



### Evidence based findings about the British veteran population

The Ministry of Defence estimated that there were approximately 2.5 million UK Armed Forces veterans residing in households across Great Britain in 2016, based on responses to the Annual Population Survey conducted by the Office for National Statistics. UK-wide, in 2016 the veteran population represented 5% of household residents aged over 16. Whilst the overall number of veterans residing in Great Britain is projected to decrease over the next years, the percentage of veterans of working age is projected to increase from 37% in 2016 to 44% by 2028.

The Northern Hub for Veterans and Military Families Research is a collective of academics, service providers and service users with an interest in improving the health and social wellbeing of veterans and their families across the life-span.

[www.northumbria.ac.uk/militaryveterans](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/militaryveterans)

The 2011 Armed Forces Act provided a comprehensive legislative framework for the British Armed Forces and created the requirement for an annual Armed Forces covenant report to UK Parliament each year. In order to support the armed forces community more effectively, there is an increasing demand for evidence-based findings.

One of the main goals of the Map of Need project is to provide evidence-based findings about the veteran population. Data sharing partnerships are central to the analysis within the project, allowing us the ability to statistically compare multiple data sources when examining a veteran or family issue, and then compare these with wider research findings. The approach we have adopted seeks to use multiple data sources to provide end users with the most accurate picture of a phenomenon as possible.

### By using service usage data, we are obtaining a reliable source of actual service usage.

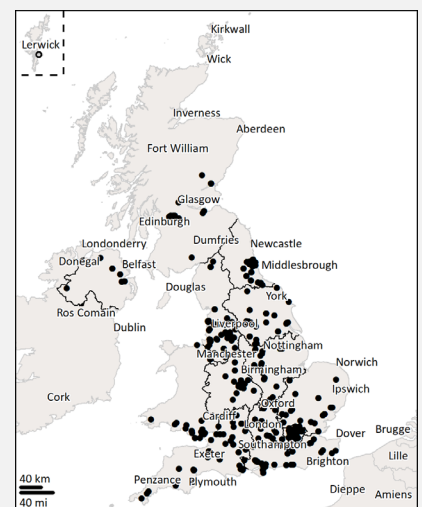
Financial hardship and housing issues are the most prevalent topics affecting veterans that seek assistance from the main charities in the sector. The data shows that most of those that seek assistance for financial hardship are in fact older veterans (>50 years). Also, the veteran population seeking financial assistance is spatially differentiated based on the military branch that they served in. UK-wide, a similar pattern in all the data analysed suggests that benevolence payments to the veteran community cannot be only explained by deprivation in a given area.

- The Northern Hub for Veterans and Military Families Research developed an online directory of services available to the veteran community.
- The online directory is publicly available at:

<https://www.veteransgateway.org.uk/ocal-support/>

The Northern Hub for Veterans and Military Families Research

Contact: Dr Matt Kiernan  
[matt.kiernan@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:matt.kiernan@northumbria.ac.uk)



## RBL's call centre contacts (2014/17)

From the sample of contacts used in this analysis (N= 187,270), the South West had the highest number of RBL contacts (n= 30,750; 16%), whilst Scotland had the lowest (n= 3,369; 2%).

- When considering a crude call rate which takes into account the ratio between the number of contacts compared to the total population, the South West also had the highest yearly average call rate (15 yearly average contacts per 10,000 population), followed by Wales (10 yearly average contacts per 10,000 population). Scotland and London had the lowest yearly average call rate, registering less than 2 yearly average contacts per 10,000 population.

If we consider the 2014/17 timeframe, in most of the regions, 85+ years was the age range with more recipients of assistance.

- The only exceptions were found in Northern Ireland, where the 60-64 years age range grouped more contacts, and the North East where 30-34 years was the age range with more contacts.

Between 2014/17, approximately 34% (n= 63,189) of the contacts requested financial support. This was by far the main purpose of requested assistance, followed by 'Welfare Breaks' (n= 30,886; 17%).

- However, between 2014 and 2017, UK wide the number of contacts requesting financial support decreased -31.8%, from 17,712 contacts in 2014 to 12,081 in 2017.

Plymouth (n= 4,584; 2.45%) followed by Wiltshire (n= 4,571; 2.44%), followed by Cornwall (n= 3,681; 1.97%) were the main local authorities regarding the count of RBL contacts.

- The results show that some local authorities had a high number of contacts in areas that did not have a significant presence of stationed military personnel or military pension recipients, i.e., Birmingham, Liverpool, Leeds, Cardiff.

Richmondshire (79.9 yearly average calls by 10,000 population) followed by Gosport (44.8 yearly average calls by 10,000 population) followed by Plymouth (44.7 yearly average calls by 10,000 population) were the top 3 local authorities regarding RBL's call rate.

- The results show that several local authorities, that do not sit within the most deprived nationally, registered a high number of contacts per 10,000 population (Richmondshire, Rushmoor, Rutland, Wiltshire).

Current government area deprivation indices perform poorly at predicting the location of RBL assistance, nonetheless it was still possible to find an association between income deprivation in the general population and RBL contacts.

- Out of the 12 devolved administrations and England's regions, there was a positive statistically significant relationship between income deprivation in the general population and RBL contacts in 9 (75%) of them. Meaning that the higher the income deprivation in the areas, the higher the number of RBL contacts. In 3 (25%) this relationship did not exist or could be attributed to random chance alone (Northern Ireland, Scotland and South West).
- Out of the 12 devolved administrations and England's regions, there is a positive statistically significant relationship between overall deprivation in the general population and RBL contacts in 6 (50%) of them. Meaning that the higher the overall deprivation in the areas, the higher the number of RBL contacts. In 6 (50%) of the regions this relationship does not exist or could be attributed to random chance alone.
- Therefore, income deprivation (as opposed to overall deprivation) performed as a better predictor, however, it is not considered reliable enough to be used as a predictor of potential clients. This suggests that, by itself, poverty in the general population cannot be used as a proxy to explain hardship in the veteran population.
  - The North West was the region where area deprivation performed as a better predictor. However, even in the North West, income deprivation only explains approximately 34% of the spatial variation in RBL contacts.

The location of military pension recipients performed much better when used to predict the location of RBL contacts.

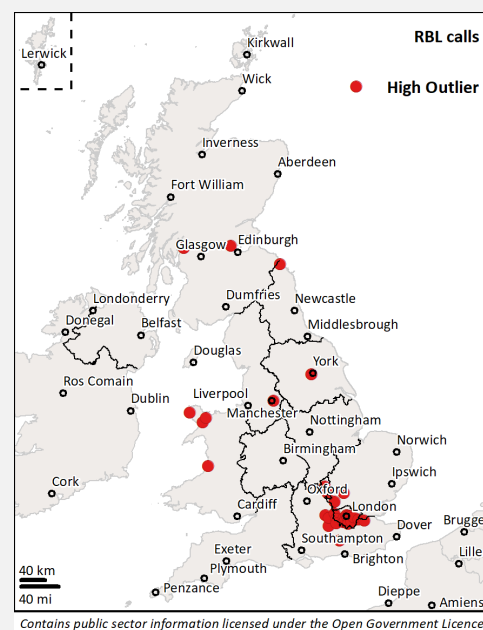
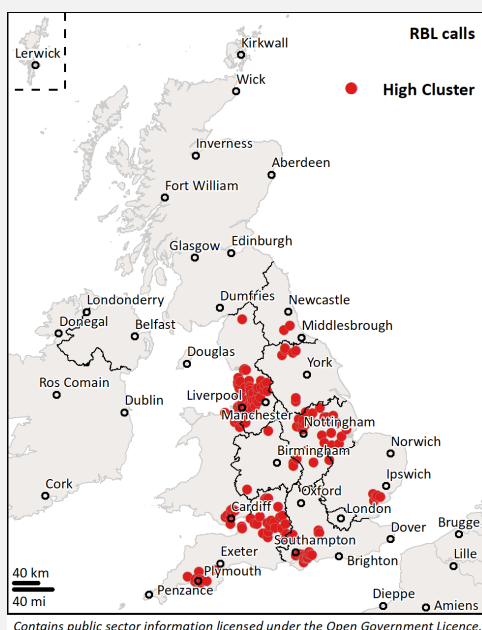
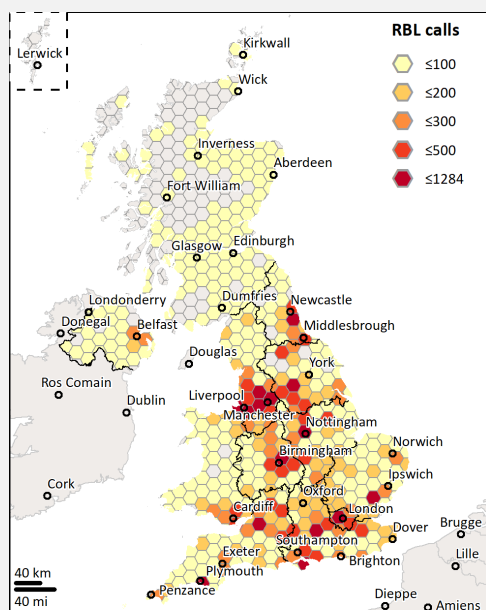
- This indicates that the presence of military pension recipients is a helpful proxy to predict the potential location of individuals that may require RBL services. This finding also suggests that many of the recipients seeking RBL assistance might already be in receipt of a pension.

At the postcode level, there are several areas that we draw the reader's attention to:

- KY16 (Scotland): In 2014 it ranked #7 amongst Scotland's postcode districts regarding the number of contacts. By 2015, it was ranked as #43 postcode in Scotland for contacts before rising to #2 in 2016 where it remained in 2017.
- DE13 (West Midlands) ranked #73 amongst West Midlands postcodes in 2014. However, contacts increased, and DE13 ranked #1 in 2015 and 2016 before falling abruptly to #145 in 2017.
- Between 2014 and 2017, 3 postcodes concentrated almost 2% (n= 3,392) of all the UK contacts: DL9, CO2 and SP4.
  - DL9 (Yorkshire and the Humber): Between 2014 and 2017, 0.65% (n= 1,214) of RBL's call centre contacts in the UK were associated with the DL9 postcode (Catterick Garrison). Catterick Garrison is the UK's largest Army garrison.
  - CO2 (East of England): Between 2014 and 2017, 0.58% (n= 1,092) of RBL's call centre contacts in the UK were associated with the CO2 postcode (Colchester).
  - SP4 (South West): Between 2014 and 2017, 0.58% (n= 1,086) of RBL's call centre contacts in the UK were associated with the SP4 postcode (Salisbury, Wiltshire).

The data not only shows spatial clustering but also identifies spatial outliers. Overall, between 2014 and 2017 the spatial distribution of RBL contacts across the devolved administrations and English regions remained consistent.

- The results identify three main regions within the UK where the clusters of postcode districts concentrate. England's North West, South West and East Midlands.
- The outliers mostly concentrate across London and the South East.
- The results show that the postcode districts of high concentration of contacts remained the same between 2014 and 2017. What this demonstrates is that there are clear areas of continuous demand for RBL assistance and there is nothing within this data to suggest that there would be a sudden change in the near future of this geospatial distribution.



The sample used in this study constitutes historical time-based data, which can be used to create a forecast, a prediction of RBL contacts at the postcode level. The number of contacts is then predicted for future years based on the observed years of data (2014/17).

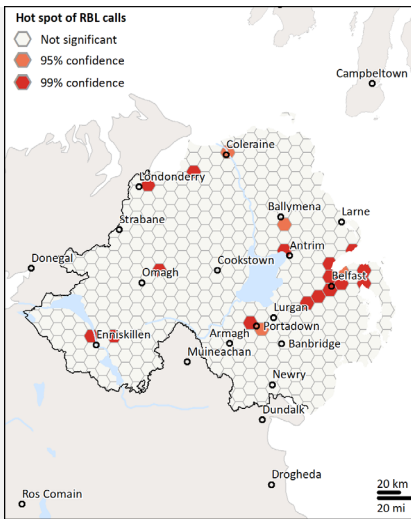
- At a macro scale, when compared with the year 2017, it is expected a +17% increase of contacts from Scotland in the year 2019, a +1% increase in Yorkshire and the Humber, and a +3% increase in both West Midlands and London.
- Focusing on the devolved administrations and England's regions that are expected to decrease the number of contacts, it is expected that in 2019 Wales will register a decrease of -20%, followed by East of England (-12%) and Northern Ireland (-11%).
- Shifting the focus to the postcode level, between 2017 and 2019 it is expected that the majority of the top 10 postcodes regarding the number of RBL contacts will increase their number of contacts, with GU11 (South East) standing out with a forecasted increase of +18%, followed by ME20 (South East) which is expected to increase by +17% the number of RBL contacts.

*Trend at the macro level.*

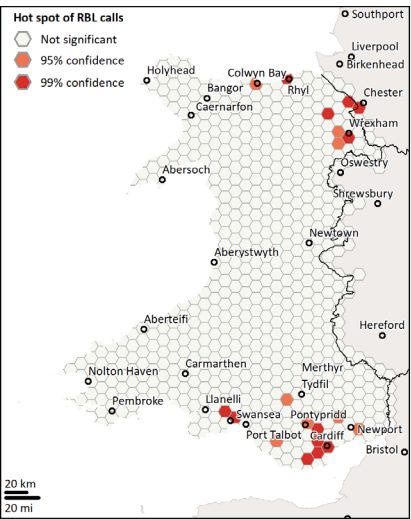
	Number of observed contacts				Forecast (expected number of contacts)			Range surrounding forecast, in which future call count is expected to fall (95% confidence interval)			
								2018 forecast		2019 forecast	
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Forecast 2017/19% change	Lower confidence bound	Upper confidence bound	Lower confidence bound	Upper confidence bound
Northern Ireland	1,661	1,557	1,308	1,534	1,414	1,359	-11%	1,166	1,662	1,109	1,609
Scotland	670	855	738	1,106	1,170	1,296	17%	973	1,368	1,098	1,493
Wales	3,345	3,515	2,595	2,950	2,551	2,352	-20%	2,013	3,089	1,815	2,890
North East	2,484	2,511	2,264	2,542	2,542	2,542	0%	2,317	2,767	2,317	2,767
North West	7,114	7,014	6,374	6,628	6,320	6,122	-8%	5,954	6,686	5,755	6,488
Yorkshire and the Humber	4,065	4,418	4,017	4,448	4,393	4,475	1%	4,030	4,757	4,112	4,839
West Midlands	3,755	4,338	3,898	3,788	3,857	3,883	3%	3,235	4,479	3,248	4,517
East Midlands	4,397	4,481	3,864	4,356	4,155	4,095	-6%	3,705	4,606	3,645	4,545
East of England	4,242	4,217	3,571	3,863	3,573	3,406	-12%	3,195	3,952	3,028	3,785
London	1,519	1,808	1,598	1,534	1,572	1,585	3%	1,262	1,882	1,269	1,901
South East	6,415	6,672	6,105	6,386	6,180	6,122	-4%	5,790	6,571	5,731	6,512
South West	7,352	8,193	7,244	7,961	7,810	7,908	-1%	6,948	8,671	7,042	8,774

*Trend at the postcode level.*

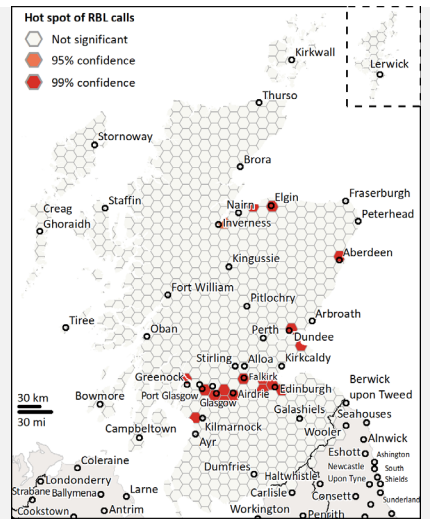
Postcode	Number of observed contacts				Forecast (expected number of contacts)			Range surrounding forecast, in which future call count is expected to fall (95% confidence interval)			
								2018 forecast		2019 forecast	
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Forecast 2017/19% change	Lower confidence bound	Upper confidence bound	Lower confidence bound	Upper confidence bound
DL9 (Yorkshire and the Humber)	310	286	282	336	332	341	1%	280	384	288	394
SP4 (South West)	242	299	277	268	276	281	5%	223	329	227	335
CO2 (East of England)	291	281	260	260	247	235	-9%	238	256	226	244
GU11 (South East)	191	248	255	260	285	306	18%	246	323	266	345
SP9 (South West)	206	220	208	202	203	202	0%	186	220	185	219
PL6 (South West)	199	262	199	187	187	184	-2%	115	260	110	258
PO13 (South East)	195	219	212	183	184	179	-2%	149	220	142	216
PO12 (South East)	149	175	180	168	178	184	10%	153	204	158	210
PL5 (South West)	161	240	211	167	175	172	3%	86	264	81	264
ME20 (South East)	91	97	93	148	155	173	17%	120	190	137	209



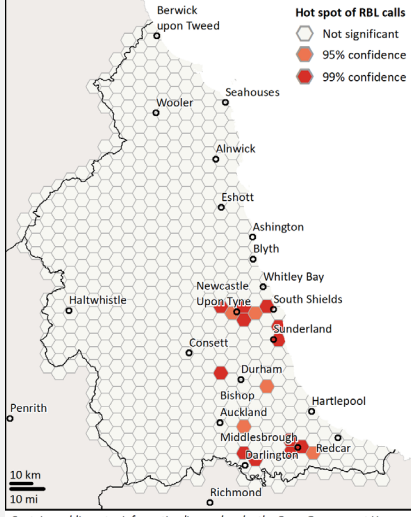
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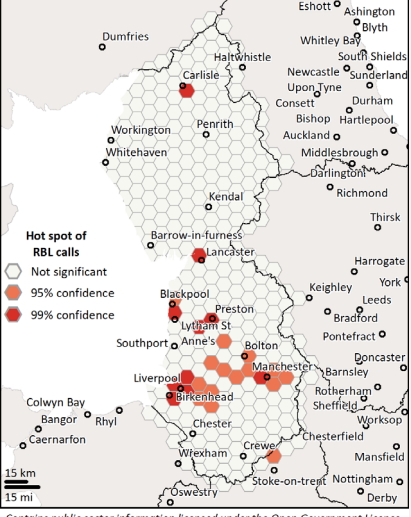
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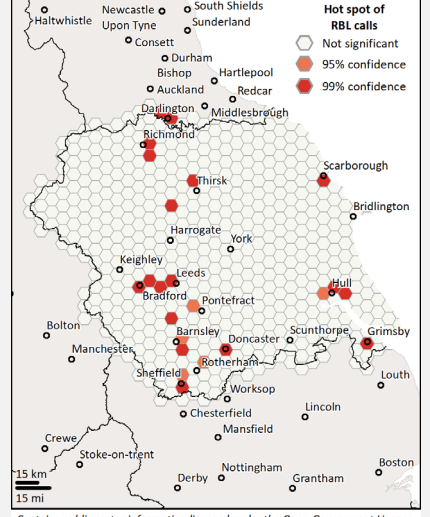
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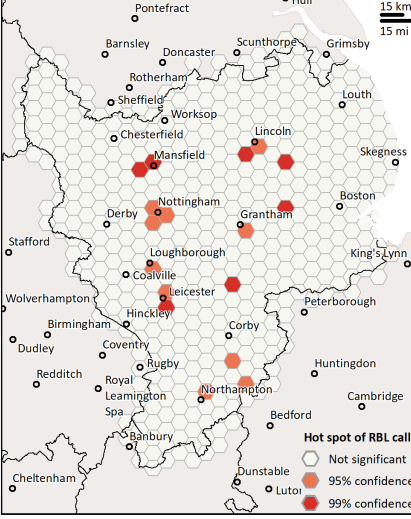
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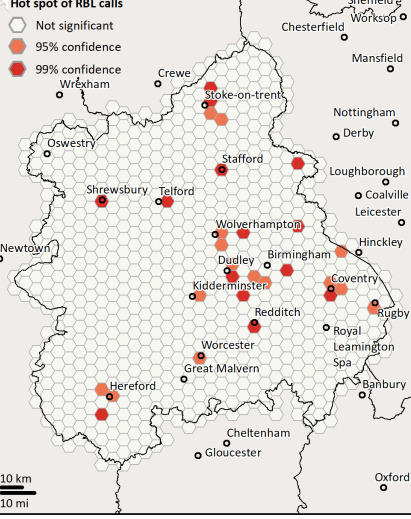
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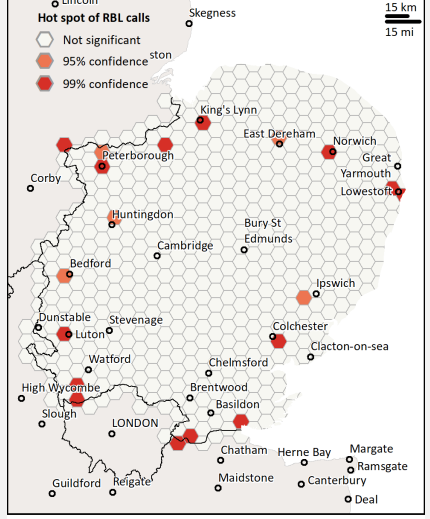
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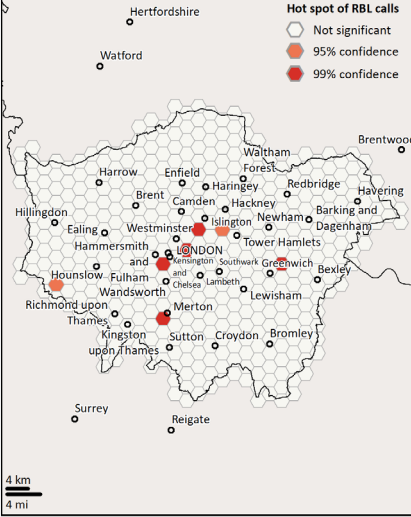
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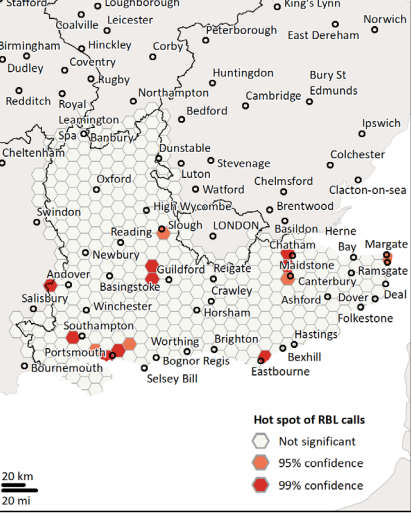
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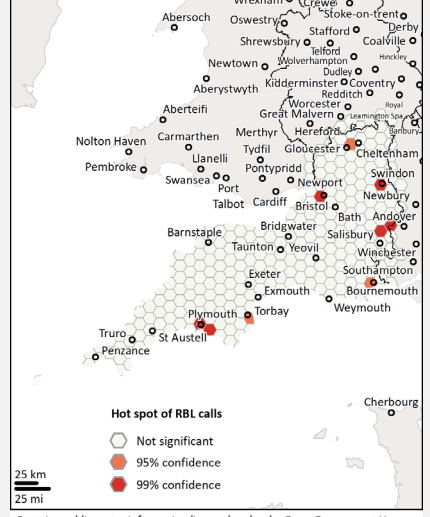
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