Armed Forces Charities in the Criminal Justice System

2019

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Foreword

On behalf of the *Cobseo Criminal Justice Cluster*, I welcome this report, *Focus On: Armed Forces Charities in the Criminal Justice System* by the Directory of Social Change (DSC), funded by the Forces in Mind Trust (FiMT), which provides insight into the delivery of support to veterans in the criminal justice system.

The report shows that a very limited number of military charities provide support to veterans in the criminal justice system, with just 31 or 1.6% of all military charities providing this kind of assistance. The report highlights that the combined work of these charities supports at least 3,200 veterans each year - far less than for other topics of charitable provision. DSC's research also shows that because of the small number of charities delivering support, work in this area accounts for a fraction of the charitable expenditure on other areas of support, with less overall committed to veterans in the criminal justice system than to mental or physical health issues or homeless or unemployed assistance.

Through our work in the *Cobseo Criminal Justice System Cluster*, we know that whether they are under the supervision of the police, probation service or are in prison, veterans in the criminal justice system often have chaotic lives and require support across multiple areas. Veterans can reach a point in their lives when they feel that there is no way out for them and so they lose hope. As well as the veterans themselves, the families of veterans frequently bear the brunt of their partners' offences, either directly as victims, or indirectly because such veterans cannot contribute to a stable home.

Through the support of a military charities that understand life in the armed forces, the impact that active service in a conflict can have, the challenges faced in the transition to civilian life and the barriers to employment, many veterans who have become offenders can move on. Having the support of a charity that knows what they have been through and takes an interest in them, can give veterans the strength they need to turn their lives around.

As Co-Chair of the *Cobseo Criminal Justice Cluster,* I feel that this report highlighting support shows that although a small number of charities are delivering across multiple areas of the criminal justice system, more needs to be done to understand the scale of need, and to encourage opportunities to reach and assist those veterans and families who need us.

Chloe Mackay

Chief Operating Officer, RFEA The Forces Employment Charity
Co-Chair, Cobseo Criminal Justice Cluster

About the authors

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Anthony joined DSC in 2017 as a Researcher on DSC's Armed Forces Charities research project. Along with undertaking research and writing reports such as *Focus On: Armed Forces Charities' Mental Health Provision* (2017), Anthony maintains the project's online database of armed forces charities.

Prior to joining DSC, Anthony volunteered as a high-school Classroom Assistant and also as a member of the Merseyside Police Volunteer Cadet Scheme.

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Stuart is the Research Manager for DSC's Armed Forces Charities research project. Since joining DSC in 2015, Stuart has researched armed forces charities, producing reports including *Focus On: Armed Forces Charities' Mental Health Provision* (2017), *Sector Insight: Armed Forces Charities in Scotland* (2016) and *Cobseo Members' Survey* (2015).

Before joining DSC, Stuart held an academic post in public health research, working on projects in partnership with the World Health Organization, Alcohol Research UK and the NHS. Stuart's work focused on violence, traumatic injury and alcohol consumption.

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RHIANNON DOHERTY

Rhiannon is a Senior Researcher on DSC's Armed Forces Charities research project. She has led on four *Focus On: Armed Forces Charities* reports since joining DSC in 2017 and has presented this work at several research conferences.

Rhiannon holds a BA (Hons) in English Literature and Communications. She also holds an MA in Politics and Mass Media from the University of Liverpool.

Before joining DSC, Rhiannon volunteered for a range of charities including NDCS and Oxfam.

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Acknowledgements

About the Directory of Social Change

The Directory of Social Change (DSC) has a vision of an independent voluntary sector at the heart of social change. We believe that the activities of independent charities, voluntary organisations and community groups are fundamental to achieving social change. We exist to support these organisations in achieving their goals.

We do this by:

- providing practical tools that organisations and activists need, including online and printed publications, training courses and conferences on a huge range of topics;
- acting as a 'concerned citizen' in public policy debates, often on behalf of smaller charities, voluntary organisations and community groups;
- leading campaigns and stimulating debate on key policy issues that affect those groups;
- carrying out research and providing information to influence policymakers, as well as offering bespoke research for the voluntary sector.

Since 2014, DSC has been commissioned by the Forces in Mind Trust (FiMT) to produce research to illuminate the work of the armed forces charity sector. Now in its fifth year, the project has grown to include two *Sector Insight* reports (2014, 2016) and a searchable online database of armed forces charities, armedforcescharities.org.uk, which exists as a free resource for members of the public.

DSC's *Focus On* reports are intended as short, easily digestible reports on individual areas of support. They are intended to inform those who work within the charity sector, policymakers, media professionals and members of the public interested in the work of armed forces charities. DSC delivered five *Focus On* reports across 2017, 2018 and 2019 on the topics of mental health, education and employment, physical health, housing, and sector trends. This sixth report focuses on armed forces charities working in the criminal justice system.

For details of all our activities, and to order publications and book courses, go to www.dsc.org.uk, call 020 7697 4200 or email cs@dsc.org.uk.

For details of our research, go to www.dsc.org.uk/research or email research@dsc.org.uk.

For more information on DSC's Armed Forces Charities project, or to download the reports, visit www.armedforcescharities.org.uk.

Executive summary

The majority of Service personnel make a successful transition to civilian life when their military service ends. For some, the transition from Service to civilian life is challenging and a relatively small number of individuals find themselves in contact with the criminal justice system. This report explores the support available from armed forces charities for such individuals and their families.

FiMT has projected the annual cost of 'poor transition' in 2020 from criminal justice issues to be in the region of £4.3 million (£4.0 million in prison costs and £0.3 million in criminal offence costs) (FiMT, 2017).

The purpose of this report is to hold up an objective mirror to the armed forces charity sector and, for the first time, provide an account of the criminal justice support offered by such charities. To that end DSC devised the following research questions:

■ How many armed forces charities support individuals and their families in the criminal justice system?
■ How is criminal justice support delivered to beneficiaries?
■ What examples of collaboration, evaluation and challenges exist?

This report is intended as a resource for those who work in the armed forces charity sector, along with policymakers, the media, government bodies and interested members of the public.

KEY FINDINGS

Thirty-one armed forces charities deliver criminal justice support

The armed forces charity sector often comes under fire for containing 'too many' charities (Haynes, 2017). Yet, DSC's *Focus On* reports have shown that when the sector is analysed by topic of support, a relatively small number of charities are found to be supporting large numbers of beneficiaries across each area of provision.

The 31 charities represented in this report equate to around 1.6% of all UK armed forces charities (N=1,888) (Doherty et al., 2019). When they were analysed further, DSC found small cohorts of charities delivering specifically directed support at differing stages of the criminal justice system, both within and outside the prison system.

This is significantly less than the number of charities delivering support for physical health (N=121), education and employment (N=78), housing (N=78), and mental health (N=76).

Armed forces charities delivered criminal justice support to at least 3,200 beneficiaries within the past year

This is less than the number of beneficiaries accessing mental health support (10,000), housing support (12,000), and education and employment support (38,000), and significantly less than the number accessing physical health support (250,000) from charities.[1] It should be noted that the figure of 3,200 represents only the number of beneficiaries accessing charitable support, rather than reflecting the overall need, which is potentially far higher.

This beneficiary figure is likely to be indicative of the relatively small number of charities delivering this support, combined with potential difficulties for charities in accessing beneficiaries and delivering services.

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[1] According to previous research conducted by DSC (Cole et al., 2017; Doherty et al., 2017; Doherty et al., 2018a; Doherty et al., 2018b).

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Armed forces charities spent at least £4.5 million on criminal justice support within the past financial year

This was far less than the amount dedicated to education and employment support (£26 million), mental health support (£28 million), housing support (£40 million), and physical health support (£103 million) by armed forces charities.[2] However, it is also indicative of the comparatively small number of charities delivering criminal justice related support.

Charities provide a range of services to individuals in the criminal justice system

At each stage of the criminal justice system, armed forces charities provide a range of services. From support while individuals are in police custody, to support while they are serving prison sentences, along with assistance following their release from prison. The most common support provided was education and employment, which was delivered by over half (51.6%) of charities featured in this report.

Criminal justice provision extends beyond supporting ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system

Armed forces charities also provide support to the family members of individuals in the criminal justice system, with close to two-fifths (38.7%) of charities provided such support. A quarter (25.8%) of charities providing support for family members delivered finance and debt support, with over one-tenth (16.1%) providing peer support.

Relatively few charities deliver direct support to ex-Service personnel in prison

DSC found that eight charities currently provide support in prisons, covering a total of 36 prisons in England and Wales, 15 prisons in Scotland and three prisons in Northern Ireland. Support delivered in prisons includes education and employment support, peer support and mental health support. Demand for charities to deliver services directly in prison may be low, as existing statistics suggest that ex-Service personnel make up only 3.6% of the prison population (MOJ, 2018). There are also more challenges for charities to overcome in terms of access to prisons, or beneficiaries being unable to access non prison-based support from charities.

Collaboration is key – armed forces charities frequently work together but are less likely to partner with statutory organisations

DSC undertook a survey of charities that provide criminal justice support. In total, 15 charities (93.8% of survey respondents) said that they experienced benefits of partnership. Unsurprisingly, armed forces charities are significantly more likely to partner with fellow armed forces charities than with non-Service-related charities (84.4% versus 53.1%).

In terms of wider partnerships, DSC found that two-fifths of charities work with HM Prison Service (43.8%) and the National Probation Service (43.8%), but few partnered with social services (18.8%) or Liaison and Diversion teams at the police custody stage (15.6%).

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[2] According to previous research conducted by DSC (Cole et al., 2017; Doherty et al., 2017; Doherty et al., 2018a; Doherty et al., 2018b).

RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Foster collaboration

Collaboration emerged as a key theme in this report, as 90.6% of all charities undertook some form of collaboration and survey respondents frequently reported the benefits of working in collaboration.

The case studies in this report featuring the Cobseo Veterans in the Criminal Justice System Cluster, and Project Nova, display notable examples of cross-sector collaboration. However, partnerships with other criminal justice support organisations, such as social services and Liaison and Diversion services, were less common (18.8% and 15.6% respectively).

By developing more collaboration with the wider criminal justice sector, armed forces charities, mainstream charities and statutory bodies could mutually benefit from sharing resources, knowledge and expertise. Cobseo's Veterans in the Criminal Justice System Cluster is an excellent example of such collaboration in practice.

More research to measure the need

More comprehensive figures on the number of ex-Service personnel in various stages of the criminal justice system are needed. Studies on the number of ex-Service personnel entering police custody, serving community sentences or under probation orders, would help determine the size of the ex-Service population in the criminal justice system. Additionally, this data would help charities to direct their services to meet the needs of individuals and their families at the different stages of the criminal justice system.

Explore wider provision

This report focuses exclusively on organisations which meet DSC's definition of an armed forces charity (for a definition see page xiv). However, as is acknowledged in this report, many mainstream charities, such as CAIS Limited, Catch22, Sacro and Venture Trust, now operate specific programmes for ex-Service personnel and their families.

Although they lie outside the remit of this report, such charities undeniably provide valuable support for ex-Service personnel and their families. Exploring the extent to which mainstream charities support the armed forces community and the specific support they provide are worthy topics of further research.

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Introduction

CONTEXT

Challenges in assessing the ex-Service prisoner population

National newspapers often contain reports about the number of ex-Service personnel serving prison sentences, which may give the impression that this group is over-represented in the prison population. These reports cite figures such as 4,000 ex-Service personnel serving sentences (Rayment, 2018) and 2,500 ex-Service personnel jailed in 2016 alone (Watt, 2017), which may also give the impression of a causal link between Service and criminality. However, research has generally found that the vast majority of those who serve in the armed forces return to civilian life without issue and are in fact less likely than their civilian counterparts to commit criminal offences (Phillips, 2014).

Since 2015, as part of the Basic Custody Screening Tool (BCST), individuals entering prisons in England and Wales have been asked whether they have previously served in the armed forces. However, the wording of the question *'Have you been a member of the armed services?'* captures those who report serving in other countries' armed service organisations alongside those who served either as a regular or a reservist in the UK armed forces (MOJ, 2018). According to the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), when foreign nationals were accounted for, the total number of British ex-Service personnel in prison in 2018 stood at 1,832, which represented 3.6% of the prison population who had undertaken the BCST (MOJ, 2018).

Similarly, individuals entering Scottish prisons are asked whether they are ex-Service personnel. According to recent statistics, 255 prisoners had disclosed their veteran status (Scottish parliament, 2019). This represents 3.1% of the total Scottish prison population.[3] Currently, Northern Ireland has no formal processes established to collect data on the number of ex-Service personnel entering the criminal justice system (Armour et al., 2017).

By combining recent figures from both the MOJ and the Scottish government, a figure of approximately 2,100 ex-Service personnel currently serving prison sentences across England, Wales and Scotland is produced (MOJ, 2018; Scottish parliament, 2019).

Research indicates that ex-Service personnel in prisons may be reluctant to identify themselves, due to potential stigma, shame or embarrassment, or not wishing to associate their military career with criminality (Cooper et al., 2018a). Additionally, ex-Service personnel may be reluctant to self-identify for fear of reprisal from other prisoners, especially in relation to a trend of Islamic radicalisation among the prison population, which carries a risk of violence towards former Service personnel (Phillips, 2014). In addition, research from the Howard League found that many ex-Service personnel in prison fail to see themselves as 'veterans' and feel the term is applicable to others but not to them (Howard League, 2011; see also HM Inspectorate of Prisons, 2014). Therefore, the reported number of ex-Service personnel in prison may be under-representative of the actual ex-Service prisoner population.

A recent bulletin report for the Scottish Prison Service found that 8% (N=248) of Scottish prisoners who participated in a survey on prison life identified themselves as being a veteran (Broderick, 2018). The survey gained a 46% completion rate, so was far from comprehensive; however, this illustrates difficulties in reliably measuring the prison population through the means of a survey.

There is a shortage of data on the number of ex-Service personnel coming into contact with the wider criminal justice system. Research to date, has mainly focused on the number of ex-Service personnel in prison, as at this stage of the criminal justice system, attention is focused on identifying ex-Service personnel in order to address their needs (Howard League, 2011). Attention may therefore be drawn away from research to determine the number of ex-Service personnel who have been arrested, serving a community sentence or are under a probation order.

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[3] As of 8 March 2019, the Scottish prison population stood at 8,057 (Scottish Prison Service, 2019)

Reasons why ex-Service personnel find themselves in the criminal justice system

There is often a long delay between discharge from the armed forces and custody for individuals who offend, making it difficult to form any causal link between Service (or what happened in the period after discharge) and imprisonment (Cooper et al., 2018a; Howard League, 2011).

As part of his review, into *Former Members of the Armed Forces and the Criminal Justice System*, Stephen Phillips QC stated that the reasons for ex-Service personnel finding themselves in the prison system needed to be properly identified, so that support could be improved (Phillips, 2014). His recommendations proposed that at every stage of interaction between an offender and a professional within the criminal justice system, information should be captured and recorded to track whether that offender formerly served in the armed forces (Phillips, 2014).

There are multiple reasons why ex-Service personnel enter the criminal justice system, and these reasons mirror those found in the general population. Such reasons include; low socio-economic circumstances, poor educational attainment, having experienced or witnessed trauma at some point in their lives, experiencing periods in care, alcohol abuse, social exclusion and financial problems (Howard League, 2011; MacManus et al., 2013; The Royal British Legion, 2014). However, research has also found that some ex-Service personnel have a history of criminal behaviour prior to joining the military (Howard League, 2011). In these cases, an individual's military service acts as a 'hiatus', preventing offending that otherwise might have occurred (Cooper et al., 2018a).

Government statistics show that that ex-Service personnel are more likely to commit a violent or sexual offence than the general public (Cooper et al., 2018a). Statistics suggest that 32.9% of ex-Service personnel in prison are serving sentences categorised as 'violence against the person', compared to 28.6% of the civilian prison population (Howard League, 2011). Figures also show that approximately 25% of ex-Service personnel in prison are serving sentences for sexual offences, compared to 11% of the civilian prison population (Howard League, 2011). The reported figure of 32.9% of ex-Service personnel serving sentences for 'violence against the person', includes offences ranging from assault to murder as part of its categorisation (DASA, 2010a). Therefore, as 'violence against the person' offences are not broken down into sub-groups, little understanding can be gained about the types of offences committed (Royal British Legion, 2011).

Research by King's College London found that while a crude positive association between veteran status and sex offending still occurred, that after adjusting for socio-demographic differences, such as age, ethnicity and employment status, there is a reduced rate of sexual offences in the ex-Service personnel population, compared to the civilian population in the criminal justice system (Short et al., 2018). Specifically, the research found that being over 60 years old, alongside being unemployed or on sickness or disability benefit were associated with sex offending with the veteran sample (Short et al., 2018).

Support for ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system

Across the UK, there are multiple schemes to help ex-Service personnel within the criminal justice system. One such initiative is the Veterans in Custody Support Scheme (VICS). The aim of the VICS is to identify offenders who have served at the earliest possible opportunity, with identification taking place either at reception into custody or by the resettlement team in prison (Phillips, 2014). The VICS is not universally established across the prison system as the scheme is not mandatory for prisons to adopt and receives no designated funding (Cooper et al., 2018a). Therefore, the VICS is heavily dependent on the work of prison officers who volunteer their services to the VICS (Cooper et al., 2018a). Once ex-Service personnel have been identified, the scheme refers them to a community ex-Service organisation for resettlement assistance (Phillips, 2014).

The VICS works alongside the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) in prisons to facilitate access to resettlement resources available to ex-Service offenders, with some VICSs also providing support networks and enabling peer support within the custodial setting (Phillips, 2014). Additionally, as part of the VICS, individuals are given a recognised point of contact or 'Veterans in Custody Support Officer' (VICSO). VICSOs act as a liaison between

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offender supervisors[4] and Service charities, such as Scottish Veterans Residences (SVR), contributing to sentence planning and resettlement arrangements with local probation officers (Phillips, 2014).

The Scottish Prison Service have established the use of VICSO champions, who operate in each Scottish prison, to assist ex-Service personnel who receive a custodial sentence. In 2010, the Scottish Veterans Prison In-Reach Group was established to examine the welfare needs of ex-Service personnel in custody. Furthermore, each of Scotland's 13 local policing divisions (which work alongside the Custody Division) has a 'Veterans Champion', who is responsible for promoting the needs of ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system locally. This network of champions meets regularly to share knowledge and best practice with relevant partner agencies to ensure strong awareness of national and local veteran support services (Scottish government, 2017).

The statutory and voluntary sector has come together in Scotland to establish Police Scotland's Armed Services Advice Project (ASAP), a system that enables officers to refer individuals in need to relevant support groups through a single point of contact. The ASAP service is an example of collaboration between charitable and statutory services, including Police Scotland, Poppyscotland and Citizens Advice Scotland, and has seen over 850 referrals made since its establishment (Scottish government, 2017).

In Wales, ex-Service personnel are identified as a priority group through the All Wales Criminal Justice Board's Reducing Reoffending Strategy, which was established in March 2014 (Cooper et al., 2018a). Key objectives of the strategy include proper identification of ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system; ensuring ex-Service personnel are signposted to appropriate rehabilitation and resettlement services; and ensuring collaborative working between organisations supporting ex-Service personnel (Kirk et al., 2014). Furthermore, through its *Veteran Informed Prisons* document (Welsh government, 2013), the Welsh government provided a guide to the formal identification and verification of ex-Service personnel who find themselves in prison (Cooper et al., 2018a).

Another notable scheme is the Liaison and Diversion service, which operates exclusively across England with funding from NHS England. Liaison and Diversion services identify, assess and refer offenders with vulnerabilities such as mental health problems, learning difficulties and substance misuse issues. Liaison and Diversion services engage with individuals as they first enter the criminal justice system at the police custody stage, in order to support individuals through the appropriate pathways. Although the services are used by all offenders, the procedure requires all Liaison and Diversion schemes to identify ex-Service personnel before developing specific pathways for them (Phillips, 2014). Evidence from trial areas suggests that these schemes have developed and refined links with local service providers focusing on ex-Service personnel (Phillips, 2014).

There is a lack of formal and statutory support for ex-Service personnel in Northern Ireland, which could be explained by the political situation in the country and the fact that ex-Service personnel are not seen as a vulnerable group within the prison and probation systems there (Armour et al., 2017; Cooper et al., 2018b).

FOCUS OF THE REPORT

This report aims to illuminate a subsection of the armed forces charity sector that provides support for ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system.

This is the first report to provide an overview and analysis of armed forces charities that help members of the armed forces community who have come into contact with the criminal justice system. It explores the number of charities providing support, the types of services provided to beneficiaries and the resources allocated to delivering such support. The report also presents data on charities' expenditure and numbers of beneficiaries receiving support, along with insights into collaboration, evaluation and challenges faced by charities.

There are many contextual factors underpinning the criminal justice needs of the armed forces community which are beyond the scope of this report to investigate. Nevertheless, some key background information is outlined in the

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[4] Since the establishment of the offender management system, some prison officers have been referred to as 'offender supervisors' (UK parliament, 2009).

previous section for context. Additionally, the report does not make comments or value judgements about the effectiveness of the current provision being made by charities.

Undoubtedly, members of the armed forces community may seek support for criminal justice matters elsewhere, for instance from the wider charity sector. However, this report focuses exclusively on those charities whose main purpose is to serve the armed forces community and which therefore meet DSC's definition of an armed forces charity, as outlined below.

TERMINOLOGY

For the purpose of this report, and in keeping with the language used since DSC's first *Sector Insight* report (Pozo and Walker, 2014), the term 'ex-Service personnel' refers to any person who has served in the UK armed forces (for at least one day). The term 'serving personnel' refers to individuals who are currently employed in the armed forces.

Throughout these reports, the term 'spouses/partners' refers to the partners of serving personnel and ex-Service personnel and includes divorced or separated spouses as well as widows and widowers. The term 'dependants' refers to the children of serving and ex-Service personnel. When referring to all of the above (ex-Service personnel, serving personnel and their families), the term 'armed forces community' is employed.

In the context of this report, the phrase 'criminal justice support' is defined as any activity which helps members of the armed forces community who have been in contact with the criminal justice system. Additionally, the term 'offender' refers to an individual who has committed a crime (Law and Martin, 2009).

Throughout this report, quotes are used for illustrative purposes only and the views expressed by the respondents are not endorsed by DSC.

DSC'S CLASSIFICATION OF ARMED FORCES CHARITIES

This report follows the definition of an armed forces charity in DSC's 2016 *Sector Insight* report:

> *'Charities that are established specifically to support past and present members of the armed forces and their families (the armed forces community). In this context, an armed forces charity must be able to apply this definition to their beneficiaries.'*

(Cole and Traynor, 2016, p. 24)

DSC's 2014 *Sector Insight: UK Armed Forces Charities* provided the first comprehensive overview of how many armed forces charities were operating in the UK (Pozo and Walker, 2014). A total of 1,737 armed forces charities, excluding cadet organisations, which were not deemed to directly support the armed forces community), were discovered.

DSC's 2019 report *Focus On: Armed Forces Charities – Sector Trends,* identified 1,888 forces charities operating as of July 2018 (Doherty et al., 2019). On face value, it could appear that the sector has grown by 151 charities over the previous four years. However, the inclusion of some 150 new charities does not indicate real-term sector growth but can instead be explained by DSC's evolving methodology.

Refined search methods and improvements to the accessibility of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) and Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI) data enabled researchers to find 194 new charities, which operated before or during 2014 but were previously undiscovered during *Sector Insight* (2014) data collection. DSC also updated and expanded upon the keyword list used in DSC's 2014 *Sector Insight* report to undertake the most accurate search of armed forces charities to date. The initial list of 15 keywords used in searches to compile the 2014 *Sector Insight* report was extended to incorporate 22 new terms.

Other charities do, of course, deliver support for the armed forces community. Many mainstream (not specific to the armed forces) charities now operate veteran-specific programmes, including notable examples such as CAIS Limited, Catch22, Sacro and Venture Trust. There is also increasing evidence of armed forces charities partnering with

mainstream charities to deliver support, as highlighted in case study 5, on Cobseo Veterans in the Criminal Justice System Cluster, on page 23.

Such charities provide valuable support to the ex-Service community and often work alongside armed forces charities, sharing their expertise and resources. Nevertheless, they do not meet DSC's definition of an armed forces charity as established at the outset of this project, given that their beneficiary group and charitable purpose extend beyond supporting the armed forces community. As such, they are not featured in this report. Although they fall outside the remit of this project, analysis of the support delivered by mainstream charities would be an interesting and useful topic for further research.

METHODOLOGY

DSC maintains a database containing information on approximately 1,888 armed forces charities, of which roughly 1,575 are registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (CCEW). A further 251 charities included in the database are registered in Scotland with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), with an additional 40 charities being cross-border charities, which are registered with both CCEW and OSCR. Finally, 22 charities are registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (CCNI).

In order to identify charities making provision for criminal justice support, DSC undertook a systematic search of DSC's own database along with the CCEW, OSCR and CCNI databases. To be included in this report, charities were required to meet specific eligibility criteria, including specifying that criminal justice support was either their sole or one of their key charitable objects.

Although many charities' objects broadly refer to criminal justice support, DSC also looked for specific evidence of this beyond their official charitable objects and regulator classifications. This included charities making specific reference to programmes and services addressing issues related to criminal justice support; charities funding other organisations to deliver these services on their behalf; and charities directly supporting partners to meet such needs.

In April 2019, DSC sent email requests to 31 charities inviting them to take part in a survey. This was followed up by a postal invitation. To bolster the collection of survey data, follow-up phone calls were conducted with charities which had been unresponsive to survey invitations. As a result, 51.6% of the 31 charities identified (N=16 charities) responded to the survey.

Researchers collected data on the remaining 48.4% of charities which did not respond to the survey (N=15 charities). Relevant data was gathered from a wide range of sources, including charity regulator information, charities' websites, annual accounts, impact reports and direct correspondence with charity representatives where possible. The 31 charities included in this research represent 1.6% of the approximate total number of UK armed forces charities (1,888 charities) (Doherty et al., 2019).

The financial data used in this report was not gained through the means of the survey. It was taken from the latest available accounts and annual reports that had been submitted to UK charity regulators. The majority (61.3%) of the data included in this report comes from 2017/18 accounts, with 35.5% coming from 2016/17 accounts. A total of 3.2% charities had no available accounts due to their newly registered status.

DSC is confident that the data on the charities represented in this report is comprehensive and accurate as of the final data-collection and refinement date (12 June 2019). The possibility of charities being excluded from the report due to not having been found by the researchers is recognised. However, due to the rigour of the search process, this is considered to be unlikely.

Figure 1

UK charity registration

0.0%

12.9%

29.0%

58.1%

■ CCEW   ■ Cross-border   ■ OSCR   ■ CCNI
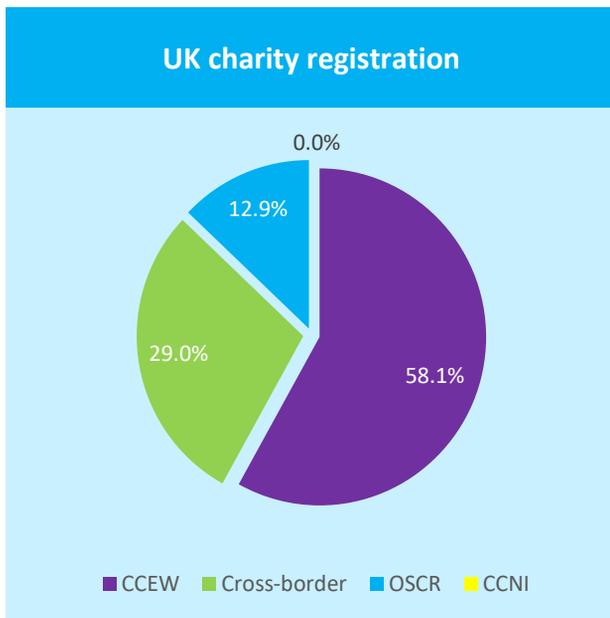
DSC examined the split of the charities by their registration with the charity regulators. Figure 1 shows a percentage split of the 31 charities featured in this data.

Charities registered exclusively with CCEW accounted for 58.1% (N=18) of the charities.

'Cross-border' refers to charities registered with both CCEW and OSCR. This category accounted for 29.0% (N=9) of the charities.

Charities registered exclusively with OSCR accounted for 12.9% (N=4) of the charities.

It must be noted that no charities registered with CCNI were identified as providing criminal justice support for the armed forces community in Northern Ireland during the research.

CHAPTER ONE

An overview of charities' support

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides information and analysis on the nature and characteristics of criminal justice support by armed forces charities. As mentioned previously, 'criminal justice support' refers to any activities which help members of the armed forces community who have been in contact with the criminal justice system.

The chapter is divided into the following sections:

- Beneficiaries accessing support
- Charitable expenditure

1.2 BENEFICIARIES ACCESSING SUPPORT

1.2.1 Number of beneficiaries accessing support

DSC undertook a survey to gain first-hand information on the support that armed forces charities were providing to individuals coming into contact with the criminal justice system. Data collected by DSC provides a figure for the estimated number of beneficiaries accessing charities' criminal justice support services within the last year.
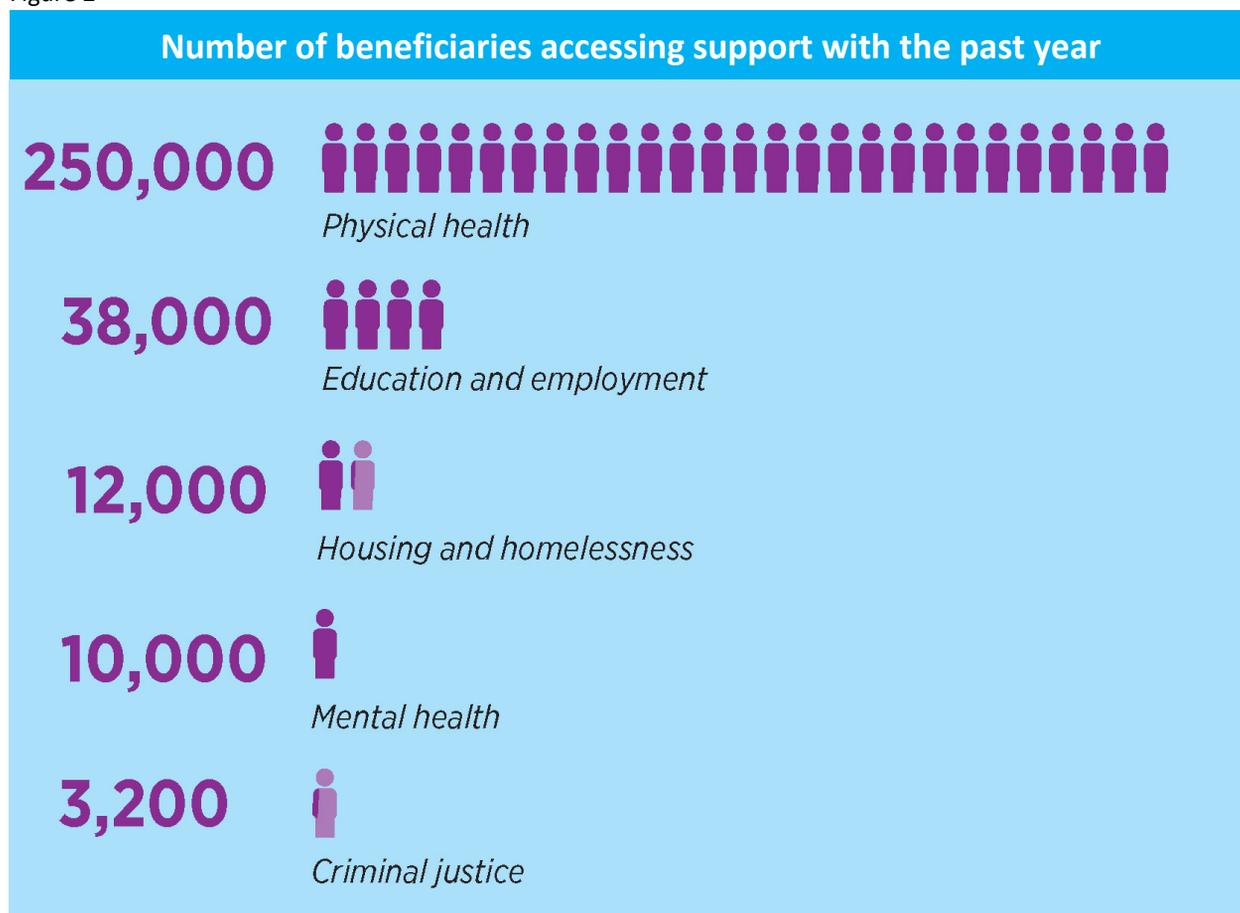
In total, 14 charities (45.2%) responded to the survey question on the number of beneficiaries served in the previous year. Survey data showed that collectively charities supported at least 3,200 beneficiaries in the criminal justice system last year. This figure should be taken as a conservative estimate, given that beneficiary data was not available from for over half of the charities featured in this report (N=17 charities, 54.8%). Therefore, the figure could be reasonably extrapolated to be in the region of 4,000 when all charities are accounted for.

It is important to note that the figure of approximate number of beneficiaries accessing support refers to the number being served by charities not the potential level of need. The number of individuals in need could potentially be higher; however, the lack of reliable figures on the number of ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system, rather than just the prison population, make it difficult to determine the actual number of individuals potentially in need.

It should also be noted that members of the armed forces community may access more than one charity for support. However, it is not possible with the current data to account for or control for such overlap. Therefore, the figures on beneficiary numbers are a conservative estimate based on available data only. Further research on the beneficiary community itself is needed in order to provide a more complete evaluation of multi-service usage.

Figure 2 compares the annual number of beneficiaries accessing support from armed forces charities across various topics of support, including direct support from charities working in the criminal justice system. The figures are based on previous research by DSC (Cole et al., 2017; Doherty et al., 2017; Doherty et al., 2018a; Doherty et al., 2018b). All figures represent the minimum number of beneficiaries accessing services, based on available data. The number of beneficiaries accessing criminal justice support is significantly less than the numbers of beneficiaries accessing mental health support (N≈10,000), housing support (N≈12,000), education and employment (N≈38,000) and physical health support (N≈250,000).

Figure 2

Number of beneficiaries accessing support with the past year

250,000 — *Physical health*

38,000 — *Education and employment*

12,000 — *Housing and homelessness*

10,000 — *Mental health*

3,200 — *Criminal justice*

Note: the data is taken from all charities which specified beneficiary numbers in their survey responses for physical health (43.0% of charities), education and employment (41.0%), housing (79.5%), mental health (59.2%) and support for ex-offenders (43.8%).

DSC explored the ratio of charities to beneficiaries for each topic of provision and found that there is one charity to every 103 beneficiaries accessing criminal justice support. The ratio for criminal justice support (1:103) is significantly better than those for mental health support (1:132), housing support (1:154), and education and employment support (1:487). Physical health support has the biggest ratio, with one charity to every 2,066 beneficiaries accessing support.

Beneficiary numbers provide some insight into the demand for services within the armed forces community. It is clear that fewer numbers of beneficiaries are receiving help for criminal justice issues and there is a lower ratio of charities to beneficiaries compared to mental health, housing, education and employment, and physical health. However, this analysis shows that there are also fewer charities working in this area (N=31), and arguably fewer beneficiaries to serve. Taken in isolation, beneficiary figures do not necessarily reflect 'need', as beneficiaries may access support outside the armed forces charity sector – in this case, from criminal justice charities, the National Probation Service or other statutory services. Nonetheless, these figures show that armed forces charities support a distinct beneficiary population with specific needs across multiple areas of support.

1.2.2 Eligibility criteria

Armed forces charities are established to support the armed forces community, but they may also develop particular programmes and specific eligibility criteria in line with their charitable objects. This understandably limits the number of potential beneficiaries for such charities specialising in supporting a particular type of beneficiary.

DSC collected data on eligibility among charities featured in this report and found that over three-fifths (61.3%) of the charities had specific eligibility criteria. Under two-fifths (38.7%) of charities had no limits on eligibility.

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Figure 3 shows the types of eligibility criteria that charities employed. The most common criterion used by the charities focused on the 'characteristics of beneficiaries' Service' (29.0%), which included length of Service (five charities), Service type (two charities), regimental links (one charity) and rank in Service (one charity).

Smaller proportions of charities used the period of time left on sentence (9.7%) and individuals' location in the criminal justice system (9.7%) as criteria. Where charities set criteria based on 'period of time remaining on an offender's sentence', this was split between those serving the final three years, the final 18 months or the final three months of their sentence (representing one charity each, respectively).

In total, 6.5% (N=2) of the charities employed additional eligibility criteria based on beneficiary characteristics, such as being homeless (one charity), or having been convicted of certain crimes, such as sex offences or arson (one charity). One charity had eligibility criteria based on the residential location of ex-Service personnel, and another charity based its eligibility on religious preference.

Figure 3

Types of eligibility criteria for beneficiaries
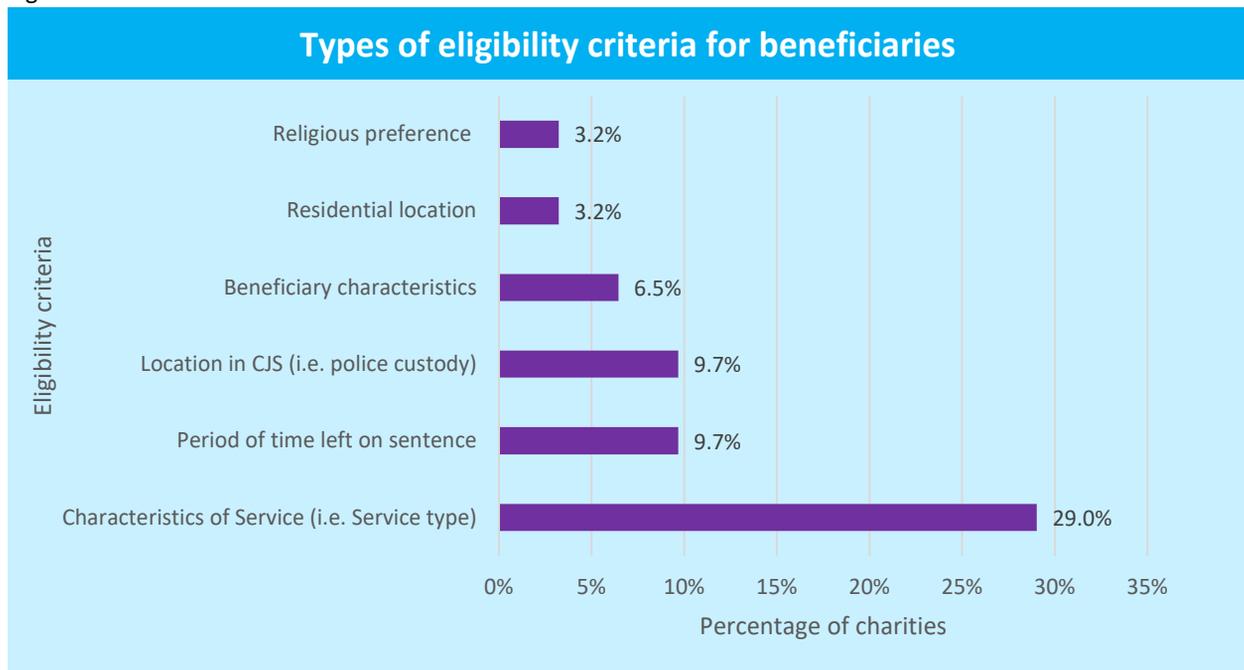
Note: the data is calculated as a percentage of all charities featured in this report (N=31). CJS = criminal justice system.

The fact that many charities enforce specific eligibility criteria may make it more difficult for some beneficiaries to access support; however, it also shows that charities' support is not homogeneous in nature and is often specific to particular beneficiary circumstances. This report's headline figure of 31 charities providing support for individuals in the criminal justice system obscures the fact that some charities within this cohort may only provide support to ex-Service personnel who reside in certain areas, who have a certain time period left on their sentence or who have certain Service characteristics. Some examples of specific eligibility criteria volunteered by survey respondents are reproduced below:

Examples of eligibility criteria

'Must have three years or less of their sentence remaining.'

'Must be from [a particular] Service.'

'Support [is] only eligible after release.'

Survey respondents

Note: quotes are taken from survey responses and charities' websites. Service details have been omitted to protect the anonymity of charities that took part in the survey.

1.3 CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE

As charities often deliver support across several areas of need, their resources are spread over multiple areas of provision. This presents a methodological challenge when exploring expenditure, as expenditure information on particular topics of support is not always evident in charities' financial accounts. To tackle this issue, DSC asked survey respondents to specify the approximate percentage of annual expenditure that they dedicated to criminal justice support. The figures were then back-calculated using the charities' latest available annual reports and accounts.[5]

The 15 charities which responded to the survey question collectively spent an approximate £4.5 million on criminal justice support last year. This should be taken as a conservative estimate, as this expenditure data was not available for 16 charities, which represent 51.6% of the charities featured in the report.

1.3.1 Expenditure by topic

Expenditure data taken from DSC's previous research enables a comparison of armed forces charities' spending by topic (Cole et al., 2017; Doherty et al., 2017; Doherty et al., 2018a; Doherty et al., 2018b). Figure 4 shows the minimum amount of expenditure armed forces charities dedicated to each topic of provision.

The amount that armed forces charities dedicated to all aspects of criminal justice support (£4.5 million) was substantially less than the amounts dedicated to education and employment (£26 million), mental health (£28 million), housing (£40 million), and physical health (£103 million).

Figure 4

Annual expenditure by topic
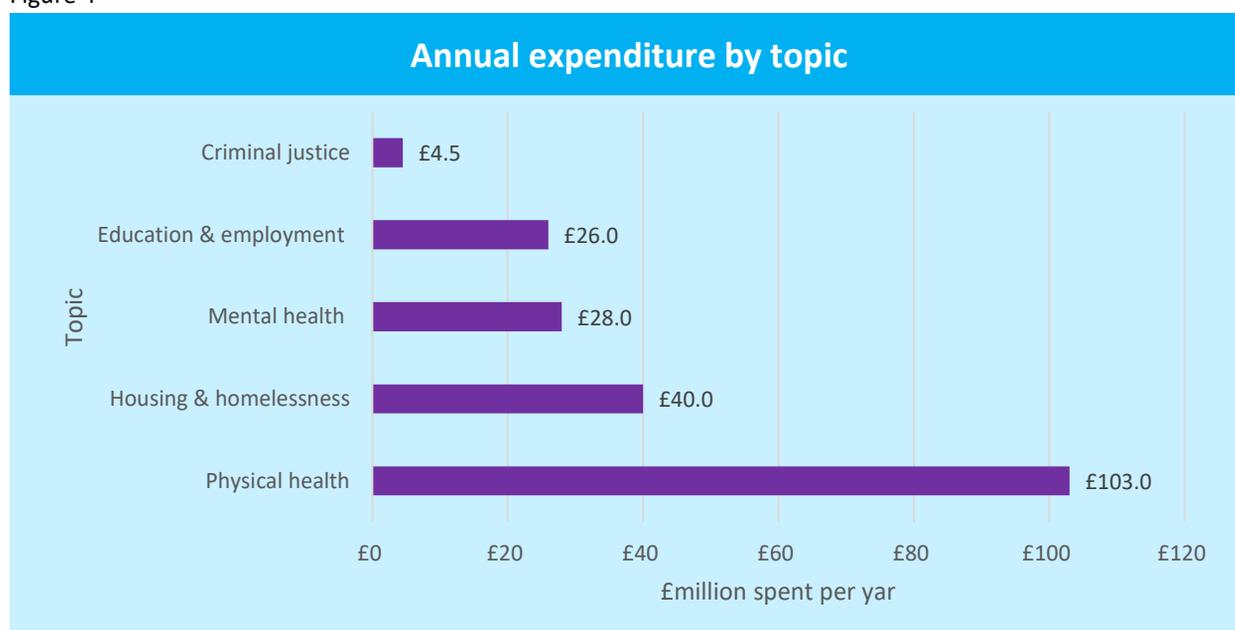
Note: the data is taken from previous *Focus On* reports (Cole et al., 2017; Doherty et al., 2017; Doherty et al., 2018a; Doherty et al., 2018b). The data is based on charities' survey responses: criminal justice (48.4% of respondents), education and employment (89.7%), mental health (50.0%), housing (42.3%), and physical health (40.5%).

It should be noted that these figures are also conservative estimates based on data specified by survey respondents or obtained from annual accounts. Nevertheless, they provide an interesting insight into relative spending priorities across the sector. It is also important to remember that comparisons between topics of support are potentially biased by the breadth and depth of the topics being investigated, rather than simple supply and demand. Physical health, for example, is arguably a much broader topic in terms of need-related provision than criminal justice. This is also seen in the number of charities which provide support (physical health (N=121) versus criminal justice (N=31); Doherty et al., 2018a).

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[5] In this report, DSC are not using a 'Primary' and 'Secondary' split to examine charitable expenditure, as the overall number of charities in this report (N=31) is much lower than in previous reports, making such comparisons unnecessary.

1.4 CHAPTER ONE SUMMARY

1.4.1 Provision for ex-offenders

DSC identified 31 charities which provide support for individuals who come into contact with the criminal justice system, which represents 1.6% of all armed forces charities (N=1,888) (Doherty et al., 2019).

1.4.2 Beneficiaries

At least 3,200 beneficiaries accessed support from armed forces charities for criminal justice related issues during the previous year. This figure is significantly less than the number of people accessing mental health support from charities (N≈10,000), housing support (N≈12,000), education and employment (N≈38,000), and physical health provision from charities (N≈250,000).

Survey results suggest that 15 charities are collectively supporting at least 3,200 beneficiaries, demonstrating a significant demand for services (albeit a smaller beneficiary population than those accessing other forms of provision).

Given that recent statistics indicate that 2,100 ex-Service personnel are in prison (MOJ, 2018; Scottish parliament, 2019), armed forces charities appear to be providing a level of support that would serve a comparable number of people. However, there are currently no reliable figures on former (now released) ex-Service ex-offenders, for whom charitable support is also available.

There are also limited figures on the number of individuals in non-custodial stages of the criminal justice system. Additionally, the figures presented may include an element of double counting, as beneficiaries may access more than one charity for support. Therefore, establishing more precisely whether the need is being met would require significantly more research.

1.4.3 Charitable expenditure

Available data on charitable expenditure suggests that armed forces charities' annual expenditure on support for criminal justice related issues is at least £4.5 million. This is significantly less than the amounts that armed forces charities dedicate to education and employment (£26 million), mental health (£28 million), housing (£40 million), and physical health (£103 million) provision.[6] However, it is important to note that there are also far less charities delivering criminal justice support compared to other topics of provision for which data is available.

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[6] The data is taken from all charities which specified a percentage of charitable expenditure in their survey responses for criminal justice (48.4% of respondents), education and employment (89.7%), mental health (50.0%), housing (42.3%), and physical health (40.5%), and should be taken as an estimate only.

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CHAPTER TWO

Service delivery

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the types of criminal justice support provided by armed forces charities and how those services are delivered to beneficiaries at distinct stages of the criminal justice system.

The chapter is divided into the following sections:

- Overview of criminal justice services
- Arrest or police custody: services to help offenders as they enter the criminal justice system
- Prison: services to support offenders serving custodial sentences
- Support following release from prison
- Support for families
- Grant-making

2.2 OVERVIEW OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES

Table 1 provides a breakdown of charities in relation to the stage in the criminal justice system at which they work. Charities commonly delivered support to ex-Service personnel following release from prison (80.6%). Under half (48.4%) of charities delivered support at the arrest and police custody stage, while over two-fifths (41.9%) of charities provided support to individuals serving prison sentences. Charities were less likely to provide support to family members of individuals in the criminal justice system (38.7%).

Table 1 shows that charities delivered support to individuals at various stages of the criminal justice system. It also highlights that support is not exclusively directed towards ex-Service personnel, as 38.7% of charities provided support for family members of those in the criminal justice system.

Table 1

Stage of the criminal justice system at which charities deliver support		
Stage of the criminal justice system	**No. of charities**	**% of charities**
Following release *When an individual is released from prison*	25	80.6%
Arrest/police custody *Arresting an individual in response to a crime, including the booking-in interview with a custody sergeant (Cooper et al., 2018a)*	15	48.4%
Prison *Enacting a custodial sentence in which individuals are held for a period of time*	13	41.9%
Support for family members *Support for families of ex-Service personnel who find themselves in the criminal justice system*	12	38.7%

Note: the categories are not mutually exclusive, and the percentages therefore do not sum to 100. The figures are presented as percentages of all charities featured in this report (N=31).

Table 2 shows the range of criminal justice support delivered by armed forces charities, listed in descending order from most to least commonly provided.

Table 2

Types of criminal justice support delivered by charities		
Types of support	**No. of charities**	**% of charities**
Education and employment *Services to help the advancement of knowledge and skills, alongside the exchange of payment for labour and services[7]*	16	51.6%
Accommodation *Provision of a room, or group of rooms, in which an individual may reside*	12	38.7%
Peer support *Individuals meet to share and discuss their own experiences with each other (Mind, 2013)*	10	32.3%
Mental health support *Support for mental health conditions, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety*	9	29.0%
Alcohol and drug support *Support for alcohol and drug addiction or misuse*	8	25.8%
Finance and debt support *Advice on money, budgeting, debt management, welfare and pensions entitlement*	8	25.8%
Other *Services provided by charities, e.g. signposting or grant-making*	4	12.9%
Research (funding and delivery) *Research focusing specifically on criminal justice provision or policy for the armed forces community*	3	9.7%
Legal advice *Advice on the law in relation to a particular situation*	2	6.5%

Note: the categories are not mutually exclusive, and the percentages therefore do not sum to 100. The figures are presented as percentages of all charities featured in this report (N=31).

Commonly delivered services included education and employment, which was delivered by over a half (51.6%) of the charities, and accommodation, which was delivered by close to two-fifths (38.7%) of the charities. Less common services included research and legal advice, both delivered by under one-tenth (9.7% and 6.5%) of the charities.

Other less common forms of criminal justice system support (not included in table 2) included grant-making (N=2), signposting (N=1) and religious support (N=1).

The following sections (2.3 to 2.7) offer insight into the support provided at each stage of the criminal justice system.

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[7] As defined by previous research by DSC (Doherty et al., 2017).

ARMED FORCES CHARITIES

2.3 ARREST OR POLICE CUSTODY: SERVICES TO HELP OFFENDERS AS THEY ENTER THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Individuals enter the criminal justice system when they are arrested and enter police custody. At this stage, a suspect can either be released or charged with a crime, depending on the advice of the Crown Prosecution Service. Across the UK, there are 45 regional police forces, with the majority (39) located in England. Four are located in Wales, and one each in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Research conducted by the Veterans & Families Institute for Military Social Research (VFI) at Anglia Ruskin University identified 86 police custody suites as having a 'Veteran Police Champion' (Cooper et al., 2018b) or 'Veterans Champion'. As mentioned in this report's 'Context' section (page xi), Veteran Police Champions meet regularly to share knowledge and best practice while promoting the needs of ex-Service personnel locally. Of the 86 police custody suites with a Veteran Police Champion, 58 are in England, 15 in Wales and 13 in Scotland. Northern Ireland does not have any Veteran Police Champions (Cooper et al., 2018b).

Projects supporting ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system have suggested that prison is too late a stage at which to identify ex-Service personnel and address their needs, with the Phillips Review noting that contact with the police creates an opportunity for timely intervention and assistance by appropriate armed forces charities (Cooper et al., 2018a; Phillips, 2014, p. 30).

Schemes such as Liaison and Diversion services have helped to identify ex-Service personnel at the police custody stage and have developed specific pathways for them (Phillips, 2014). Research by King's College London, using data from 29 Liaison and Diversion services for the period April 2015 to April 2016, found that out of 49,793 cases, 1,215 reported current or previous service with the UK armed forces (Short et al., 2018). Of these, 1,067 were classified as veterans (Short et al., 2018). The purpose of Liaison and Diversion services is to provide an assessment of individuals within the criminal justice system who have been identified as having a psychosocial need.[8] Initiatives such as the Liaison and Diversion scheme show that ex-Service personnel who have a psychosocial need and come into contact with the criminal justice system can be identified by Liaison and Diversion services and referred to appropriate organisations for help.

Charities which provide support to ex-Service personnel at the police custody stage aim to help individuals address their needs and provide a variety of services, such as alcohol and drug support, education and employment support, and mental health support. Project Nova, a collaboration between the charities RFEA and Walking with the Wounded (WWTW), is an example of a programme which supports ex-Service offenders after a referral has been made following arrest. More detail about Project Nova can be found in case study 7, on page 25.

Figure 5 shows the types of services delivered by the charities at the arrest or police custody stage. Education and employment support and mental health support were the most common types, each delivered by 16.1% of the charities, while accommodation, alcohol and drug support, and peer support were each delivered by 12.9% of the charities. Just under one-tenth of the charities delivered finance and debt support (9.7%), with legal advice and research each being delivered by 6.5% of the charities.

Other support services were delivered by over a fifth (22.6%) of charities. These included services such as signposting (two charities), sports programmes (one charity) and religious support (one charity).

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[8] Examples of psychosocial need are mental health problems, learning difficulties, physical health problems, alcohol and substance abuse problems, and welfare needs (Short et al., 2018).

Figure 5
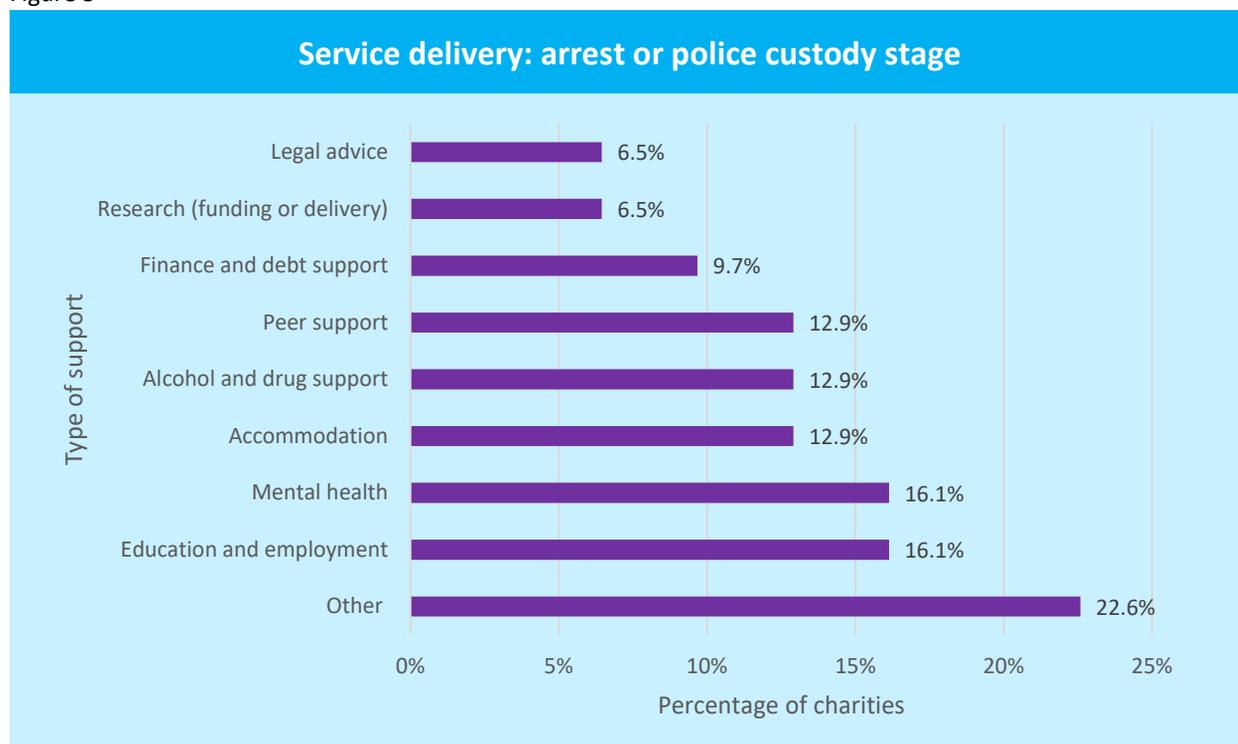
Service delivery: arrest or police custody stage

Note: the categories are not mutually exclusive, and the percentages therefore do not sum to 100. The figures are presented as percentages of all charities featured in this report (N=31).

2.4 PRISON: SERVICES TO SUPPORT OFFENDERS SERVING CUSTODIAL SENTENCES

For individuals who are charged with and ultimately found guilty of an offence, prison is one of the sentencing options available to the courts. There are 141 prisons in the UK: 123 in England and Wales, 15 in Scotland and 3 in Northern Ireland. Across the English and Welsh prison system, only two prisons (Her Majesty's (HM) Prison Berwyn and HM Prison Parc) have dedicated veteran wings. The Endeavour Unit at HM Prison Parc opened in 2015 with the aim of supporting ex-Service personnel to 'get their lives back on track' after committing crimes (Hire a Hero, 2019). The unit bases its values on the British Army's principles of integrity, discipline and respect for others. Furthermore, individuals within the unit have access to specialist support services such as employment support and peer support (Hire a Hero, 2019).
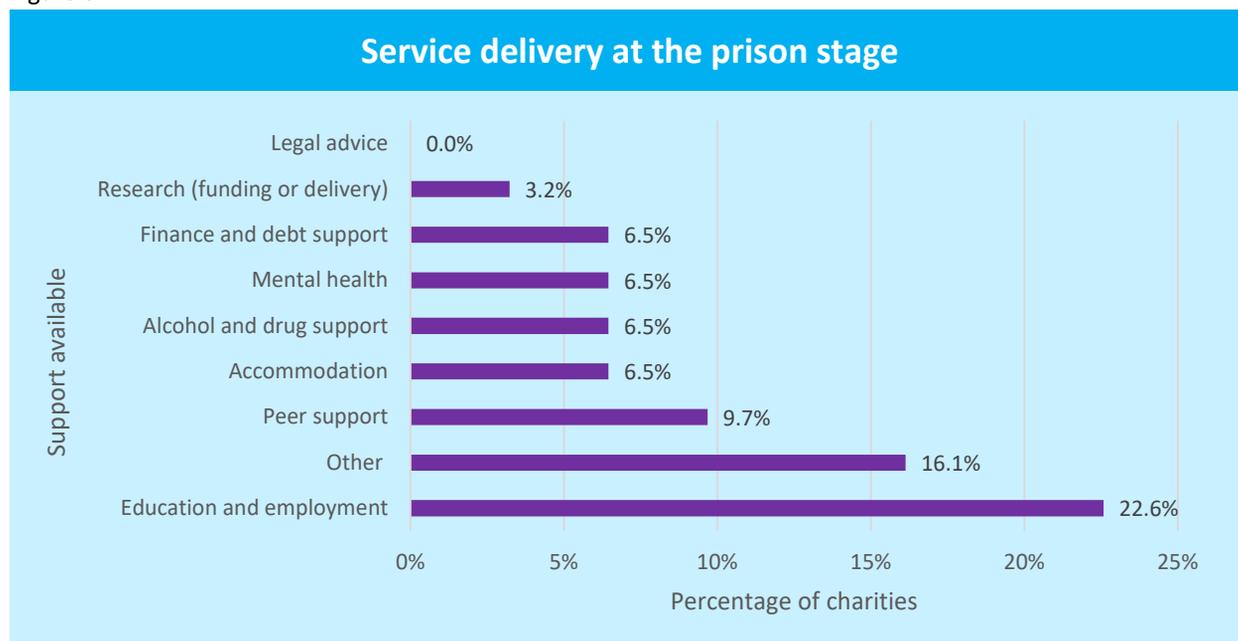
According to New Philanthropy Capital (NPC), charities that work in the criminal justice system form a unique relationship with service users. NPC suggests this is unique to charities, as their independence from the state and prison system, combined with their volunteer and community links, allows them to support a range of different needs which are often local, long term and preventative (Wyld and Noble, 2017).

During their sentence, prisoners can take part in purposeful activities which aid rehabilitation, including activities such as education and work (Prison Reform Trust, 2018). These activities are designed to equip the offender with skills to successfully re-enter society and pursue non-criminal opportunities after release. According to a 2014 MOJ report, individuals who attend vocational training in prison are more likely to secure employment shortly after their release (Brunton-Smith and Hopkins, 2014).

Figure 6 shows the types of support which the charities delivered in prison. Over a fifth (22.6%) of charities delivered education and employment support to ex-Service personnel in prison, with 9.7% of charities delivering peer support. In terms of charities providing health and wellbeing support, 6.5% provided mental health support, with a further 6.5% of charities providing alcohol and drug support. Less than a tenth (3.2%) of charities provided accommodation, finance and debt support, and research. No charities stated providing legal advice to ex-Service personnel while serving prison sentences.

'Other' support services accounted for 16.1% of charities' provision, and covered services such as general support (1 charity), postage of religious literature (1 charity), and signposting (1 charity).

Figure 6

Service delivery at the prison stage

Support available

Legal advice	0.0%
Research (funding or delivery)	3.2%
Finance and debt support	6.5%
Mental health	6.5%
Alcohol and drug support	6.5%
Accommodation	6.5%
Peer support	9.7%
Other	16.1%
Education and employment	22.6%

Percentage of charities

Note: the categories are not mutually exclusive, and the percentages therefore do not sum to 100. The figures are presented as percentages of all charities featured in this report (N=31).

DSC also gathered data about how the charities delivered support to ex-Service personnel in prison. Some insights into the work charities provide at the prison stage are presented below:

'Advice and support about land-based employment.'

*'One to one mental health counselling and psychotherapy.
[Charity] delivers free, personal, private treatment to veterans in custody with mental health problems.'*

'We provide individualised employment support for veterans with physical or mental health challenges who are pending release from prison.'

Survey respondents

Note: quotes are taken from survey responses and charities' websites. Charity details have been omitted to protect the anonymity of the charities that took part in the survey.

Additionally, two charities specified that they awarded grants to programmes to help organisations deliver support for ex-Service personnel in prisons, while one charity stated that it supported individuals in prison by posting them religious literature. One charity reported delivering support through signposting.

DSC also gathered data on the number of charities working in prisons. In total, 20 charities specified that they had never worked in prisons, while eight charities stated that they currently delivered support in prisons. Interestingly, three charities stated in their survey responses' that they had previously worked in prisons but no longer do; with one charity highlighting the 'lack of funding to continue the project and change of prison governor' as the reason for this in their survey response.

Through means of a survey, DSC gathered the names of HM prisons where the charities delivered services and matched the names to prison locations across England and Wales using the MOJ's prison map. Figure 7 shows the numbers of prisons in which the charities delivered support across regions in England and Wales.

In total, there are at least 36 prisons across England and Wales in which an armed forces charity reported delivering support; the majority are located in England (N=32) and four prisons are located in Wales. Across the 32 prisons in England in which an armed forces charity reported delivering support, the East of England had the highest number of prisons (seven prisons). No charities stated they delivered support in prisons located in the North East of England.

Figure 7

Approximate number of prisons in which charities delivered support, by region

Armed forces charities reported delivering support in 13 prisons across the southern regions of England (including London). Six of these prisons were in the South West, five were in the South East, and there two were in London.

Charities reported delivering services in 12 prisons across the northern regions of England; of these, five were in the North West, and three each in the West Midlands and Yorkshire and Humberside regions respectively. Charities also reported delivering support in one prison in the East Midlands.

These figures are based on conservative estimates, as the researchers were unable to determine the names of the prisons in which two of the charities delivered support, which accounted for a further 35 prisons. Additionally, figures do not include data on charities which did not respond to the survey (N=15).

Only one surveyed charity reported delivering support across all of Scotland's 15 prisons, and all of Northern Ireland's three prisons.

Note: the data is taken from charities' survey responses, websites and annual reports, where data was specified (N=8).

An example of a charity providing charitable support in prison is highlighted in case study 1, on SSAFA's support for ex-Service personnel in prisons.

Case Study 1:
PROVIDING SUPPORT TO INDIVIDUALS IN PRISON
SSAFA the Armed Forces Charity

The Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association, commonly known as SSAFA the Armed Forces Charity, is the UK's oldest tri-Service charity, helping Service and ex-Service personnel and their families since its inception in 1885. SSAFA is committed to providing holistic non-judgemental lifelong support to all Service and ex-Service personnel and their families no matter what the circumstances including those who have been caught up in the criminal justice system.

SSAFA uses the term Veterans in the Criminal Justice System (VCJS) to describe support given to individuals in prisons and immigration removal centres, including those on probation or community sentences. The charity also provides support to the families of Serving and ex-Service personnel who are affected by the criminal justice system.

Prior to 2018, SSAFA provided a Prison In-Reach programme, which saw trained volunteers and specialist caseworkers provide advice and information to ex-Service personnel in prisons. The programme also offered practical support such as sourcing essential household items. Additionally, SSAFA's Prison In-Reach volunteers and caseworkers provided help with issues related to housing and resettlement when individuals in prisons draw near to their release.

Following a review of VCJS services in 2018, SSAFA merged its Prison In-Reach Programme with its VCJS service, to create a unique support network across the UK. SSAFA's newly formed VCJS service uses specially trained volunteers to provide accessible support to those affected by the criminal justice system. In 2018, SSAFA's network of specially trained volunteers assisted 1,012 individuals in the criminal justice system, an increase of 48% on support provided in 2017 (SSAFA, 2019).

Previously, SSAFA's visits to prisons were on an ad-hoc basis. Following SSAFA's review, the new VCJS service aims to visit prisons at least once a month, with in-reach volunteers providing advice, information and support to prisoners, prison officers, and families. Additionally, through its case work, SSAFA will acquire funding towards: accommodation, training, domestic goods, and signposting services.

Beyond 2019, SSAFA plans to provide further targeted support to families through its Families Awareness Campaign. The campaign works alongside organisations supporting children and prisoners' families, to raise awareness of SSAFA's support for families during what can be a difficult time. Additionally, SSAFA plans to expand its VCJS support service by recruiting more in-reach volunteers, raising awareness in prisons and establishing a holistic non-judgemental service in prisons that do not currently have a regular SSAFA presence.

SSAFA collaborates with a variety of organisations to deliver VCJS support, including other armed forces and mainstream charities. SSAFA also serves as joint chair of the Cobseo Veterans in the Criminal Justice System Cluster, which is a working group of almost 30 organisations including armed forces and mainstream charities, alongside statutory services, which collaboratively aim to support ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system and their families.

SSAFA continues to forge partnerships in the sector, establishing strong links with a variety of statutory bodies across the criminal justice system.

2.4.1 Charities working with the Military Corrective Training Centre

The Military Corrective Training Centre (MCTC) in Colchester is a rehabilitation centre which provides corrective training for Service personnel from all three Services as well as civilians subject to the Armed Forces Act (2006).[9] Individuals may spend periods from two weeks to two years in detention at the centre.

The MCTC holds three categories of detainee: Service personnel who will remain in Service upon completion of their sentence, Service personnel who will be discharged upon completion of their sentence, and Service personnel held in military custody awaiting the outcome of an investigation or awaiting an HM Prison placement (British Army, 2019; Military Provost Staff, 2016).

DSC gathered data on whether charities worked with the MCTC in Colchester to provide support to serving personnel detained there. In total, six charities stated through a survey question that they provided such support. A selection of survey responses are reproduced below:

> *'Some MCTC residents attend our education and employment courses in Colchester.'*
>
> *'We have provided them with information on our welfare services so that people who are going through the MCTC intending to return to [location] have information about our welfare offering.'*
>
> *'We work with [charity] who deliver support in MCTC in Colchester. We also deliver [programme] which provides employment support at transition to veterans who leave the armed forces via Colchester.'*
>
> Survey respondents

Note: quotes are taken from survey responses and charities' websites. Location and Service details have been omitted to protect the anonymity of the charities that took part in the survey.

2.5 SUPPORT FOLLOWING RELEASE FROM PRISON

The next stage of the criminal justice system occurs when prisoners are released from prison following completion of their sentence or after being granted parole to serve the rest of their sentence on probation (UK government, 2019a).

Research by Defence Analytical Services and Advice (DASA), using the MOJ probation database and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) database for Service leavers, estimated that 3.4% (5,860) of people subject to probation supervision in England and Wales were ex-Service personnel (DASA, 2010b).

While on probation, individuals may have to meet certain requirements, such as completing an education or training course, attending appointments for addiction treatments or attending regular meetings with their probation officer (UK government, 2019b). According to statistics from the MOJ, ex-Service personnel who had served custodial sentences were less likely to reoffend compared to the general population (43% versus 59%) (Kelly, 2014).

A report from the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies found that there is no consistent national strategy guiding provision for ex-Service personnel on probation (Ford et al., 2017). Additionally, the review found that the consequences of Service can include both positive and negative experiences and that an understanding of these experiences and their relevance to ex-Service personnel's problems is key to a productive future for ex-Service personnel (Ford et al., 2017).

---

[9] Civilians subject to the Armed Forces Act are civil servants working in support of Her Majesty's forces (MOD, 2011). They commit an offence if, without reasonable excuse, they (a) fail to attend duty, (b) leave duty before they are permitted to do so or (c) fail to perform any duty (Armed Forces Act, 2006)

On release, ex-offenders can face various issues, such as homelessness, due to having no settled accommodation and not having access to adequate money to meet basic needs, including for food, clothing and transport (Crisis, 2019; House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee, 2016). According to NOMS, one in ten people released from custody in 2014/15 had no settled accommodation,[10] with only one in four people released from prison having a job to commence or resume (MOJ, 2015). According to research from the Howard League, ex-Service personnel face release from custody with little in the way of support; this is particularly the case for those with a conviction for sexual offences, which may disqualify them from gaining help with accommodation (Howard League, 2011).

Once an offender has been released from prison, a range of support and advice services are available through the National Probation Service and other advice organisations. However, the reality is that offenders are often released without having their basic accommodation needs met and without immediate financial support (Citizens Advice Bureau, 2007). Armed forces charities which support ex-Service personnel following their release from prison offer an extension to existing statutory services, including accommodation, education and employment support, and mental health support. Additionally, charities have also funded research into services available to ex-Service personnel on probation. For example, FiMT have funded the Probation Institute to produce a report which profiled and analysed the state of services for ex-Service personnel under probation supervision in England and Wales.

Figure 8 shows the support delivered by the armed forces charities for individuals following release from prison. Over two-fifths (45.2%) of the charities surveyed reported providing education and employment support. When alcohol and drug support and mental health support are grouped together as these topics represent a combined 45.2% of charities providing health and wellbeing support, of which 25.8% was mental health support and 19.4% was alcohol and drug support.

Close to one-third (32.3%) of charities provided accommodation, with 22.6% delivering peer support. Over a fifth (22.6%) of charities delivered finance and debt support, with just under a tenth (9.7%) supporting research on matters relating to ex-Service personnel following their release from prison. In total, 3.2% of charities provided legal advice following release.

Overall, 11 (35.5%) charities stated that they provided 'other' services following an ex-Service person's release from prison, with these services including signposting (four charities), welfare and benefit support (two charities), and sports programmes (one charity).

Figure 8
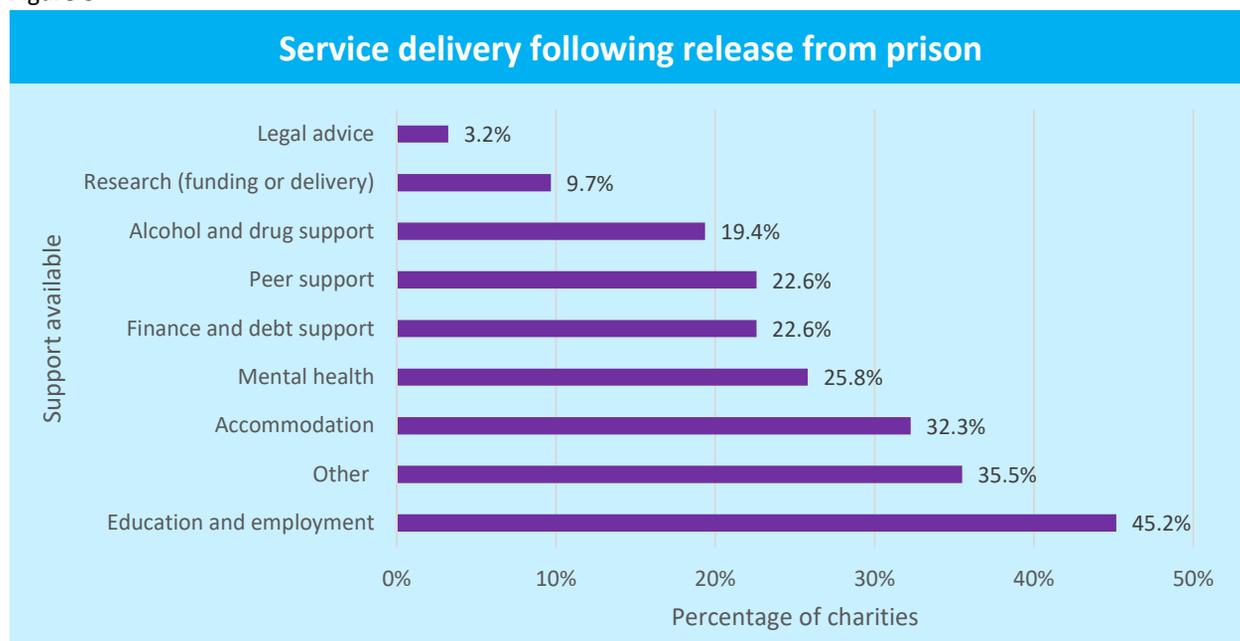
Service delivery following release from prison

Note: the categories are not mutually exclusive, and the percentages therefore do not sum to 100. The figures are presented as percentages of all charities featured in this report (N=31).

[10] Settled accommodation refers to secure medium to long-term accommodation (NHS, 2019).

Case study 2 highlights how one charity, SVR, which supports ex-Service personnel following their release from prison.

Case study 2:
FOLLOWING RELEASE FROM PRISON
Scottish Veterans Residences

Scottish Veterans Residences (SVR) is Scotland's oldest ex-Service charity, founded in 1910 in response to the sight of ex-Service personnel sleeping rough on the streets of Edinburgh (SVR, 2019). The charity currently manages three properties, located in Edinburgh, Dundee and Glasgow, collectively providing 177 beds.

Through collaboration with the Scottish Prison Service, SVR provides accommodation for ex-Service personnel upon their release from prison, depending on the reason for conviction. In 2017, 6% of the residents housed by SVR had a previous housing situation described as 'in custody' (SVR,2017). Once accommodated, SVR's support is designed to enable ex-Service personnel to recover their mental health, stay physically healthy, maintain relationships and live as independently as possible.

Collaborative working is a key feature of SVR's accommodation support. As an experienced housing support provider SVR seeks to partner and work with other experienced providers of specialist support across areas such as mental health, employment and criminal justice. This sees SVR work with organisations, such as Walking With The Wounded, Not Forgotten Association, ASAP, and Sacro to deliver support to ex-Service personnel.

Through its collaboration with Sacro, SVR is able to provide ex-Service personnel who have been in contact with the criminal justice system, with access to Sacro's Veterans Mentoring Service. The mentoring service operated by Sacro works with ex-Service personnel currently in, or at risk of becoming involved in, the criminal justice system. The Veterans Mentoring Service works closely with ex-Service personnel, to put an intensive support plan in place where strategies can be developed to cope with their specific needs, with the overall aim being to enable ex-Service personnel to enjoy sustainable, independent living (Sacro, 2017).

2.6 SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

During the time a family member is serving a prison sentence, families can suffer more than just the loss of a family member. Families may also suffer through loss of income, anti-social behaviour by distressed children, shame and social isolation, and the extra burdens of childcare (Loucks, 2004a; Loucks, 2004b). However, research conducted by the Anglia Ruskin University's VFI found that there is very little support for families of ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system (Cooper, 2018a).

Figure 9 shows the types of support for families delivered by armed forces charities. When combined, alcohol and drug support along with mental health support accounted for 29.0% of the charities identified in this report, of which 16.1% was mental health support and 12.9% was alcohol and drug support.

A quarter (25.8%) of charities reported providing finance and debt support. Under a fifth (16.1%) of charities provided education and employment support, with a further 16.1% of charities reporting that they delivered peer support. Over one-tenth (12.9%) of charities provided accommodation, with legal advice and research each delivered by 3.2% of charities respectively.

In total, 9.7% of charities delivered other support services for family members; these included signposting (N=2) and religious support (N=1).

ARMED FORCES CHARITIES

Figure 9

Service delivery in support of families

Research (funding or delivery) — 3.2%
Legal advice — 3.2%
Other — 9.7%
Alcohol and drug support — 12.9%
Accommodation — 12.9%
Peer support — 16.1%
Mental health — 16.1%
Education and employment — 16.1%
Finance and debt support — 25.8%

Support available (y-axis)
Percentage of charities (x-axis: 0%, 5%, 10%, 15%, 20%, 25%, 30%)

Note: the categories are not mutually exclusive, and the percentages therefore do not sum to 100. The figures are presented as percentages of all charities featured in this report (N=31).

An example of a charity providing support to families is Poppyscotland, which features in case study 3.

Case study 3:
SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES
Poppyscotland

Poppyscotland has been helping the armed forces community since it was founded in 1921 as the Earl Haig Fund Scotland. Poppyscotland reaches out to those who have served, those still serving, and all their families at times of crisis and need by offering vital, practical advice, assistance and funding.

In supporting the armed forces community within the criminal justice system, Poppyscotland works in close partnership with Sacro, a Scottish community justice organisation (Sacro, 2019a), to part-fund their Veterans Mentoring Service (Poppyscotland, 2017). The service delivers a disclosure service for ex-Service personnel with a criminal conviction and provides a peer mentoring service to support veterans who are currently in or at risk of being involved with the criminal justice system. The Veterans Mentoring Service works with veterans to agree a person-centred support plan to manage their specific needs (Sacro, 2019b).

Poppyscotland supports families of ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system, by providing tailored support and funding through its grants programmes which support those who are in financial distress as well as helping individuals back into employment. Additionally, Poppyscotland's dedicated welfare support service supports families with multiple and complex needs, with the charity's welfare centres in Inverness and Kilmarnock offering advice, information and support to further assist family members.

Through its grant-making programme, Poppyscotland is the primary funder of the Scottish Citizens Advice's Armed Services Advice Project (ASAP), which provides free, confidential, independent and impartial advice to the armed forces community (ASAP, 2019). Through the funding of the ASAP, families of ex-Service personal in the criminal justice system are able to access information, advice and support on issues such as: benefits, debt and money advice, housing and relationships.

Collaborative working is a key feature of Poppyscotland's support to family members of ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system, and this sees Poppyscotland partner with other armed forces charities such as SSAFA and mainstream charities such as Sacro. Through collaboration with other organisations Poppyscotland works with organisations with expert knowledge on the criminal justice system to ensure appropriate support is delivered for those who need it and in a timely fashion.

2.7 GRANT-MAKING

Grant-making plays an important role in supporting other charities to deliver services to large sections of society (Traynor and Walker, 2015). A grant is a gift which is freely given by a donor, with the timing and amount at the donor's discretion, and is awarded by institutions for a specific purpose (Sayer Vincent, 2018).

DSC gathered and assessed data about grant-making through survey questions. Figure 10 shows the grant-making practices of armed forces charities which provide support for individuals in the criminal justice system.

Overall, over a third (35.5%) of charities which provide criminal justice support offered grants. When this figure is split by type of grant, as seen in figure 10, the data shows that more charities provided grants to individuals than to organisations (19.4% versus 12.9%). Only one charity reported providing grants to both individuals and organisations.

Figure 10

Grant-making practices

- Grants to individuals and organisations: 3.2%
- Grants to organisations: 12.9%
- Grants to individuals: 19.4%
- Do not provide grants: 64.5%
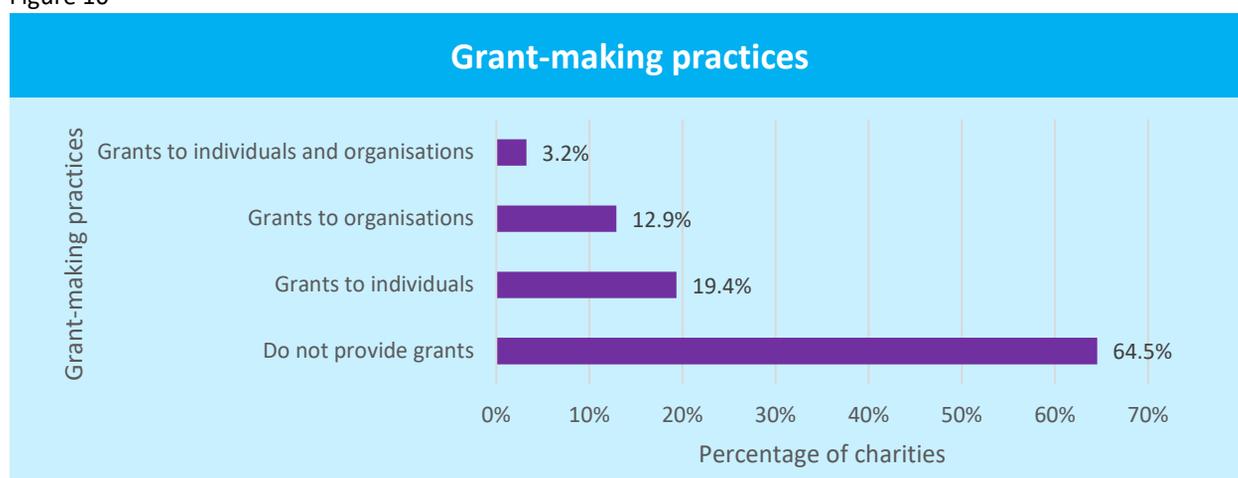
Note: the figures are presented as percentages of all charities featured in this report (N=31).

Grants to individuals were typically made to support welfare needs, such as a contribution towards accommodation, food and clothing, or one-off grants to support individuals in securing employment or training towards employment. Grants to organisations were typically made for the delivery of programmes. Grants were also made to fund the costs of research.

An example of a charity that awards grants as part of its criminal justice provision is the Armed Forces Covenant Trust Fund, highlighted in case study 4.

Case study 4:
GRANT-MAKING
The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust is a grant-making charity which has been operating as an independent trust since 2018, after previously distributing the Covenant Fund in-house in the MOD.

The Covenant Fund is an annual grant of £10 million from LIBOR funds[10] which is paid to the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust to fund grant programmes that support the armed forces community (Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, 2018).

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust has four principal themes that it uses when awarding its grants:

- removing barriers to family life;
- non-core healthcare for veterans;
- extra support both in and after Service for those in need;
- measures to integrate armed forces and civilian communities and allow the armed forces community to participate as citizens.

During 2015/16, when the Covenant Fund was operating within the MOD, grants totalling £4.6 million were awarded to organisations (Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, 2019a) as a result of the Covenant Reference Group's decision to distribute funds to projects supporting ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system in that funding year (MOD, 2016).

Since the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust became independent, a further £1.1 million of continuity and sustainability funding has been allocated to many of those projects. Examples of charities which received continuation grants during 2018/19 to deliver support to ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system included SSAFA, which was awarded £111,000 towards its newly established Veterans in the Criminal Justice System Support Service; and Walking With The Wounded, which was awarded £150,000 towards its Project Nova programme (Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, 2019b).

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust is an example of a charity which supports the armed forces community through its grant-making programmes. In this way, the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust helps to fund charities, including those which deliver projects supporting ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system.

[10] LIBOR (London Interbank Offered Rate) funds were announced in 2012, following the banking scandals related to the rigging of the benchmark rate that some of the world's leading banks charge each other for short term loans. The HM Treasury announced that proceeds from LIBOR fines would be used to support armed forces and emergency services charities and other related good causes that represent those that demonstrate the very best of values (Lake, 2017).

2.8 CHAPTER TWO SUMMARY

Charities rarely deliver criminal justice support in isolation, often providing other types of services in conjunction, such as alcohol and drug support, and employment support. Charities often adopt a needs-led approach to criminal justice provision and tailor their services in response to beneficiaries' unique circumstances, with different services being made available at different stages of the criminal justice system.

2.8.1 Overview of criminal justice services

Just over four-fifths (80.6%) of charities working in the criminal justice system provided support to individuals following their release from prison. Comparatively, close to two-fifths (41.9%) of charities delivered support to individuals who are currently in prison. DSC found that close to two-fifths (38.7%) of charities provide support to families of individuals in the criminal justice system.

Over half (51.6%) of the charities featured in this report provided education and employment support to beneficiaries in the criminal justice system. Additionally, close to two-fifths of charities (38.7%) were found to be delivering accommodation support, and around a third of charities (32.3%) were found to be delivering peer support to beneficiaries.

2.8.2 Arrest or police custody: services to help offenders as they enter the criminal justice system

In total, 16.1% of the charities delivered education and employment support, with the same amount delivering mental health support (16.1%). Over one-tenth of the charities delivered accommodation, alcohol and drug support (12.9%), and peer support (12.9%).

2.8.3 Prison: services to support offenders serving custodial prison sentences

Over one-fifth (22.6%) of charities delivered education and employment support in prison, with close to one-tenth (9.7%) delivering peer support. DSC found that only eight charities delivered support in prisons, covering at least 36

prisons across England and Wales, and all of Scotland's 15 prisons and Northern Ireland's three prisons. Additionally, just under one-fifth (19.4%) of charities worked with the MCTC in Colchester.

2.8.4 Support following release from prison

Armed forces charities delivering support to individuals following release from prison commonly delivered education and employment support (45.2%) and accommodation (32.3%), with a quarter (25.8%) of charities delivering mental health support. Over a fifth (22.6%) of charities provided peer support following their release from prison.

2.8.5 Support for families

A quarter (25.8%) of charities providing support to families delivered finance and debt support, with over one-tenth delivering peer support (16.1%), education and employment support (12.9%), and mental health support (12.9%).

2.8.6 Grant-making

Close to two-fifths (35.5%) of the charities provided grants to support individuals in the criminal justice system. Grant-making charities were marginally more likely to award grants to individuals than to organisations (19.4% versus 12.9%). Only one charity stated that it made grants to both individuals and organisations.

CHAPTER THREE

Collaboration, evaluation and perspectives on challenges

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter takes a mainly qualitative approach, drawing upon survey responses and short interviews with charity representatives to provide insights into the following topics:

- Partnership and collaboration
- Evaluation and impact
- Perspectives on challenges in delivering charitable support

3.2 PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

Figure 11 shows the extent of partnership and collaboration between armed forces charities and other organisations.

Nearly all of the charities featured in this report said they undertook some form of partnership or collaboration (90.6%). The most common form was partnership with other charities. Charities were considerably more likely to partner with other Service charities than with non-Service charities (84.4% versus 53.1% of charities).

More than two-fifths of the charities which support ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system partner with either HM Prison Service (43.8%) or the National Probation Service (43.8%). Over one-third (34.4%) of charities partner with police constabularies, with close to three-tenths (28.1%) of charities reporting collaboration with Armed Forces Covenant signatory organisations. Over one-fifth of charities partner with other statutory services (21.9%), with close to one-fifth of charities partnering with social services (18.8%) and Liaison and Diversion teams (15.6%).

Charities also specified collaborating with 'other organisations' as part of their criminal justice provision. Charities collaborating with other organisations accounted for a quarter (25.0%) of charities; of these, four charities reported working with community rehabilitation companies (CRCs), three with police and crime commissioners, and two with the NHS and local councils. Charities also reported partnerships with universities and other academic institutions, a law firm and a consultant.

Figure 11

Charities partnering with other organisations

Partners	Percentage
Liaison and Diversion teams	15.6%
Social services	18.8%
Statutory services	21.9%
Other organisations	25.0%
Covenant signatory organisations	28.1%
Police constabularies	34.4%
Probation service	43.8%
HM Prison service	43.8%
Non-Service charities	53.1%
Armed forces charities	84.4%

Percentage of charities

Note: the categories are not mutually exclusive, and the percentages therefore do not sum to 100. The figures are presented as percentages of all charities featured in this report (N=31).

DSC also asked the charities (through a survey question) how they identified and engaged with beneficiaries in need of support. All of the survey respondents (N=16) reported being reliant on signposting and referrals from other organisations. Common referral organisations included HM Prison Service, other Service charities and police constabularies.

Of the remaining charities, close to one-fifth (18.8%) received referrals from the National Probation Service, with over one-tenth (13.3%) received referrals from non-Service charities. Additionally, almost two-fifths (37.5%) of charities relied on self-referrals as a means of engaging with ex-Service personnel. As highlighted in the survey responses, working with other charities and external agencies (such as police constabularies) was a relatively common way of engaging with hard-to-reach beneficiaries.

Charities were also asked whether they had experienced any benefits of partnership; this question resulted in 15 responses (93.8% of survey respondents). All of the responses highlighted benefits of collaboration and partnership. Reported benefits included efficient use of funds and services for beneficiaries, the sharing of advice and knowledge, and referrals. Some insights from the survey into the perceived advantages of collaboration are provided in a selection of quotes below, along with a case study on the Cobseo Veterans in the Criminal Justice System Cluster, both of which provides an example of collaboration.

ARMED FORCES CHARITIES

How does your charity benefit from collaboration?

'Through collaboration we gain access to insights and skills that the [charity] staff team may not have, allowing us a more expansive view of veteran/criminal justice issues and best practice working models.'

'Our collaborative approach also enables clear referral pathways and the ability to promote what we offer to those who need support. At [charity] we see collaboration with other services and charities as an invaluable part of our provision.'

'It benefits us greatly because we get to reach and support more beneficiaries across the country.'

'We understand that we cannot support the veteran in isolation, and we need the skills of other organisations to support the veteran's journey.'

'Collaboration in the third sector is vital to ensuring the most efficient use of charitable funds. By partnering with expert organisations, we are able to ensure the most appropriate support for those who need it and in a timely fashion.'

Survey respondents

Note: charity details have been omitted to protect the anonymity of charities who took part in the survey.

The following case study on Cobseo, provides an example of multi-agency collaboration.

Case study 5:
COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP
Cobseo Veterans in the Criminal Justice System Cluster

Cobseo – The Confederation of Service Charities provides a single point of contact between the government (including local government and the devolved administrations), the Royal Household, the private sector and members of the armed forces community.

Cobseo's objectives are to represent, promote and further the interest of the armed forces community by:

- ■ exchanging and co-ordinating information internally;
- ■ identifying issues of common concern and co-ordinating any necessary and appropriate action;
- ■ acting as a point of contact for external agencies to members of Cobseo;
- ■ representing and supporting the needs and opinions of its member organisations, individually and collectively, at the central and local government levels and with other national and international agencies.

Since 2009, Cobseo has operated a working group system known as 'clusters'. These clusters were formed to implement Cobseo's collective desire to enhance collaborative working and to ensure issues could be raised, solutions identified, and subsequent actions taken or recommended. In 2014, the executive committee of Cobseo endorsed the importance of the clusters as a critical component of collective delivery and one of the main mechanisms by which Cobseo will conduct its work (Cobseo, 2019).

Originally referred to as the ex-Service Offenders Working Group, the Veterans in the Criminal Justice System Cluster is formed of a group of almost 30 organisations and operates to collaboratively discuss issues affecting ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system. Members include a mixture of armed forces charities, non-Service charities, individuals and governmental departments.

A joint chair model is in place, which enables the cluster to represent the different criminal justice support providers. Currently, representatives from SSAFA and RFEA serve as joint heads of the cluster. Members of the cluster have different specialisms, ranging from providing specialist programmes when ex-Service personnel are

identified at the police custody stage to providing support to families of individuals who have either served or are serving a prison sentence.

In 2016, the cluster identified a lack of information about the nature, type and scope of provision towards ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system. With funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund, the cluster commissioned the Veterans and Families Institute at Anglia Ruskin University to produce a directory of charitable and statutory service provision for individuals in the criminal justice system.

The report's recommendations suggest that the cluster should continue to act as a central forum, bringing together major service providers alongside providing regular analysis and updates on service provision to the wider community (Cooper et al., 2018b).

An example of a charity that works in partnership with other organisations as part of its criminal justice support is Forward Assist, covered in case study 6.

Case study 6:
COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP
Forward Assist

Forward Assist has a vision 'to engage veterans in community projects that utilise their valuable transferable skills' (Forward Assist, 2019). Forward Assist aims to create life-changing employment, volunteering, education and training opportunities that reduce social isolation and promote veterans' physical and mental wellbeing.

Forward Assist uses community benefit projects with the intention of giving veterans a sense of purpose, direction and belonging. These projects give ex-Service personnel an opportunity to use their transferable and leadership skills. The charity aims to provide practical approaches to assist those adjusting to life as a civilian, with interventions having a focus on post-traumatic growth. In this way, it hopes to ensure ex-Service personnel can live their lives filled with purpose, providing service to others, connection and growth.

To help ex-Service personnel to redevelop a sense of purpose, Forward Assist and its volunteers run the Citizenship Reload course, which is a tailor-made 12-week course established to help ex-Service personnel transition and assimilate into civilian life.

As part of its provision for criminal justice support, Forward Assist works in collaboration with the Northumbria CRC to help identify low - to medium-risk ex-Service personnel currently subject to community service requirements. Once identified, ex-Service personnel can volunteer with any of the Forward Assist community-based supervised activities, which includes the 'Veterans Health and Wellbeing Hub'. Additionally, ex-Service personnel can volunteer in the charity's veteran-led community cafes and mobile coffee truck.

Through its partnership with Northumbria CRC, Forward Assist is able to provide specialist support to ex-Service personnel to help them gain employment. It also provides access to specialist mental health interventions which are specific to individuals' needs.

The charity also collaborates with Starbucks UK to provide training to ex-Service personnel to become coffee baristas, which can in turn lead to employment with Starbucks and/or volunteer work for Forward Assist in its community cafe initiatives.

3.3 EVALUATION AND IMPACT

Evaluation can help charities to demonstrate their impact and, in doing so, earn the confidence of funders, donors, beneficiaries and stakeholders. It also enables charities to assess whether their current range of services is effective and, if not, to adapt them accordingly.

In total, over half (51.6%) of the charities specified undertaking some form of evaluation or monitoring. DSC investigated which procedures, practices and tools were commonly used by the charities to evaluate their criminal justice provision.

Three survey respondents reported that their charity had evaluated its work in the area of criminal justice through an external audit – that is, an audit that is carried out by an auditor who is external to and independent of the organisation (Law, 2009a).

Only one charity reported that it had evaluated its work using an internal audit – that is, an audit which an organisation carries out on its own behalf, normally to ensure that its internal controls are operating satisfactorily (Law, 2009b).

Other forms of evaluation cited by charities included focus groups and testimonials. One charity specified using the social return on investment (SROI) method to evaluate its criminal justice provision. SROI is an outcomes-based measurement tool that helps organisations to understand and quantify the social, environmental and economic value they are creating (NEF Consulting, 2019).

Project Nova is an example of a programme with evaluation through the process of external audit. This is featured in case study 7 as an example of collaboration and evaluation.

Case study 7:
COLLABORATION AND EVALUATION
Project Nova

Project Nova is delivered as a partnership between RFEA and Walking With The Wounded (WWTW). It works to identify and support ex-Service personnel who have been arrested or are at risk of arrest, to prevent further downward spirals and continued offending by supporting them back into society (WWTW, 2018). The initial pilot project ran from July 2014 to July 2015 in Norfolk and Suffolk.

Since the pilot stage, Project Nova has expanded and now operates across the East, North West and North East of England, as well as in South Yorkshire and Humberside, with plans to extend the project on a nationwide scale (WWTW, 2019).

Project Nova staff have combined experience of the armed forces, the criminal justice system and the charity sector. They are also skilled in engaging with ex-Service personnel to understand their military service, their lives before they joined the armed forces and their lives since their transition back into civilian life.

This enables the staff to undertake a needs assessment for each individual, before putting in place a holistic support programme from a network of armed forces charities and other organisations. Staff at Project Nova keep in touch with beneficiaries in order to maintain their already established connection and help to resolve any issues that may occur.

Project Nova works in partnership with multiple police forces, statutory bodies and community rehabilitation groups which refer beneficiaries to the programme. These organisations include the Norfolk and Suffolk Police & Crime Commissioners, Durham Police, Greater Manchester Police, NHS Liaison and Diversion teams, and the Humberside, Lincolnshire and North Yorkshire CRC.

Through funding from FiMT, RFEA and WWTW were able to commission Anglia Ruskin University to conduct an independent study into the effect of Project Nova on the lives of ex-Service personnel who had been or were at risk of being arrested.

The evaluation found evidence to suggest a trend in the reduction in recidivism across all offending types, for individuals who engaged in the programme (Fossey et al., 2017). However, the small sample size (34) was noted by the researchers in their conclusions (Fossey et al., 2017).

The evaluation reported that the project provides personally tailored support delivered by a team that has an intimate understanding of military culture and the military-to-civilian transition experience.

The evaluation also found that, while reduction in offending is a key metric for the police, other indicators, such as improvements in quality of life or social circumstances, may be better measures of efficacy for programmes delivering similar types of support (Cooper et al., 2018a).

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, internal audits were also cited by charities as a method of evaluating their services. An example of a programme being evaluated by an internal audit is Care after Combat's Project Phoenix, which is highlighted in case study 8.

Case study 8:
EVALUATION
Care after Combat's Project Phoenix

Care after Combat's Project Phoenix was designed to specifically respond to the issues raised in the Phillips Review (2014).[11] The project aims to reduce the number of reoffending ex-Service personnel released from prison. The project has been operational since May 2015 and operates across 42 prisons with over 162 beneficiaries involved with the project.

Project Phoenix works by assigning each ex-Service member in prison with a mentor 18 months prior to release, with mentors visiting individuals in prison to provide social support and practical advice upon their release from prison. Mentoring continues for a period of no less than 12 months following release. Each Project Phoenix mentor is ex-Service themselves, with some being ex-offenders. Each mentor will have completed a mentor module training programme, which is validated by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service.

In preparation for their initial prison visit, mentors are briefed on the individual offender's background. For the first nine months of the mentorship visits occur monthly, to allow a relationship to be established between the mentor and ex-Service member. During the final nine months, visits increase to fortnightly in preparation for release and focusing on issues related to life outside prison.

On release, the beneficiary is met by their mentor at the prison gate. The mentor ensures that the individual is registered with a local GP and dentist and ensures the individual meets with their probation officer. The mentor will also accompany the individual as they purchase their first weekly shop. The mentor and ex-Service person also meet on a weekly basis, with the mentor also being available by phone and text.

In December 2016, Care after Combat published its internal evaluation into Project Phoenix. The purpose of the evaluation was to give an account of the invention used as part of the project and the effectiveness of the project, alongside describing the ex-Service prison population.

The evaluation reported that of the 162 ex-Service members enrolled on the project, 44 prisoners had been released and had not reoffended. Of these 44 individuals, 20 had surpassed one year without reoffending, while 24 are still within their first 12 months following release. The evaluation also calculated the cost of mentoring each beneficiary to be approximately £5,020 per year.

Based on its findings the evaluation made 15 recommendations to help support ex-Service personnel in prisons. These recommendations ranged from the installation of a dedicated helpline for ex-Service personnel, to the allocation of further funding from the government to facilitate joint working partnerships with a wide range of providers who meet the requirements of labour market needs.

The internal audit of Care after Combats' Project Phoenix highlights another method for charities to assess the effectiveness of their provision for beneficiaries.

3.4 PERSPECTIVES ON CHALLENGES IN DELIVERING CHARITABLE SUPPORT

DSC's survey gathered insights on challenges that can arise in delivering support in the criminal justice system. Opinions on challenges varied significantly from charity to charity.

In total, 15 charities responded to the survey question about challenges. Common themes which emerged included issues around funding for programmes, identification of beneficiaries and working within the prison system itself. A selection of responses are reproduced below.

What challenges does your charity face in delivering support for your beneficiaries in the criminal justice system?

'Every prison seems to have a different attitude and working practice towards veterans. Referrals are random, largely due to local initiative.'

'We recognise that [our beneficiaries are] a niche subsection of the veteran community in prison. We would like to partner with the prime providers of support in the criminal justice system to support these veterans facing additional challenges. We also find it difficult at times to know the key meetings where governors attend where we can share our service detail and expertise.'

'Lack of guaranteed funding for veteran clients, especially those who refer from outside of our geographical area.'

Survey respondents

Note: charity details have been omitted to protect the anonymity of charities who took part in the survey.

The common challenge of funding reported by survey respondents could be explained by the fact that charities working to support offenders often rely on funding from the state rather than from public donations, as voluntary donations peak with stories of beneficiaries that resonate with potential donors (Body and Breeze, 2016; Kielburger, 2019). Therefore, as charities working in the criminal justice system are potentially less likely to use stories that resonate with donors to gain fundraising income, they are reliant on state funding to continue their programmes.

Additionally, research by NPC found that independent funders are increasingly frustrated with the criminal justice system, with many losing confidence in their ability to have an impact, particularly when funding work that is delivered in prisons (Wyld, 2018). The loss of confidence from independent funders could be explained by funders becoming aware of how difficult it has become for charities to access prisoners due to 'double-access' problems: firstly, getting into prisons to deliver programmes and secondly gaining access to prisoners for long enough to carry out activities (Clay, 2018). A further problem is the regular media headlines surrounding prison riots, lockdowns and staff shortages (Wyld, 2018).

3.5 CHAPTER THREE SUMMARY

3.5.1 Partnership and collaboration

Armed forces charities were more likely to partner with other armed forces charities than with non-Service charities (84.4% versus 53.1% of charities).

Partnerships with other criminal justice organisations were less common. Only 43.8% of charities partnered with HM Prison Service, while a further 43.8% partnered with the National Probation Service and 34.4% partnered with police constabularies.

Nevertheless, partnership was cited as an important aspect of support by charities, with survey respondents highlighting the benefits of partnership.

3.5.2 Evaluation and monitoring

Just over half (51.6%) of charities evaluated their services, with a variety of evaluation methods being used. External audits were the most common method of service evaluation undertaken by the charities, with focus groups, internal audits and testimonials also being cited as methods of evaluation.

3.5.3 Challenges in delivering support

Perspectives on challenges in delivering support varied significantly from charity to charity. However, some challenges to emerge included issues around funding for programmes, the identification of beneficiaries in need of support, and working within the prison system.

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CHAPTER FOUR

The last word: conclusions and recommendations

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The remit of this research was to provide an objective analysis of the subsector of 31 armed forces charities which support members of the armed forces community who come into contact with the criminal justice system. The report itself is a resource for policymakers, the media, researchers, and established and emerging charities.

DSC devised the following research questions at the commencement of this research:

- How many armed forces charities support individuals and their families in the criminal justice system?
- How is criminal justice support delivered to beneficiaries?
- What examples of collaboration, evaluation and challenges exist?

4.2 HOW MANY CHARITIES SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR FAMILIES IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM?

DSC's research found evidence of relatively small groups of charities delivering highly directed services. This research reveals that just 31 armed forces charities provide support for individuals in the criminal justice system, which represents only around 1.6% of the armed forces charity sector. Collectively, 15 of these charities helped at least 3,200 beneficiaries access criminal justice support and spent at least £4.5 million on provision within the year prior to DSC's survey.

If anything, the small number of charities raises further questions about the extent to which ex-Service personnel and their families are receiving criminal justice support from non-Service charities, and whether the support available from armed forces charities is sufficient to meet the need.

Furthermore, the research presented in this report shows how the charities delivering support in the criminal justice system are not one homogeneous group. In fact, small groups of charities deliver specific services at multiple stages of the criminal justice system, both within and outside of the prison system.

4.3 HOW IS CRIMINAL JUSTICE SUPPORT DELIVERED TO BENEFICIARIES?

At each stage of the criminal justice system, armed forces charities provide a range of services to help ex-Service personnel and to support their families.

Just over four-fifths (80.6%) of armed forces charities working in the criminal justice system provide support to individuals following their release from prison. Comparatively, over two-fifths (41.9%) of charities provide support to individuals who are currently in prison.

In total, 51.6% of charities provided education and employment support to beneficiaries accessing criminal justice support, with almost two-fifths (38.7%) of charities delivering accommodation. Close to one-third of charities provided peer support (32.3%) to beneficiaries accessing criminal justice support.

Armed forces charities also provided support to the family members of ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system, with close to two-fifths (38.7%) of charities providing such support. The most common types of support for family members were finance and debt support (25.8%) alongside education and employment support, mental health support, and peer support, each delivered by 16.1% of charities.

Close to two-fifths (37.5%) of the charities featured in this report made grants, with grants to individuals being more common than grants to organisations (19.4% versus 12.9%). Grants to individuals were most commonly awarded for accommodation, food and clothing, alongside grants towards securing employment or training towards employment. Grants to organisations were most commonly awarded to fund programmes which support ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system.

Relatively few charities delivered support for ex-Service personnel in prison. Eight charities stated that they provided support in prisons, covering a total of 36 prisons across England and Wales, all of Scotland's 15 prisons and Northern Ireland's three prisons; and reported delivering a range of services including education and employment support, peer support and mental health support. However, the demand for armed forces charities to deliver services directly in prisons may be low, as existing statistics suggest that ex-Service personnel make up only 3.6% of the prison population (MOJ, 2018).

4.4 WHAT EXAMPLES OF COLLABORATION, EVALUATION AND CHALLENGES EXIST?

DSC found that armed forces charities frequently collaborate with one another; however, they are less likely to partner with other non-Service charities or criminal justice organisations such as HM Prison Service and police constabularies. From this perspective, more could be done to encourage cross-sector collaboration. This concept forms one of DSC's key recommendations, as discussed in more detail in the following section.

In total, 51.6% of charities reported that they had evaluated their criminal justice support services. The most common method of evaluation was using an external audit, as reported by three charities. Other forms of evaluation used included focus groups, internal audits and testimonials.

Perspectives on challenges in delivering charitable support varied between charities. However, some key themes emerged from the survey responses. Most notable were the importance of identifying beneficiaries and the need for funding to run programmes.

4.5 RECOMMENDATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

4.5.1 Foster collaboration outside the armed forces charity sector

Collaboration emerged as a key theme in this report. Survey respondents reported benefits of collaboration, with the case studies featured throughout highlighting excellent examples of collaboration.

The Cobseo Veterans in the Criminal Justice System Cluster has taken the lead in promoting a collaborative approach to criminal justice provision. Programmes such as Project Nova further showcase the collaborative approach to provision between armed forces charities (RFEA and WWTW), police constabularies, and Liaison and Diversion services.

Many charities which deliver support to beneficiaries in the criminal justice system also worked with a range of referral organisations to locate and engage with hard-to-reach beneficiaries; these referral organisations included HM Prisons and National Probation Service and other armed forces charities. However, partnerships with Social Services and Liaison and Diversion services were less common and there is room for development in this respect. By establishing partnerships with Liaison and Diversion services, a greater number of armed forces charities could help to deliver support to ex-Service personnel as they enter the criminal justice system.

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By collaborating with the wider criminal justice sector, armed forces charities may benefit from sharing resources and may in turn benefit the wider sector through exchanging knowledge and expertise. Collaboration also potentially addresses the challenges raised by survey respondents who cited difficulties in locating beneficiaries in need of support, especially those within the prison system.

4.5.2 Further research

There is a critical need for more comprehensive figures on the number of ex-Service personnel across the different stages of the criminal justice system. Such figures would assist charities in their efforts to respond to beneficiaries across different stages of the criminal justice system. Additionally, further information on the characteristics of offences would be helpful for directing support and would potentially help better understand the scope of need.

The shortage of information on ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland may simply reflect the fact that Northern Ireland has yet to formally adopt the Armed Forces Covenant, and also the fact that ex-Service personnel are not seen as a vulnerable group within Northern Ireland's prison and probation systems (Armour et al., 2017). Further research which explores the experiences of ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland is needed to address the questions of how many ex-Service personnel come into contact with the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland and whether charities are adequately responding to this need.

4.5.3 Wider provision

This report focuses exclusively on organisations which meet DSC's definition of an armed forces charity (for a definition see page xiv). However, as acknowledged at the beginning of this report, many mainstream charities, such as CAIS Limited, Catch22, Sacro and Venture Trust, now operate specific programmes for ex-Service personnel and their families.

Many mainstream charities work alongside armed forces charities. For instance, Sacro collaborates with Poppyscotland as part of its Veterans Mentoring Service. Several Cobseo cluster members also serve the ex-Service community, despite lying outside the specific remit of this report.

Nevertheless, such charities undeniably provide valuable support for the ex-Service community. There are, after all, hundreds of organisations which deliver support to the UK's offender population, and ex-Service personnel and their families can approach these organisations for support (for example, Clinks has over 500 member organisations supporting individuals in the criminal justice system).

This is a worthy topic for further research and raises several interesting questions. Firstly, to what extent do mainstream charities support ex-Service personnel and their families in the criminal justice system? Secondly, how do those charities respond to such need?

A word from the authors

DSC has been researching and publishing analysis on the armed forces charity sector since 2014. Through our work, we have always striven to provide a resource through which readers can better understand the charities which proudly support the armed forces community.

It is hoped that this report will be used by policymakers, government, the media and charities themselves to provide clarity of knowledge and data on UK armed forces charities and their many beneficiaries.

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Armed Forces Charities
in the Criminal Justice System 2019

This report follows on from the Directory of Social Change's (DSC) *Sector Insight* reports on UK armed forces charities, a series which DSC has been publishing since 2014. Building on these broader studies, the *Focus On* series exists to provide a more specific analysis of the work of armed forces charities across the UK – in this case, charities which are making provision for Service personnel, veterans and their families who have come into contact with the criminal justice system. This study contributes to DSC's growing body of research on the armed forces charity sector, which also includes the *www.armedforcescharities.org.uk* website.

This report provides an overview of the criminal justice provision made by armed forces charities registered across the UK, focusing on:

- Exploration of criminal justice support offered by charities
- Assessment of expenditure on criminal justice provision
- Case studies on charities delivering support
- Collaboration, evaluation and challenges
- Conclusions and recommendations

This is a unique resource for charities, government, policymakers and researchers to understand what armed forces charities deliver in terms of their criminal justice provision. This subject area has been thoroughly explored to provide a body of evidence and insightful analysis which informs of policy, practice and research.

'For anyone claiming to hold dear the interests of the Armed Forces community, be they politician, official, media or charity, the DSC's Focus On series is a must read. This particular report provides the evidence base and hence understanding of the Criminal Justice System, upon which all good policy decisions should be made.'

Air Vice-Marshal Ray Lock CBE, Chief Executive, Forces in Mind Trust

'Having the support of a charity that knows what they have been through and takes an interest in them can give veterans the strength they need to turn their lives around. I welcome this report, which provides insight into the delivery of support to veterans in the Criminal Justice System.'

Chloe Mackay, Co-Chair, Cobseo Veterans in the Criminal Justice System Cluster (from the Foreword)

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directory of social change

**helping you
to help others**

This report is part of a wider project for and about armed forces charities, which includes the website
www.armedforcescharities.org.uk