# UK launches digital Veteran Card to modernise support and test national digital identity plans



The UK government has launched a digital version of the HM Armed Forces Veteran Card, allowing nearly 1.8 million veterans to download and use the credential for in-person verification of their status. The digital Veteran Card, accessible via the GOV.UK One Login app, supports secure access through a PIN or native device biometrics. This initiative reflects the government’s broader ambition to modernise identity verification and provide veterans with easier access to various services and discounts, including healthcare, housing support, career assistance, and travel discounts.

The digital card displays essential details such as the veteran’s name, photo, service history, and date of birth, ensuring reliable verification. However, the current version has limitations: it cannot yet be used for domestic air travel or for obtaining a Veteran Rail Card. Full integration with these services and the ability to perform end-to-end programmatic verification are expected to roll out over the next year, which will unlock wider uses both in physical and online environments. According to the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, acceptance of the digital ID will gradually increase as organisations update their systems and provide necessary staff training.

This launch follows earlier efforts to simplify veterans’ access to support. Previously, veterans who left the Armed Forces before December 2018 could verify their status online and receive a physical Veteran Card by post, an initiative intended to streamline access to assistance services. The new digital card represents a further step towards seamless, flexible service delivery by enabling veterans to carry their credentials securely on smartphones. The government claims it is the first credential stored within the government-issued digital wallet and plans to follow this with mobile driver’s licenses in due course.

On a strategic level, the digital Veteran Card also serves as a testbed for broader national digital identity ambitions. Digital Government Minister Ian Murray has highlighted the card’s availability to approximately 300,000 veterans as a useful case study demonstrating the operational viability of mobile digital credentials. This accompanies an ongoing government outreach campaign aimed at fostering public trust and support for a proposed national digital identity scheme, which has faced scepticism in the court of public opinion. Although system design includes a federated architecture to prevent a single point of failure and guarantees that NHS data will not be stored on digital IDs, concerns about costs and privacy remain subjects of parliamentary discussion.

IBM Consulting has recently addressed the challenge of building public trust — a “privacy paradox” where technology can either empower or control citizens. Experts suggest grounding identity frameworks on trusted platforms, like GOV.UK, applying open standards, giving citizens control over their data, and embedding security from the start. Yet the UK experience to date shows that familiarity with GOV.UK alone is insufficient to allay public wariness. The government’s digital ID proposals currently lack a fully agreed consensus on the country’s needs and how to address them, suggesting that future efforts will require not only technical innovation but also deeper engagement with social and political concerns.

Veterans wishing to use the digital card can follow detailed guidance provided by the government, which includes steps for downloading the One Login app, verifying their identity, and adding the digital Veteran Card for convenient access. The Government Digital Service continues to explore ways to expand the card’s functionality over time, aiming to support enhanced online transactions and automated digital identity verification, offering veterans more choice and flexibility in how they prove their status and access services.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.biometricupdate.com/202510/uk-launches-digital-id-for-veterans-with-hopes-of-allaying-public-fears), [[2]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/digital-version-of-veteran-card-launched-for-quicker-and-easier-access-to-support), [[6]](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/adding-your-veteran-card-to-the-govuk-one-login-app)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.biometricupdate.com/202510/uk-launches-digital-id-for-veterans-with-hopes-of-allaying-public-fears), [[4]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/digital-veteran-card-to-make-accessing-support-even-easier-for-ex-service-personnel), [[7]](https://gds.blog.gov.uk/2025/10/17/service-meets-innovation-the-digital-veteran-card-is-here/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/veterans-card-rolled-out-to-streamline-access-to-services), [[5]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hm-armed-forces-veteran-cards-will-officially-launch-in-the-new-year-following-a-successful-assessment-from-the-central-digital-and-data-office), [[1]](https://www.biometricupdate.com/202510/uk-launches-digital-id-for-veterans-with-hopes-of-allaying-public-fears)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.biometricupdate.com/202510/uk-launches-digital-id-for-veterans-with-hopes-of-allaying-public-fears), [[7]](https://gds.blog.gov.uk/2025/10/17/service-meets-innovation-the-digital-veteran-card-is-here/), [[1]](https://www.biometricupdate.com/202510/uk-launches-digital-id-for-veterans-with-hopes-of-allaying-public-fears)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.biometricupdate.com/202510/uk-launches-digital-id-for-veterans-with-hopes-of-allaying-public-fears), [[7]](https://gds.blog.gov.uk/2025/10/17/service-meets-innovation-the-digital-veteran-card-is-here/), [[1]](https://www.biometricupdate.com/202510/uk-launches-digital-id-for-veterans-with-hopes-of-allaying-public-fears)
* Paragraph 6 – [[6]](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/adding-your-veteran-card-to-the-govuk-one-login-app), [[7]](https://gds.blog.gov.uk/2025/10/17/service-meets-innovation-the-digital-veteran-card-is-here/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.biometricupdate.com/202510/uk-launches-digital-id-for-veterans-with-hopes-of-allaying-public-fears> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/digital-version-of-veteran-card-launched-for-quicker-and-easier-access-to-support> - The UK government has launched a digital version of the HM Armed Forces Veteran Card, enabling veterans to apply for and download the card via the GOV.UK One Login app. This initiative aims to provide nearly 2 million veterans with quicker and easier access to services and discounts, including healthcare, housing support, and career assistance. The digital card displays essential information such as the veteran's name, photo, service details, and date of birth, ensuring secure and convenient verification of veteran status.
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/veterans-card-rolled-out-to-streamline-access-to-services> - The UK Ministry of Defence has introduced the HM Armed Forces Veteran Card, allowing veterans who left the Armed Forces before December 2018 to verify their veteran status online and receive a physical card by post. This initiative aims to streamline access to support services for thousands of veterans, confirming their status and simplifying the process of obtaining assistance.
4. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/digital-veteran-card-to-make-accessing-support-even-easier-for-ex-service-personnel> - The UK government has announced plans to introduce a digital Veteran Card, enabling former service personnel to prove their veteran status more easily and access support services more swiftly. The digital card will be available for download on smartphones, providing a convenient way for veterans to access essential services and benefits, including housing support, employment assistance, and discounts on public transport.
5. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hm-armed-forces-veteran-cards-will-officially-launch-in-the-new-year-following-a-successful-assessment-from-the-central-digital-and-data-office> - The UK Ministry of Defence and the Office for Veterans' Affairs have been working together to develop a new digital service that allows veterans who left the Armed Forces before December 2018 to verify their veteran status and receive a Veteran Card by post. The service is set to officially launch by the end of January 2024, following a successful assessment from the Central Digital and Data Office.
6. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/adding-your-veteran-card-to-the-govuk-one-login-app> - This guidance provides step-by-step instructions on how to add the HM Armed Forces Veteran Card to the GOV.UK One Login app. It includes details on downloading the app, verifying identity, and adding the digital card to a smartphone, ensuring veterans can access their digital credentials securely and conveniently.
7. <https://gds.blog.gov.uk/2025/10/17/service-meets-innovation-the-digital-veteran-card-is-here/> - The Government Digital Service has introduced the digital Veteran Card, allowing veterans to verify their status from their smartphones. This initiative aims to provide greater flexibility and choice in accessing services, with plans to expand its functionality over time to include online transactions and enhance in-person verification through automated digital checks.