

# [New mental fitness tool launched to help military enhance mental wellbeing](#)

[HeadFIT](#), designed specifically for the Defence community, provides 24/7 access to self-help tools that can enhance mood, drive and confidence, and help Defence people manage the stresses of everyday life.

The platform includes tools such as breathing exercises, body posture and relaxation techniques that have been designed for all defence personnel, whether they are new recruits, long-serving personnel, veterans, civilian staff or those in uniform. The techniques are designed so they can be easily integrated into their everyday lives.

HeadFIT has been developed in partnership with The Royal Foundation's Heads Together campaign, the Ministry of Defence, Kings College London, with clinical advice from Dr Vanessa Moulton, and has been spearheaded by The Duke of Sussex.

The Duke said:

HeadFIT has been almost three years in the making, and I am extremely grateful for everyone who has been on this journey with us. Everyone who has worked on it, to create what we have today, should be incredibly proud and excited for the impact it will have.

I've long believed the military community should lead the way for the rest of society. For too long we have been waiting for problems to arise and then reacting to them. HeadFIT is a proactive approach to mental fitness, focusing on our own potential to increase our performance, using proven methods in sport science.

This is about optimisation of self. This is about being the best you can be. This is about gaining an advantage, whether facing an opponent or overcoming a challenging situation. This is about building resilience that will match that of most world class athletes and prepare you for every day stress. To be HeadFIT, is to be at your peak performance.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Johnny Mercer said:

We train our armed forces to be both physically fit and mentally fit. And right now mental resilience has never been more important as our Defence community works tirelessly to support the UK's public services during the coronavirus pandemic.

HeadFIT will provide our people – serving and civilian – with the tools they need to maintain mental fitness throughout their career

and afterwards. By launching the site ahead of schedule, we are providing them with the support they deserve in these exceptional times.

Developed in partnership with Heads Together, HeadFIT has been designed with input from Defence personnel at every step.

HeadFIT's activities help its users take a proactive approach to their own mental wellbeing reflecting the way our armed forces are trained to maintain their physical fitness. The wide range of tools on offer can be included in day-to-day routines, creating positive mental health habits.

Each of the single Services and Civil Service have programmes and initiatives to support their mental health and fitness, HeadFIT is designed to support the messages in these existing programmes.

HeadFIT is available to everyone as an open source website but Defence staff in high-security environments can often struggle to see public websites so HeadFIT has also been made accessible on Ministry of Defence technology such as Defence Connect and DefNet.

Originally scheduled to launch in June, the platform is currently under evaluation by King's College London. The official launch has been brought forward to help Defence staff adapt to new challenges and changed working environments and the site will continue to be evaluated and adapted based on the feedback it receives.

Helen Helliwell Director Armed Forces People Policy and Defence Mental Health Champion says:

I am delighted to have worked in partnership with Heads Together on this project. HeadFit complements the single Service initiatives out there but given its accessibility the platform can also benefit the wider Defence community, including Defence civilians, veterans and family members. This absolutely plays in to our Defence People Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and it's aim to promote good mental health.

## **Background**

- to find out more about how HeadFIT can help improve mental fitness, visit the [HeadFIT website](#)
- Heads Together is a campaign seeking to change the national conversation on mental health. Championed by The Duke of Sussex and Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, Heads Together continues to be managed by The Royal Foundation of The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge (formally The Royal Foundation of The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and The Duke and Duchess of Sussex)
- HeadFIT is the result of the partnership that was first announced by The Duke of Sussex, in October 2017, when an agreement to kick start this

work was signed by The Royal Foundation and Ministry of Defence

- Kings College London are monitoring the website to track usage and monitor impact, in order to continually assess its effectiveness and maximise the resources
- the tools on the site have been clinically assessed by Dr Vanessa Moulton alongside the Ministry of Defence's occupational health and welfare team.