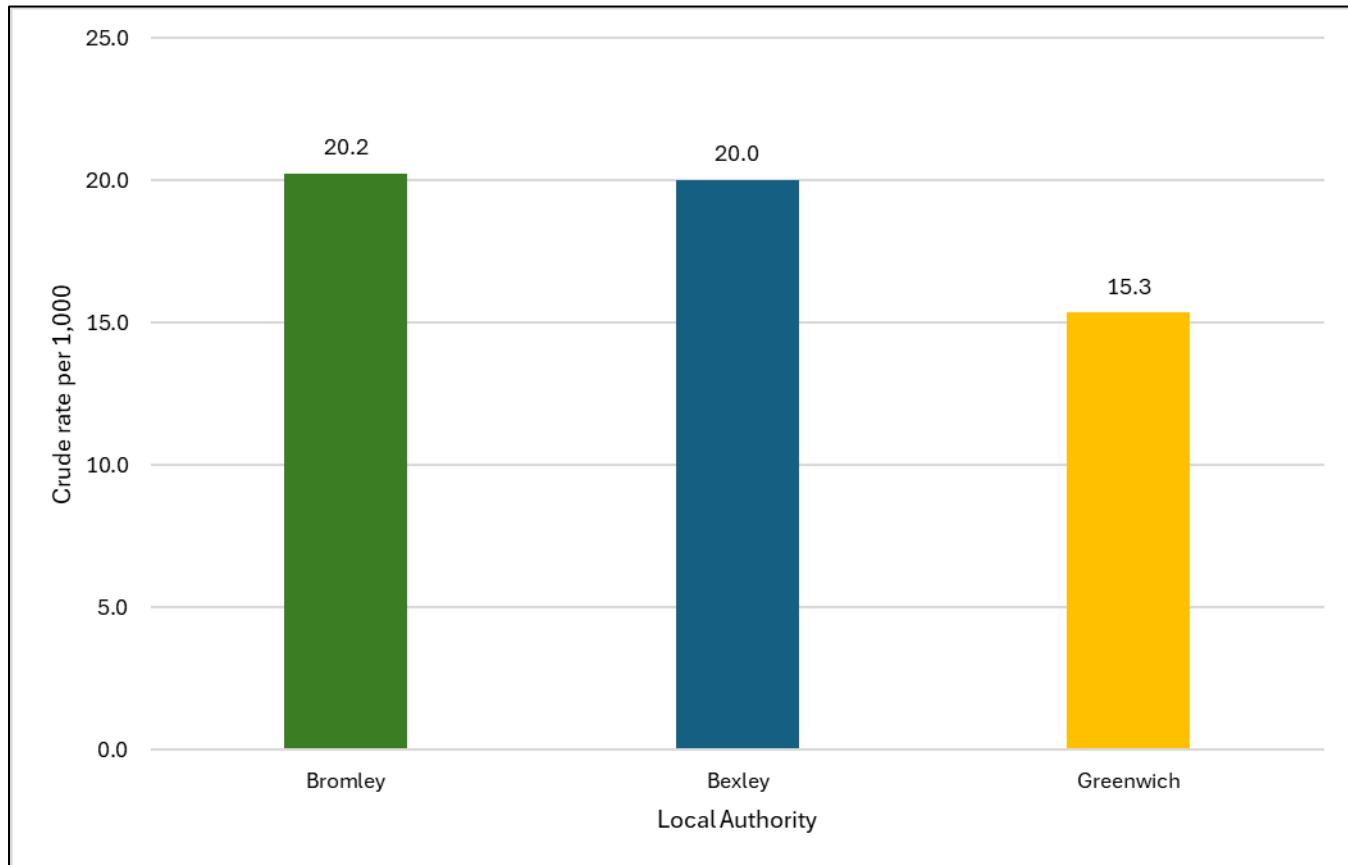
<b>Borough / British Armed Forces (BAF) Group</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
<b>Bromley</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>60</b>
BAF Reservist	0	0	0	0
Reservist	0	0	0	0
BAF Family/Carer	5	10	10	15
Family/Carer of Veteran	0	0	0	5
Family/Carer of serving Personnel	0	5	5	10
BAF Veteran	30	30	25	45
Ex-British Armed Forces	0	5	0	5
Ex-services member	10	5	0	10
Yes (serving/veteran)	20	20	20	30
<b>Bexley</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>155</b>
BAF Reservist	0	0	0	0
Reservist	0	0	0	0
BAF Family/Carer	10	15	10	15
Family/Carer of Veteran	5	5	5	10
Family/Carer of serving Personnel	5	5	5	10
BAF Veteran	95	95	85	135
Ex-British Armed Forces	10	5	5	15
Ex-services member	20	20	10	25
Yes (serving/veteran)	65	70	70	95
<b>Greenwich</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>200</b>
BAF Family/Carer	20	25	20	30
Family/Carer of serving Personnel	5	5	5	10
Family/Carer of Veteran	20	20	10	20
BAF Veteran	125	120	120	170
Ex-services member	15	10	10	15
Ex-British Armed Forces	25	20	20	30
Yes (serving/veteran)	85	90	90	125

**Source: OXLEAS NHS, 2024**

Note: All values are rounded to the nearest 5 to address the data disclosure risk.

Table 2 shows that in Bromley, Bexley and Greenwich, most BAF-related patients referred to OXLEAS were current serving personnel at the time of admission (30, 95 and 125 patients respectively). In Bromley, the number of BAF- related patients referred to OXLEAS increased from 35 in 2021/22 to 40 in 2022/23 and then decreased to 35 in 2023/24. In the most recent year of 2023/24, 10 of these patients (about 26%) were family members or carers of veterans. In Bexley, the number of BAF- related patients referred to OXLEAS decreased from 105 in 2021/22 to decreased to 95 in 2023/24. 10 patients (about 9%) were family members or carers of veterans in the most recent year of 2023/24. In Greenwich, the number of BAF- related patients referred to OXLEAS decreased from 145 in the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years to 135 in 2023/24. 20 of these patients (about 13%) were family members or carers of veterans in the most recent year of 2023/24.

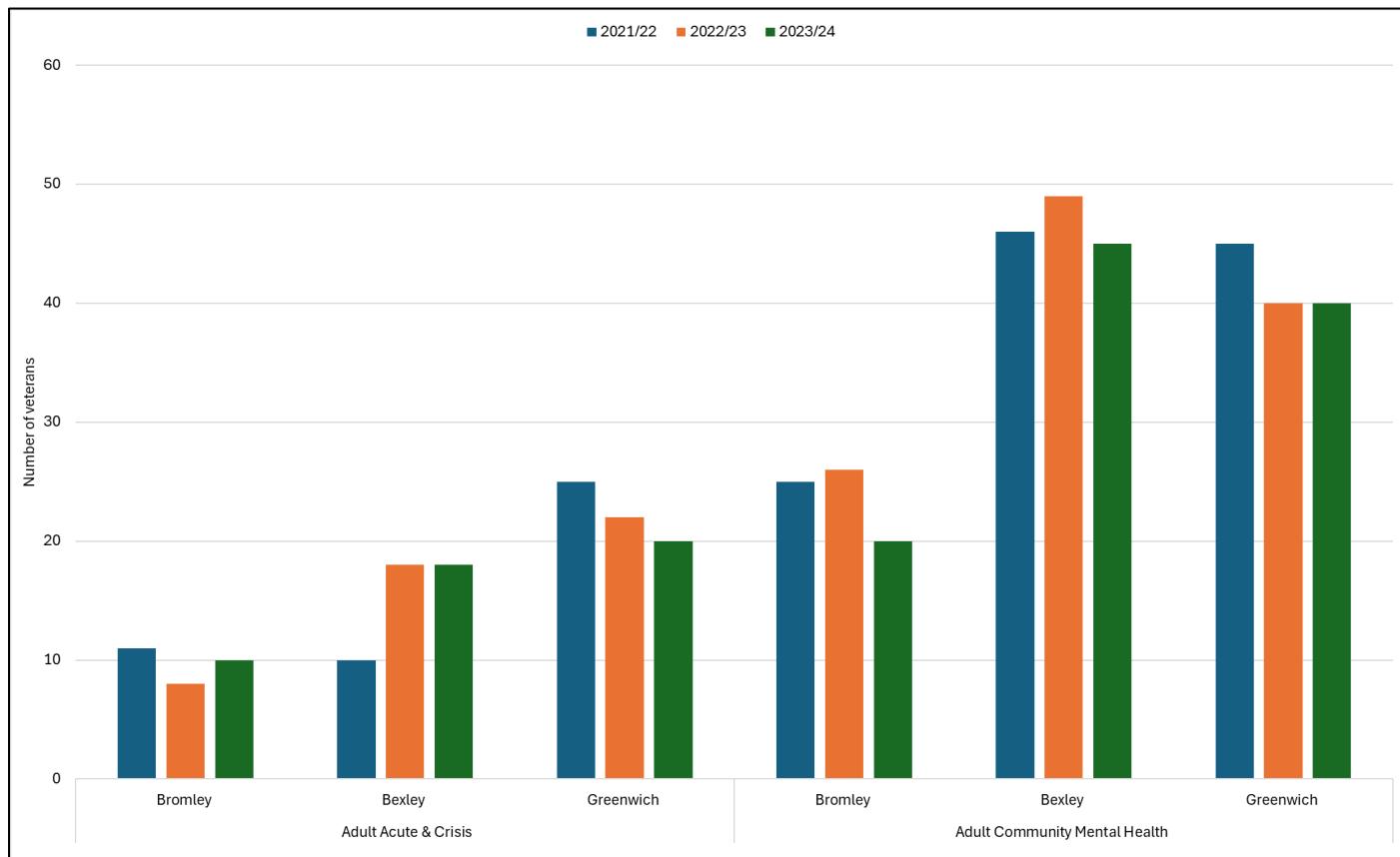
**Figure 17: Crude rate per 1000 of usual residents aged 16 years and over that previously served in the UK armed forces in Bromley Bexley and Greenwich.**



**Source: Census, 2021**

Figure 17 shows that the crude rate per 1,000 of usual residents aged 16 years and over that previously served in the UK armed forces is highest in Bromley (20.2 residents per 1,000), when compared to the neighbouring boroughs of Bexley (20.0 residents per 1,000) and Greenwich (15.3 residents per 1,000). Interestingly, Greenwich has the highest numbers of BAF-related patients referred to OXLEAS services, followed by Bexley. Bromley has the lowest proportion of referrals to local health services but has larger veteran community than Greenwich and Bexley.

**Figure 18: Number of veterans per Financial Year for Adult Acute & Crisis (AAC) and Adult Community Mental Health (ACMH) Directorate by borough**



**Source: OXLEAS NHS, 2024**

Figure 18 shows that the number of veterans accessing Adult Acute & Crisis (AAC) services in Bromley fluctuated over the past three financial years, starting at 11 in 2021/22, dipping to 8 in 2022/23, and rising again to 10 in 2023/24. This is a lower number compared to Greenwich, which consistently had the highest figures. However, Bromley has the highest crude rate of veterans at 20.2 per 1,000 residents aged 16+ (Figure 16), followed closely by Bexley, with Greenwich considerably lower at 15.3. This suggests that, relative to its veteran population size, Bromley may have a lower rate of AAC service use among veterans, potentially indicating differences in need, access, or engagement with services.

A higher number of veterans interact with ACMH services compared to AAC services. In the past three years, Bromley had between 20- 25 veterans per year in ACMH. This is still lower than Bexley and Greenwich, which both had considerably higher figures (ranging from 40 to 49). These findings imply that veterans in Bromley may be accessing mental health services at lower rates overall.

## **Key findings: Health and Wellbeing Profile**

### **Self-reported general health**

- Most veterans in Bromley report their health as either “Good” (36.3%) or “Fair” (27.2), with 25.2% reporting “Very Good” health.
- However, around 750 (11%) veterans report “Bad” or “Very Bad” health, highlighting a considerable group with poor health outcomes.
- Compared to London and England, Bromley has a higher proportion of veterans in “Fair” health (27.2%), suggesting a larger share with moderate health status.
- Bromley veterans are more likely to report poorer health than the general population, with only 61.5% reporting “Very good” or “Good” health compared to 83.4% of the general population, and nearly three times as many reporting “Bad” or “Very Bad” health.

### **Disability and activity limitations**

- In 2021, 66.1% of working-age veterans in Bromley reported no limitations in daily activities, slightly lower than London (70.1%) and England (68.1%).
- A higher proportion in Bromley reported being “limited a lot” (16.1%) or “limited a little” (17.8%), indicating a greater prevalence of disability or long-term health conditions.
- When compared to the general population (6.1%), Bromley veterans are over twice as likely to report severe activity limitations due to disability (16.1%), suggesting a higher disability prevalence among veterans.

### **Access to mental health services**

- Between 2021/22 and 2023/24, Bromley had the lowest number of BAF-related patients referred to OXLEAS NHS services, with 33 referrals in 2021/22, 39 in 2022/23, and 34 in 2023/24.
- In 2023/24, 26% of these referrals (9 patients) were family members or carers of veterans.
- In comparison, Bexley had 93 referrals in 2023/24 (9% family/carers), and Greenwich had 136 referrals (13% family/carers).
- Despite having fewer referrals, Bromley’s veteran population is larger than that of Bexley and Greenwich.
- In 2021 Bromley had the highest crude rate of veterans among neighbouring boroughs, with 20.2 veterans per 1,000 residents aged 16 and over, compared to 20.0 per 1,000 in Bexley and 15.3 per 1,000 in Greenwich.

### **Mental health services use**

- The number of veterans accessing Adult Acute & Crisis (AAC) services in Bromley are consistently lower than those in Greenwich, which had the highest AAC service use among the three boroughs.
- Bromley also had fewer veterans accessing Adult Community Mental Health (ACMH) services, with 20-25 veterans per year between 2021 and 2024, compared to Bexley and Greenwich, which had between 40-49 veterans per year accessing ACMH services.
- These patterns suggest that veterans in Bromley may be accessing mental health services at lower rates overall, despite having the highest veteran population density in the area.

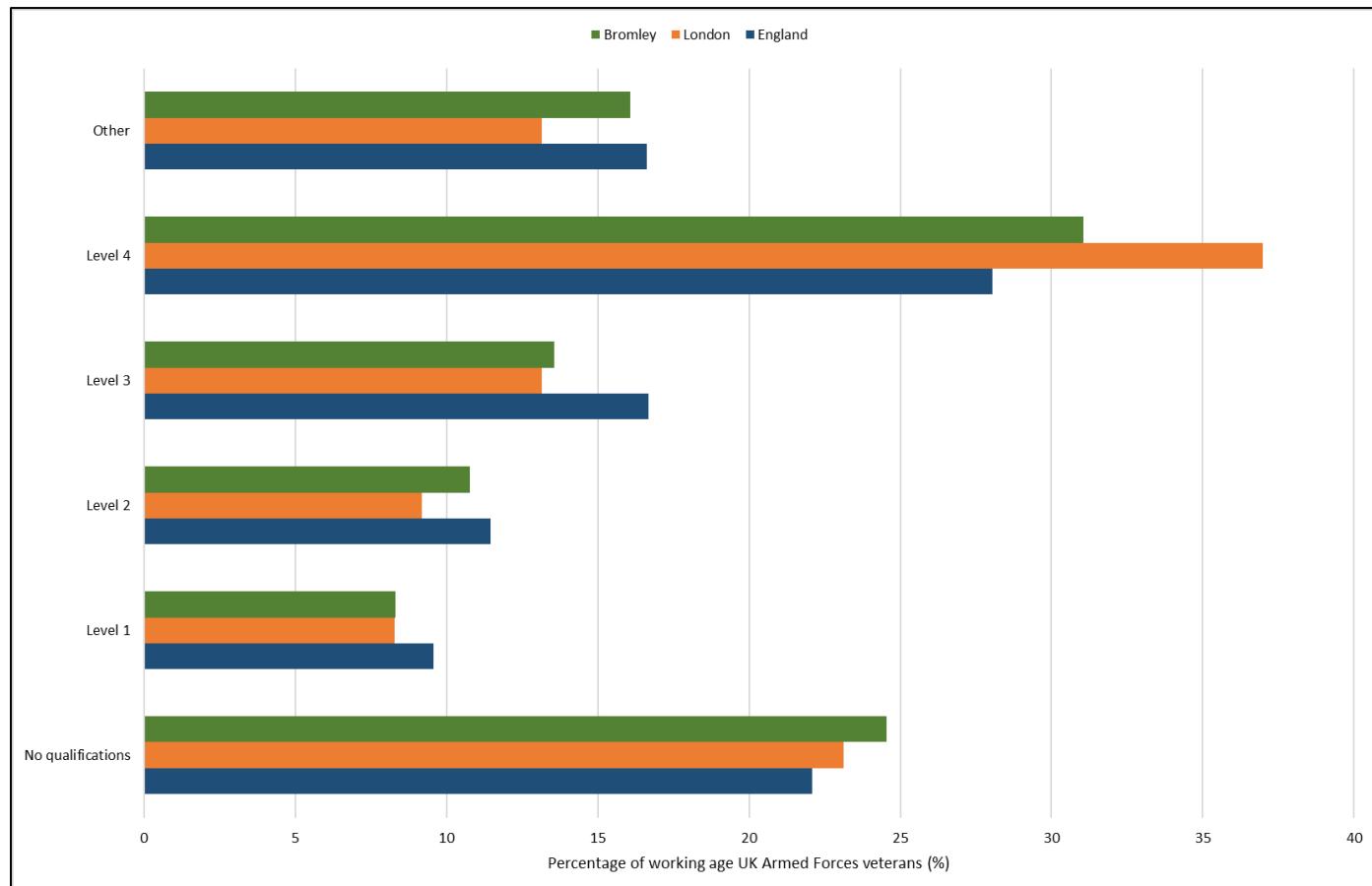
## 2.4 Education, employment and financial profile

The employment and financial profile refer to the economic activity, occupational roles, educational attainment, and housing tenure of individuals, as captured in the national census. For veterans, this includes their employment status (e.g. full-time, part-time, self-employed, unemployed), level of qualifications, types of occupations held, and patterns of home ownership or rental. These indicators help assess the socioeconomic integration, financial resilience, and career outcomes of the Armed Forces Community following their transition to civilian life. Data for this profile is primarily drawn from the 2021 Census, which remains the most recent source of detailed employment and housing information at the local authority level.

### Education:

Higher education data examines the highest level of qualification held by individuals, as reported in the national 2021 census. For veterans, this includes academic, vocational, and professional qualifications, such as GCSEs, A-levels, degrees, and equivalent foreign credentials, grouped into seven standard categories. These indicators help assess the skills base, employability, and potential for career progression within the Armed Forces Community. However, comparisons between veterans and non-veterans should be made with caution, as veterans are typically older and predominantly male, which can influence educational outcomes. Additionally, there are quality considerations around Level 4+ qualifications, particularly among older respondents and international migrants, and in comparing data with the 2011 Census.

**Figure 19: Working Age UK Veteran Estimates in Bromley, London and England, by Education, 2021**

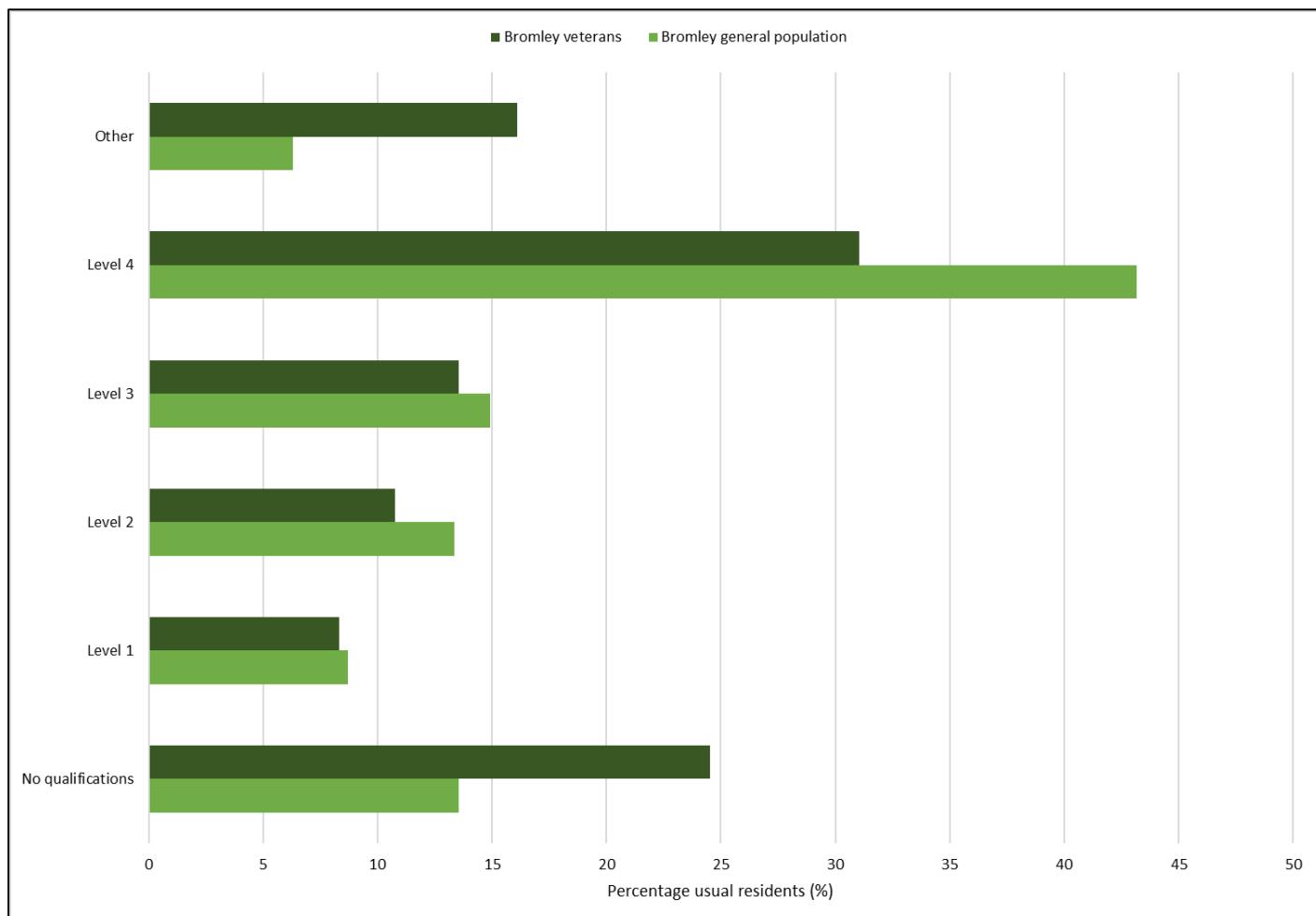


### Source: Census, 2021

Figure 19 shows that 31.0% of working-age veterans in Bromley held a Level 4 qualification or higher, such as a degree or professional qualification, which is above the England average (28.1%) but below London (37.0%), indicating a relatively well-educated veteran population.

However, 24.5% of Bromley veterans had no formal qualifications, slightly higher than both England (22.1%) and London (23.1%). The proportion of veterans with Level 1 (8.3%), Level 2 (10.8%), and Level 3 (13.6%) qualifications in Bromley was broadly in line with national and London averages, while 16.1% held "Other" qualifications, including apprenticeships, vocational or overseas credentials. Overall, Bromley's veteran population shows a strong presence of higher-level qualifications, though a notable share still lacks formal education credentials.

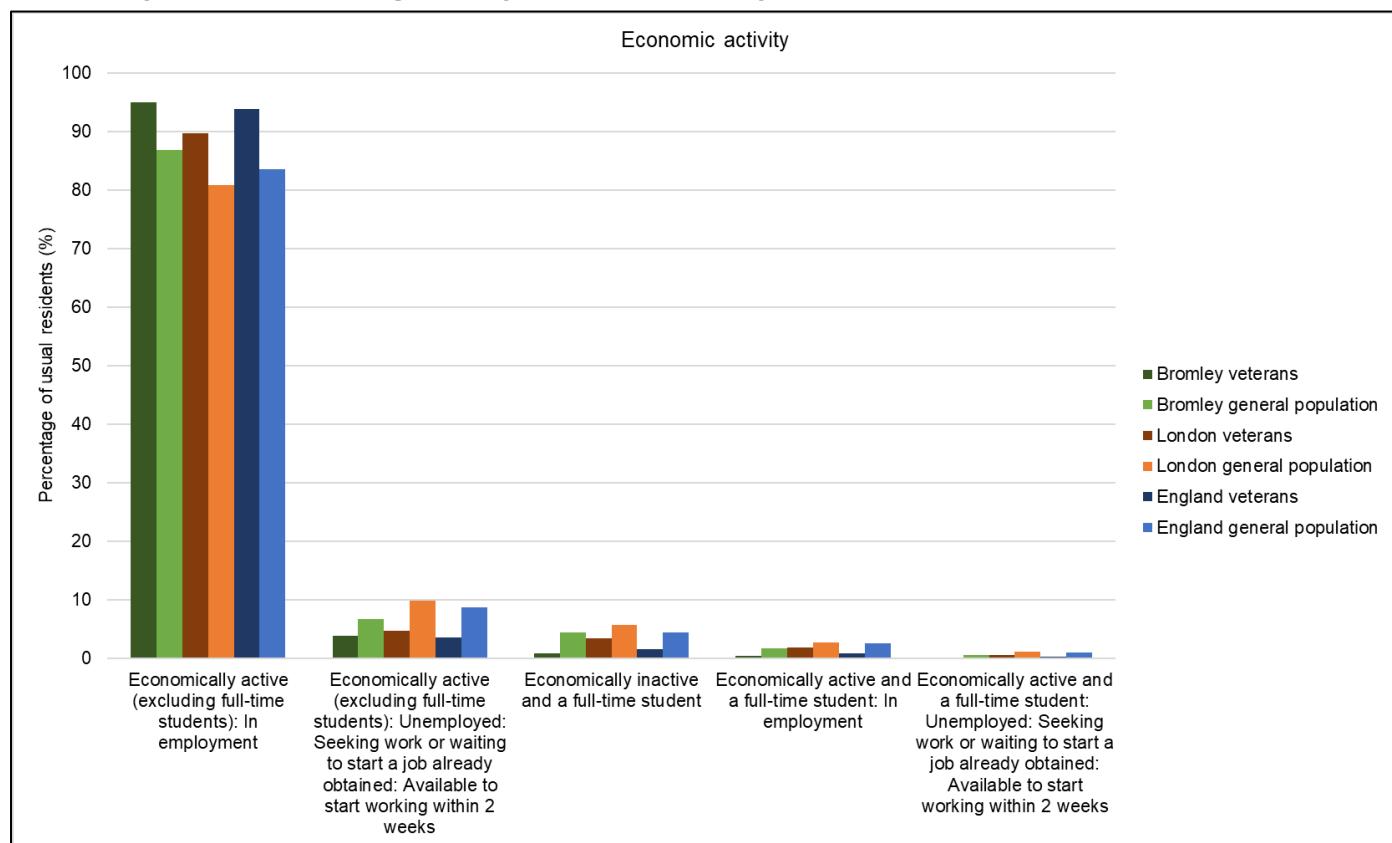
**Figure 20: Educational attainment of Bromley veterans compared to Bromley's general population aged 16 and over**



**Source: Census, 2021**

Figure 20 shows that Bromley veterans tend to have lower formal educational attainment compared to the general population. Nearly a quarter of veterans (24.5%) have no qualifications, almost double the rate in the general population (13.5%). Additionally, only 31% of veterans hold a Level 4 qualification (equivalent to a degree or higher), compared to 43.2% of the general population. Veterans are also more likely to fall into the "Other" category (16.1% vs. 6.3%), which may include vocational or military-specific training not classified within standard education levels. These figures suggest that there may be an educational gap between veterans and the wider community in Bromley.

**Figure 21: Economic activity of veterans compared to the general population aged 16 and over in Bromley, London and England, by economic activity, 2021**



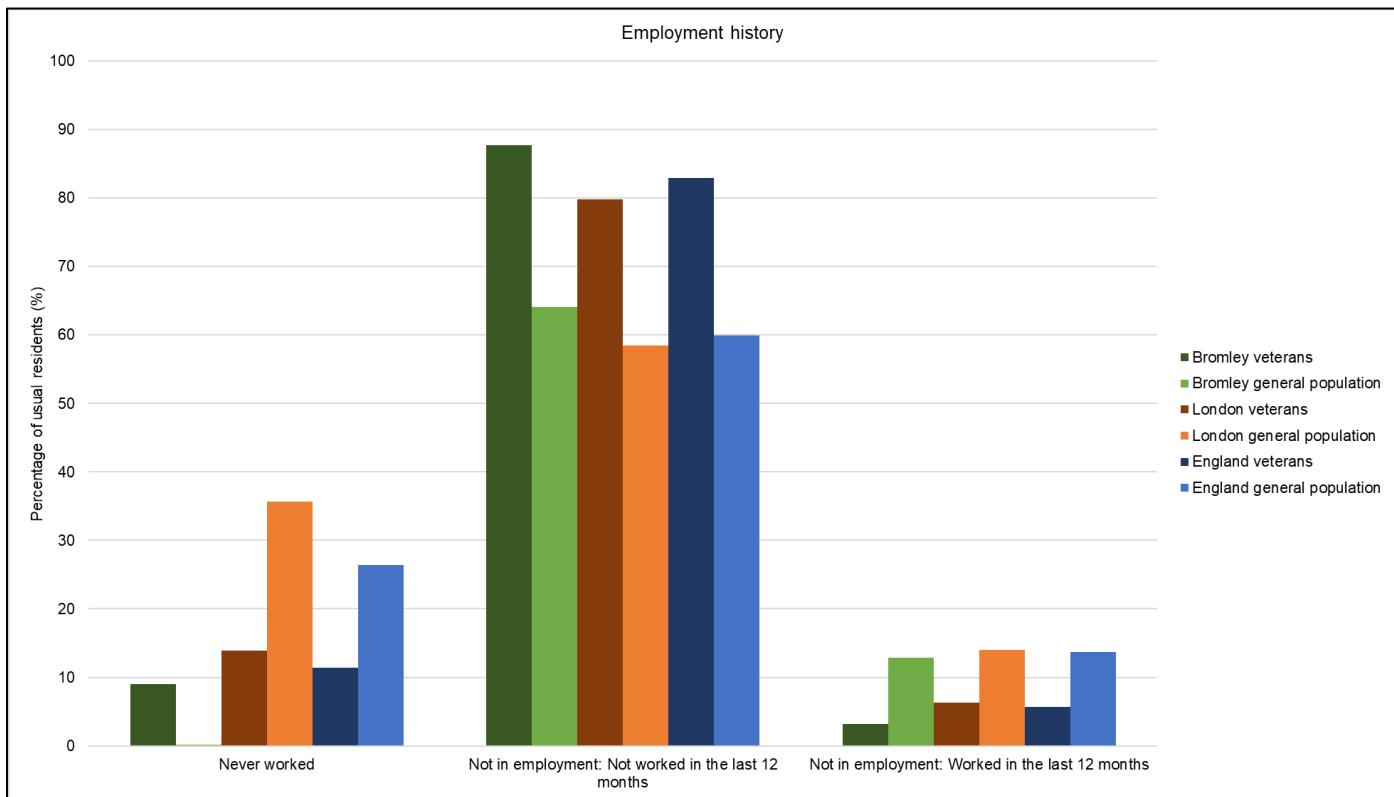
**Source: Census, 2021**

Figure 21 shows that working age veterans in Bromley demonstrated strong engagement in the civilian workforce, with 95.0% in employment (excluding full-time students), which is notably higher than London (89.7%) and slightly higher than England (93.9%). Unemployment among the economically active veterans (excluding students) in Bromley stood at 3.8%, which is lower than both London (4.6%) and England (3.6%). A small proportion of Bromley veterans were full-time students, either employed (0.4%) or seeking work (0.04%), indicating that education was not a major concurrent activity in this group.

However, economic inactivity remains a concern. Notably, 65.4% (4,363) of all veterans in Bromley were economically inactive (excluding students), which is considerably higher than London (54.1%; 54,473) and England (57.0%; 990,357). This could largely be attributed to the substantial proportion of Bromley's older veteran population that are either in retirement or living with a disability.

Considering that unemployment levels in the civilian UK population is 4.7%, as of June 2025, Bromley's unemployment figure of 3.8% for veterans implies that Bromley's veterans are generally well-integrated into the workforce [9]. Based on the data provided, Bromley veterans have a notably higher employment rate (95.0%) than the general population (86.8%), indicating strong workforce integration among those not in education. However, veterans are less likely to be full-time students, whether employed (0.4% vs. 1.7%) or unemployed (0.04% vs. 0.5%), and fewer are economically inactive students (0.8% vs. 6.6%). This suggests that veterans are less engaged in formal education and training. While unemployment rates among economically active individuals are similar (3.7% for veterans vs. 4.4% for the general population), the overall profile reflects a veteran community that is older, more likely to be employed, and less likely to be pursuing education. There is still some level of economic inactivity which may warrant targeted support to help re-engage those currently outside the labour market.

**Figure 22: Employment history of veterans compared to the general population aged 16 and over in Bromley, London and England, by economic activity, 2021**

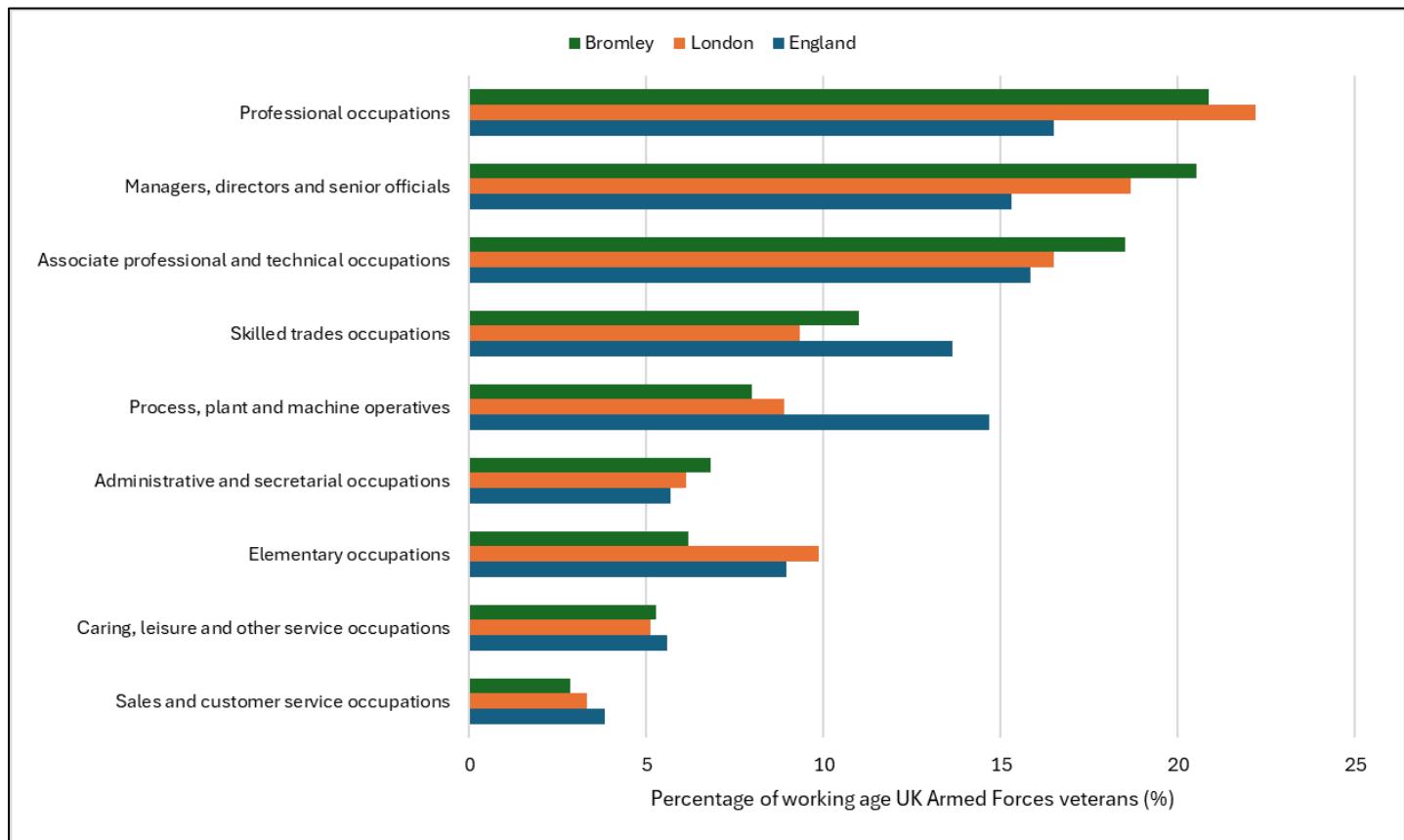


**Source: Census, 2021**

Figure 22 shows that among veterans not in employment, Bromley has the highest proportion who have not worked in the last 12 months (87.8%), compared to veterans in London (79.9%) and England (83.0%). Bromley veterans also have the lowest percentage who worked in the last 12 months (3.2%), suggesting lower recent labour market engagement. Interestingly, Bromley veterans are less likely to report never having worked (9.0%) than veterans in London (13.9%) and England (11.4%), which may reflect differences in age profiles, service history, or local employment opportunities.

When compared to its general population (64.1%), Bromley veterans not in employment are considerably more likely to have not worked in the last 12 months (87.8%) and far less likely to have worked recently. Additionally, 9.0% of veterans report never having worked, which is a remarkable difference to just 0.1% of the general population. These differences suggest that veterans face greater barriers to employment re-entry and may benefit from targeted support to improve labour market participation and reduce long-term inactivity.

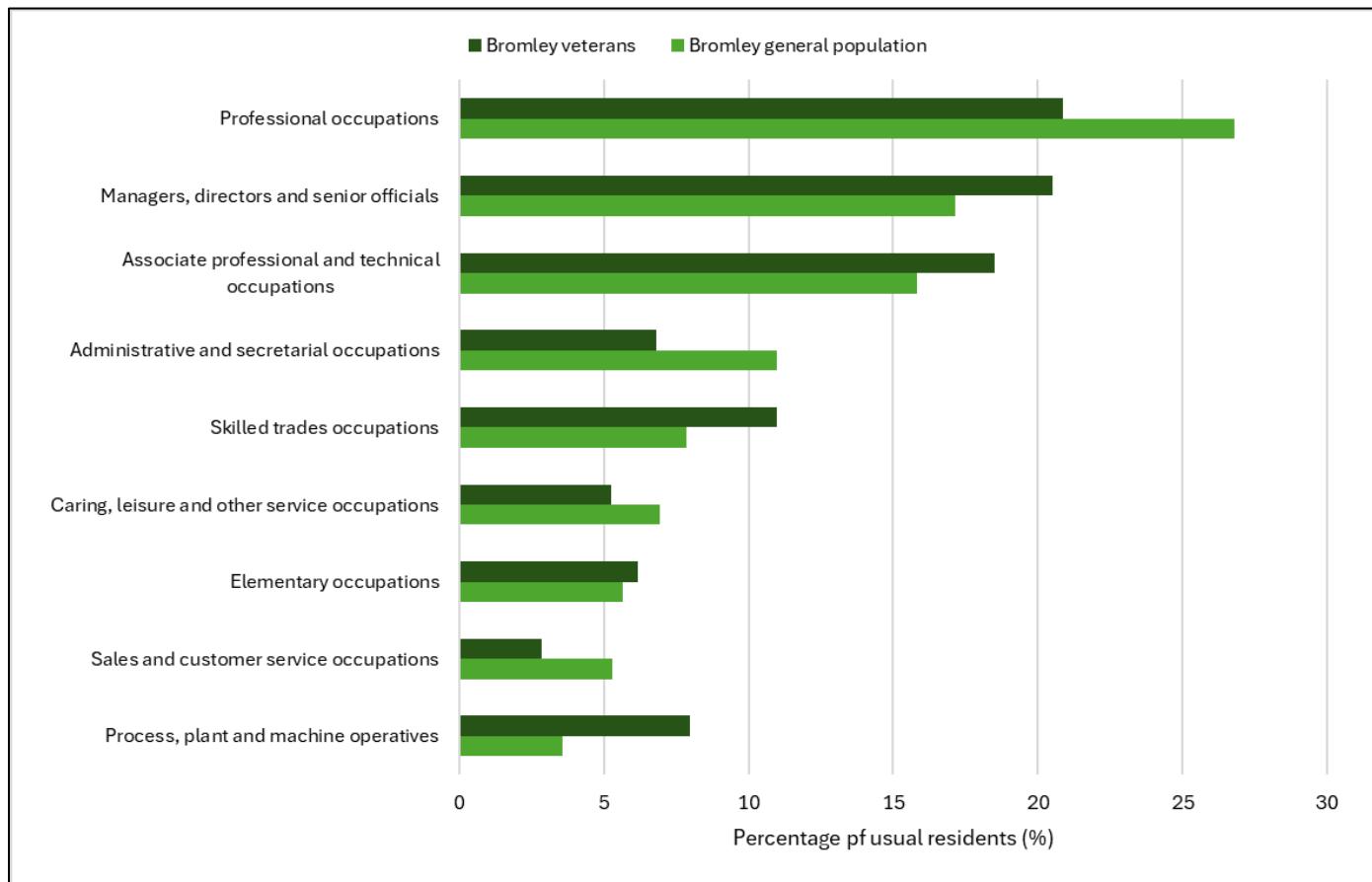
**Figure 23: Percentage of working age UK veterans in Bromley, London and England, by occupation, 2021**



**Source: Census, 2021**

In 2021, Bromley's working-age UK veterans were more likely to be employed in higher-skilled and professional occupations compared to their counterparts in London and England (Figure 23). The largest shares were in managers, directors and senior officials (20.5%), professional occupations (20.9%), and associate professional and technical roles (18.5%), all notably higher than the averages for London (18.7%, 22.2%, and 16.5%) and England (15.3%, 16.5%, and 15.8%). Bromley also had a relatively strong presence in administrative and secretarial roles (6.8%) and caring, leisure and other service occupations (5.3%), aligning closely with national and regional figures. In contrast, Bromley veterans were less represented in elementary occupations (6.2%), sales and customer service roles (2.9%), and process, plant and machine operatives (8.0%), compared to higher proportions in London and England. These patterns suggest that Bromley's veteran workforce is more concentrated in leadership, professional, and support roles, with lower engagement in manual and frontline service occupations.

**Figure 24: Occupation of Bromley veterans compared to the Bromley general population aged 16 and over, 2021**



**Source: Census, 2021**

Figure 24 shows that Bromley veterans are more likely than the general population to work in associate professional and technical occupations (18.5% vs. 15.8%) and in managerial roles (20.5% vs. 17.1%), suggesting a strong presence in leadership and skilled technical positions. However, they are less represented in professional occupations (20.9% vs. 26.8%), indicating that while veterans often hold roles requiring expertise and responsibility, they may be underrepresented in jobs that typically require advanced academic qualifications. This pattern reflects the practical and leadership skills gained through military service, which may translate more readily into technical and managerial roles than into traditionally academic professions.

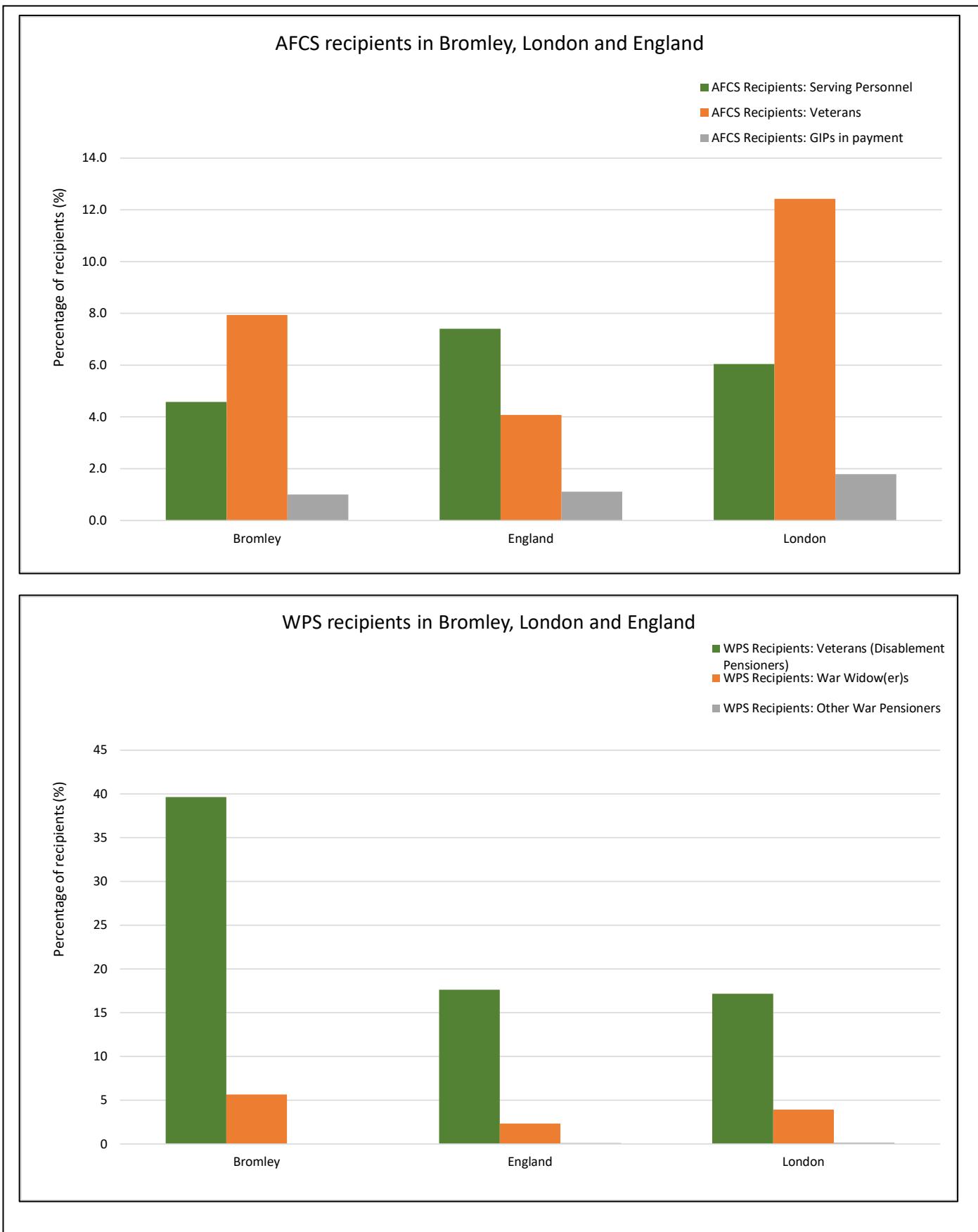
#### **Pension and compensation:**

Information on the Armed Forces Pension and Compensation recipients is based on administrative data from the Ministry of Defence's Compensation and Pension System (CAPS) and the War Pension Computer System (WPCS), as of 31 March 2023 [10]. These systems record the addresses of individuals receiving payments under three key schemes: the Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS), the War Pension Scheme (WPS), and the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS). The AFPS provides pensions to Regular UK Armed Forces members who have served for at least two years, with AFPS 75 (from 1975) and AFPS 05 (from 2005) included in the Background Quality report published by the Ministry of Defence. AFPS 15 (from 2015) is excluded. The WPS is a no-fault compensation scheme for injuries, ill-health, or death caused or worsened by service from 1914 to 5 April 2005, available only to ex-Service personnel. The AFCS covers similar outcomes for service on or after 6 April 2005 and includes both regular and reserve forces.

The data reflects only those in receipt of payments as of 31 March 2023 and does not represent the entire veteran population. To protect confidentiality, the report follows JSP 200 statistical disclosure

control, suppressing any cell with fewer than three individuals and applying secondary suppression where necessary. Geographic analysis is based on the most recent postcode data, though this may not always reflect current residence. Data quality is maintained by DBS veterans UK, who are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the CAPS and WPCS systems used by Defence Statistics [10].

Figure 25: Percentage of AFCS and WPS recipients in Bromley, London and England, 2023

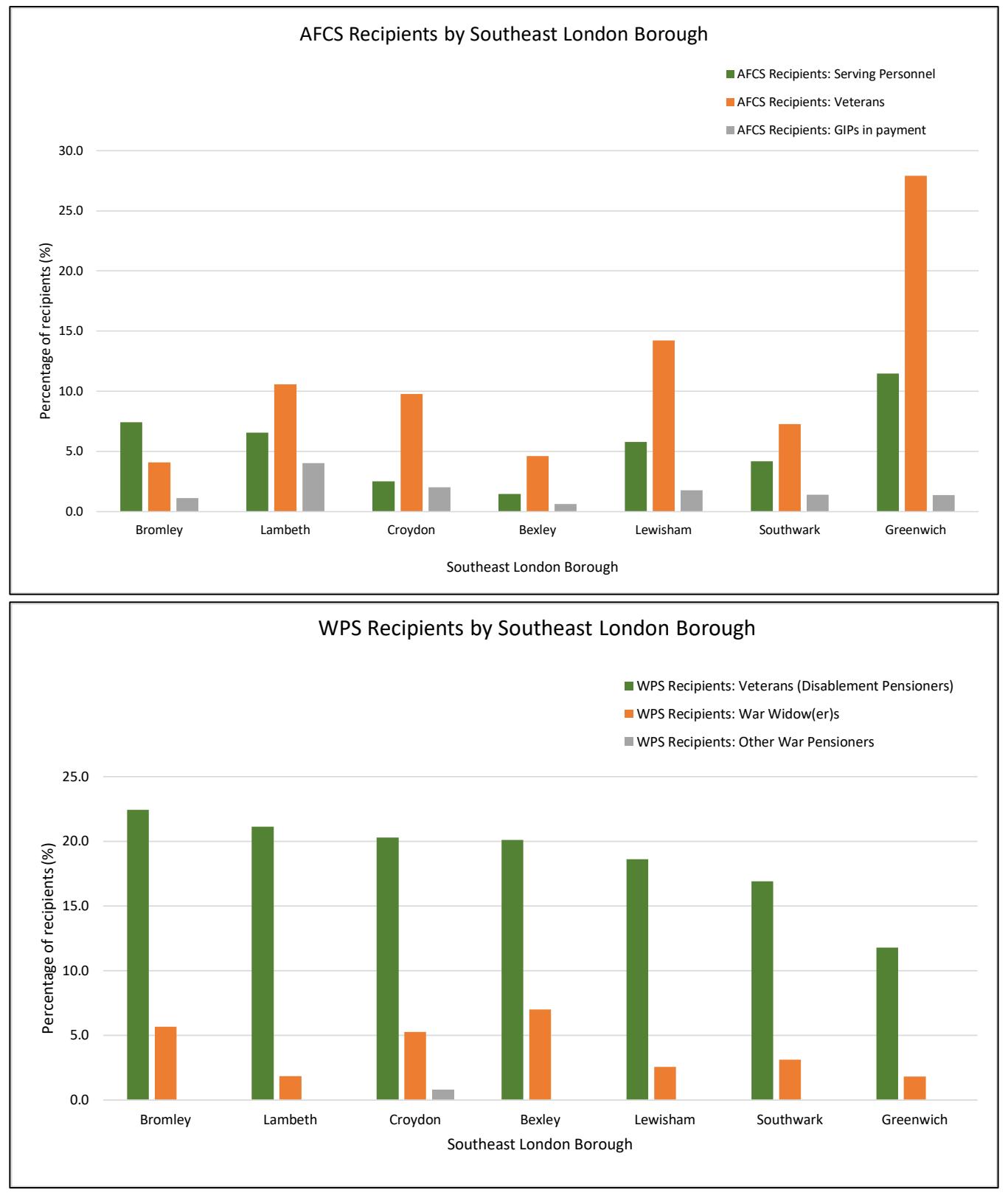


Source: UK Location of Armed Forces Pension and Compensation Recipients, 2023

Figure 25 shows the percentage distribution of AFCS recipients across three categories: Serving Personnel, Veterans, and Guaranteed Income Payments (GIPs). Out of all recipients, Bromley shows a moderate share of serving personnel (4.6%; 20 recipients), slightly below England (7.4%; 15,549 recipients) and London (6%; 548 recipients). For veterans, Bromley's proportion is 7.9%, which is more than double England's (4.1%) but lower than London's (12.4%), indicating a notable presence of post-2005 veterans. The percentage of GIPs in payment is consistent across all three areas, with Bromley and England both at approximately 1%, and London slightly higher at 2%, suggesting a relatively uniform distribution of seriously injured veterans receiving long-term income support.

Figure 25 also compares the percentage distribution of WPS recipients across three categories: veterans (Disablement Pensioners), War Widow(er)s, and Other War Pensioners in Bromley, London, and England. Bromley has the highest proportion, at 39.6%, compared to 17.1% in London and 17.6% in England. The borough also has a 5.7% proportion of war widow(er)s, which is higher than both London and England. These figures suggest Bromley has an older veteran population, as well as a notably higher concentration of older veterans with service-related disabilities from before 2005. Older veterans and dependants are likely receiving regular, long-term payments, which can provide a steady and predictable source of income. The high concentration of WPS recipients suggests that a substantial portion of Bromley's veteran community benefits from established financial support mechanisms, contributing to overall economic stability. The presence of war widow(er)s further implies that survivor benefits are playing a role in supporting families of deceased veterans.

**Figure 26: Percentage of AFCS and WPS recipients by Southeast London Borough, 2023**



**Source: UK Location of Armed Forces Pension and Compensation Recipients, 2023**

Figure 26 shows that Bromley has the highest percentage of WPS veterans (22.4%; 107 recipients) and has a notably high percentage of war widow(er)s (5.7%; 27 recipients). Bromley has a moderate share of serving personnel (7.4%), higher than most boroughs except Greenwich (11.5%), but is on the lower end for AFCS veterans (4.1%). Bromley's high proportion of WPS recipients, particularly veterans and war widow(er)s, suggests a significant population of long-term beneficiaries who are

likely receiving regular, stable payments. These pensions, awarded for service-related disablement or bereavement prior to 2005, often provide consistent financial support over many years. This could indicate a relatively stable income base for a segment of Bromley's veteran population, especially among older residents who may rely on these payments as a key part of their retirement income. The presence of war widow(er)s also points to households that may be receiving survivor benefits, further contributing to financial continuity.

However, Bromley's lower percentages of AFCS veterans (4.1%) and Guaranteed Income Payments (1.1%) suggest fewer recent or severe service-related injuries among its post-2005 veteran population. Compared to boroughs like Greenwich or Lewisham, which have much higher AFCS veteran shares, Bromley may have fewer residents receiving large lump sums or long-term income supplements tied to more recent conflicts or service. This could imply that while Bromley's veteran community benefits from stable, long-established pension flows, it may not be seeing the same level of newer, potentially higher-value compensation awards. Overall, this points to a veteran population with modest but steady financial support, rather than one experiencing significant recent inflows from compensation schemes.

## **Key Findings: Education, employment and financial profile**

### **Education**

- In 2021, 31.0% of working-age veterans in Bromley held a Level 4 qualification or higher (e.g. degree or professional qualification), above the England average (28.1%) but below London (37.0%).
- However, veterans in Bromley are nearly twice as likely to have no formal qualifications (24.5%) compared to the general population (13.5%), indicating a notable educational attainment gap and potential barriers to employment or training.
- The distribution across other qualification levels (Levels 1-3 and “Other”) was broadly consistent with national and regional trends.

### **Economic activity**

- 95% of Bromley veterans were in employment, surpassing London (89.7%) and England (93.9%).
- Unemployment was at 3.8%, which is below the London rate of 4.6% and slightly above England's 3.6%, suggesting that while Bromley veterans are generally well-engaged in employment, targeted support may be beneficial to address pockets of economic inactivity and promote broader workforce participation.
- Bromley veterans have a higher employment rate than the general population but are less likely to be engaged in education, indicating strong workforce integration but limited participation in formal learning or training.
- Bromley veterans not in employment are considerably more likely to have not worked in the last 12 months (87.8%) compared to the general population (64.1%), and far less likely to have worked recently.

### **Occupational profile**

- Compared to the general population, Bromley veterans were more likely to work in higher-skilled roles, including:
  - Managers, directors, and senior officials (20.5%)
  - Associate professional and technical roles (18.5%)
- Bromley veterans are less represented in professional occupations (20.9%) compared to 26.8% in the general population.
- Lower representation was seen in manual and frontline service roles, such as elementary occupations (6.2%) and sales/customer service (2.9%).

### **Pension and compensation**

- As of March 2023, Bromley had a moderate share of AFCS recipients who were serving personnel (4.6%), slightly below England (7.4%) and London (6%).
- Bromley's share of AFCS veterans was 7.9%, more than double England's 4.1% but lower than London's 12.4%, indicating a notable presence of post-2005 veterans.
- The percentage of GIPs was consistent across Bromley and England at around 1%, with London slightly higher at 2%.

### **WPS recipients**

- Bromley had the highest proportion of WPS recipients compared to London and England, with 39.6% of recipients being veterans with service-related disabilities from before 2005. It had a higher share of war widow(er)s (5.6%) compared to London and England, suggesting a significant older veteran population receiving long-term support.

### 3. Conclusions

#### 1. Demographic characteristics

- Bromley has one of the highest veteran populations in London (2.5% of residents aged 16+), despite not hosting active military units, likely influenced by the presence of 43 married quarters.
- UK veterans predominantly come from regular service backgrounds, with the British Army being the most common branch.
- Veterans are predominantly male and older, with the highest rates in the 85+ age groups. Younger age groups show lower representation, reflecting declining military participation in recent decades.
- Bromley has the highest number and proportion of veteran spouses and children living in the same household in Southeast London, with many adult children (aged 25+) still residing with veteran parents.
- Religious affiliation among veterans is predominantly Christian (69%), considerably higher than the general population (54%), reflecting the older and less religiously diverse demographic.

#### 2. Needs

- Most veterans report “Good” or “Fair” health, but around 750 (11%) individuals report “Bad” or “Very Bad” health, indicating a need for targeted health and wellbeing support.
- Veterans in Bromley are over twice as likely to report severe activity limitations due to disability (16.1%) compared to the general population (6.1%), highlighting a higher prevalence of long-term health conditions.
- Mental health service use is low despite Bromley having the highest veteran population density in Southeast London. Between 2021 and 2024, only 8-11 veterans accessed acute mental health services annually, and 20-25 accessed community mental health services.
- Veterans in Bromley are generally well-integrated into the workforce, with 95.0% of working-age veterans in employment, exceeding both London and England averages. However, a substantial 65.4% of all veterans are economically inactive, a figure notably higher than regional and national levels. This highlights a need for targeted support and re-engagement initiatives, particularly for older or health-affected veterans.
- While housing stability is generally high, reliance on the private rental sector may expose some veterans to affordability and tenure security challenges.
- The needs of younger veterans, particularly those who served post-2005, may differ and require tailored support.
- There is a need for a consistent process to capture data and success stories related to Armed Forces Covenant delivery, to support transparency and continuous improvement.

### **3. Existing services**

- Bromley supports its veteran population through nearby married quarters, reserve unit recruitment, and cadet forces, despite not hosting active military bases.
- Housing stability is high, with 60.5% of veterans owning their homes and a strong presence in housing association and private rental sectors.
- Healthcare is primarily delivered through the NHS, with some referrals to OXLEAS NHS Foundation Trust. There is a gap between the size of Bromley's veteran population and their engagement with local health and mental health services.
- Pension and compensation data show that Bromley has a moderate share of AFCS recipients and the highest proportion of WPS recipients and war widow(er)s in London and England.
- The borough's older veteran demographic may require increased support for age-related health conditions, mobility, and social inclusion.

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## 5. Glossary of terms

### **Adult Acute & Crisis (AAC)**

A mental health service providing urgent and short-term care for adults experiencing acute mental health crises.

### **Adult Community Mental Health (ACMH)**

Services that support adults with ongoing mental health needs in the community, focusing on recovery and long-term support.

### **Armed Forces Community (AFC)**

Includes serving personnel (regular and reserve), veterans, and their families.

### **Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS)**

A scheme that provides compensation for injury, illness or death caused by service in the UK Armed Forces.

### **British Armed Forces (BAF)-related patients**

Individuals who are currently serving or have served in the British Armed Forces and are receiving healthcare services.

### **Defence Medical Services (DMS)**

The organisation responsible for providing medical care to UK Armed Forces personnel.

### **Guaranteed Income Payments (GIPs)**

Regular payments made under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme to individuals with serious injuries or illnesses due to service.

### **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)**

A report that identifies the current and future health and wellbeing needs of a local population to inform planning and commissioning.

### **JSP 200 statistical disclosure**

A Ministry of Defence publication that outlines rules and guidance for the statistical disclosure of defence-related data.

### **London Borough of Bromley (LBB)**

A local authority area in Greater London, responsible for public services and governance in Bromley.

### **Ministry of Defence (MoD)**

The UK government department responsible for implementing defence policy and managing the Armed Forces.

### **Ministry of Defence's Compensation and Pension System (CAPS)**

A system used by the MoD to manage compensation and pension claims for service personnel and veterans.

### **War Pension Computer System (WPCS)**

A system used to administer war pensions for veterans injured or disabled due to service before 6 April 2005.

### **War Pension Scheme (WPS)**

A scheme providing pensions and allowances to veterans injured or disabled due to service before 6 April 2005.

## 6. Appendices

### 6.1 Appendix 1

#### Data sources:

**Table 3:** Shows mapping of planned JSNA Armed Forces Chapter sections against available data. **Amber** indicates where only England or UK data is available.

Population profile	Sub-sections	Data source (s)	Comments
Demographic	Ex-forces: total number, sex, age, legal partnership, religion, ethnicity and country of birth	Census 2021	Bromley data available
	Active forces	Government Annual Location Statistics 2023	
Family and housing	Household size and composition (spouse/partner and children/stepchildren, by age and sex)	Census 2021	England data only
	Type of accommodation (incl. heating information)	Census 2021	England data only (including homes/detention and prison/temporary accommodation. for homeless/other communal)
	Home ownership status (age, sex, ethnicity)	Census 2021	England data only
	Household deprivation measure (education, health & wellbeing, employment, accommodation)	Census 2021	England data only
	Local Authority accommodation	LBB service data	Bromley data available
	Armed forces children in schools	LBB service data	Bromley data available
	Challenges faced by Armed Forces Families	<a href="https://www.aru.ac.uk/veterans-and-families-institute">https://www.aru.ac.uk/veterans-and-families-institute</a> Intro to education attainment for service children: <a href="https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/effective-practice/children-from-military-families/">https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/effective-practice/children-from-military-families/</a>	Research or grey literature
Health and wellbeing	Self-reported health score general	Census 2021	Aggregated data only for Bromley (demographic breakdown at London level)
	Prevalence of physical health conditions	Census 2021 <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/impact-of-service-on-health-and-wellbeing-2019">Impact of service on health and wellbeing, 2019</a> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/veterans-universal-passport-a-pilot-of-a-health-and-social-care-record-for-uk-ex-service-personnel-2019">Veterans Universal Passport: a pilot of a health and social care record for UK ex-service personnel, 2019</a> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/royal-british-legion-report-2014">Royal British Legion Report, 2014</a>	Disability data for London (incl. demographics) UK only - No Bromley specific data is available from these reports

	Prevalence of mental health	<a href="#">Prevalence of MH disorders using PHC data, 2023</a> KCL Report on <a href="#">MH and Treatment needs, 2020</a> <a href="#">Royal British Legion Report, 2014</a>	Bromley data available  UK only - No Bromley specific data is available from these reports
		OXLEAS/Homeless health/Healthwatch	Bromley data available
	IPVA	<a href="#">KCL report on IPVA, 2022</a>	UK data only
	Spouse and family health/caring responsibilities	Census 2021	Spousal and child self-reported health, disability and providing unpaid care data for London (incl. demographics)
Employment and financial	Economic activity of UK armed forces veterans (employment status, highest qualification, industry and occupation)	Census 2021	England level data only
	Maps of financial hardship	<a href="#">Covenant fund Map of Need Project</a>	Raw data not available, only maps, and only at London level

### Data limitations:

- The level of detail available varies between datasets. While some data are disaggregated to the local authority level, others are only available at regional or national levels.
- The Census 2021 provides a valuable baseline for understanding the veteran population, but it does not capture all aspects of the AFC, such as currently serving personnel or reservists living in the borough.
- Administrative data from the MOD and NHS are subject to disclosure controls and may not reflect the full extent of service use or need.
- Some datasets rely on self-reporting, which may lead to under-identification of veterans, particularly among younger cohorts or those who do not self-identify as part of the AFC.

## 6.2 Appendix 2

### Definitions:

- **UK Armed Forces Veteran:** An individual who has served at least one day in HM Armed Forces (regular or reserve), or a Merchant Mariner who served in legally defined military operations. This excludes individuals currently serving, those who have only served in foreign armed forces, or those living outside England and Wales.
- **Usual Resident:** A person who, on Census Day (21 March 2021), was in the UK and had stayed or intended to stay for 12 months or more or had a permanent UK address and was temporarily outside the UK for less than 12 months.
- **Education Levels (Census 2021 Categories)**
  - **No Qualifications:** No formal academic or vocational qualifications.
  - **Level 1:** GCSEs (grades D-G), NVQ Level 1, or equivalent.
  - **Level 2:** GCSEs (grades A\*-C), NVQ Level 2, or equivalent.
  - **Level 3:** A-levels, NVQ Level 3, or equivalent.
  - **Level 4+:** Higher education qualifications such as HNC/HND, bachelor's degrees, postgraduate degrees, or professional qualifications.
  - **Other Qualifications:** Includes vocational, overseas, or apprenticeship qualifications not classified under Levels 1-4.
  - **Full-time student:** Individuals currently enrolled in full-time education.
- **Economic activity categories**
  - **Employed:** Includes full-time, part-time, and self-employed individuals.
  - **Unemployed:** Individuals actively seeking work and available to start.
  - **Economically Inactive:** Individuals not in employment and not seeking work, often due to retirement, disability, or caring responsibilities.
  - **Student (Employed):** Full-time students who are also employed.
  - **Student (Unemployed):** Full-time students actively seeking work.
  - **Never Worked:** Individuals who have never held paid employment.
  - **Worked in Last 12 Months:** Individuals not currently employed but who have worked within the past year.
- **Married quarters:** Housing provided by the Ministry of Defence for married service personnel and their families.
- **Service children:** Children of serving or former Armed Forces personnel, often eligible for additional support in schools.
- **Housing Tenure Types:**
  - Owned Outright: Property owned without a mortgage.
  - Owned with Mortgage/Shared Ownership: Property owned with financial obligations.
  - Private Rented: Housing rented from private landlords.
  - Social Rented: Housing provided by local authorities or housing associations.
  - Rent-free: Living without paying rent, often with family or friends.