

[News story: Supporting veterans through membership of the VAPC](#)

Jonathan Jelley, Chairman of the Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee
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On 14 December 2017, the [Centre for Public Appointments](#) launched a new campaign to raise awareness of the benefits of being a public appointee.

The campaign aims to increase diversity on public boards but also to make a wider audience aware of the benefits of such appointments. The Cabinet Office published the [Public appointments diversity action plan](#) to coincide with the launch.

I was appointed as Chairman of the Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee in Eastern England by the Minister of State for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans in February 2015. With a long background in voluntarily supporting the oldest military charity SSAFA, taking on this role was a natural extension to the work I was already doing in supporting veterans and their families.

Since taking on the role the Eastern England VAPC have set out to change our way of working by establishing a clear plan of action and to seek new recruits with different backgrounds in order to execute it.

We are now playing an increasingly important and influential part in the work supporting our veterans and their families. We have provided leadership and direction, worked with Veterans UK in support of their work as the executive and representing what we discover on the ground to an array of stakeholders including the minister.

From a personal perspective, it has helped me to gain broader experience and to develop further skills but it has also allowed me to contribute my expertise and knowledge in support of veterans and to influence the decisions that affect them and their families.

This is why I was delighted to support the government's recent campaign to increase awareness of the work that can be done through membership of public bodies such as the VAPC.

[Jonathan Jelly MBE, East of England VAPC](#)

I encourage others to apply for these positions as they offer unique opportunities to broaden skills and experience as well as making meaningful contributions to society.