Usage of the directory of services (Local Support) on Veterans' Gateway

December 2019

ARMED FORCES
COVENANT
FUND TRUST

The Northern Hub for Veterans and Military Families Research

Northumbria University
NEWCASTLE

Analytical Methodology

Hexagonal binning

Analysis was conducted in order to normalise geographical space across the UK for mapping analysis. This was achieved through the process of aggregating and summarizing spatial data into equal sized connected hexagons. This method is referred to as hexagonal binning. Using regularly spaced hexagons for spatial analysis (opposed to irregular shaped areas such as counties, local authorities, etc.), resolves issues such as disparities in perceptions between geographical areas which vary significantly in shape and size. It is important to note the purpose of hexagonal binning is to assist in the visualization of spatial data and that the units do not have a correspondence with real-world area boundaries.

Analysis of spatial hotspots

Analysis was conducted to identify significant postcode districts which are hotspots with regards to the number of directory users. The hotspot analysis uses the Getis-Ord Gi* statistic (pronounced G-i-star) to indicate geographical areas with counts of users more pronounced than one would expect in a random distribution of users at the regional level. This method works by looking at each area within the context of neighbouring areas. The local sum of users for an area and the neighbouring areas is compared proportionally to the sum of users in all areas in the region; when the local sum differs significantly from the expected range, and when that difference is too large to be the result of random chance, a statistically significant hotspot of users is identified.

Analysis of spatial outliers

Analysis was conducted to identify significant postcode districts that are outliers with regards to the number of directory users. Outliers are postcodes districts that have a high number of users in comparison with neighbouring postcode districts. The method uses the Anselin Local Moran's I statistic to indicate whether the observed spatial outliers are more pronounced than one would expect in a random distribution of those same values. Only the postcode districts that have at least a 95% confidence level are identified as outliers.

Map of Need Covenant Officers

The geospatial directory of services is continuously updated with the collaboration of trusted partners that are responsible for a given geographical area: Covenant Officers (COs). We rely in the local knowledge of these trusted partners to make sure the directory is meaningful to each veteran community across the UK. The following table lists the current geographical coverage as at December 2019.

Map of Need Covenant Officers

UK Wide COs	Coverage
The Royal British Legion	UK
Cobseo	UK

England COs	Coverage
Armed Forces South East Connect	Surrey, Kent, Sussex, West Sussex, Hampshire, Brighton and Hove, Medway
Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Manchester City, Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford, Wigan
Dorset Local Authority	Dorset
Milton Keynes, Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire & Luton Councils	Milton Keynes, Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire, Luton
Rutland County Council	Rutland, Harborough, South Kesteven
Lancashire Armed Forces Covenant Hub	Lancashire
Renewing the Covenant in the Capital	London City, Greater London
West Midlands Combined Taskforce	West Midlands
Charnwood, Melton and Rushcliffe Councils	Charnwood, Melton, Rushcliffe

Wales COs	Coverage
Welsh Government	Wales

Northern Ireland COs	Coverage
The Veterans Support Office	Northern Ireland

Scotland COs	Coverage
To be determined by Central Scottish Government	Scotland

Key Findings – December 2019

The directory of services within the Veterans' Gateway website provides veterans, service families and health and social care providers with easy access to thousands of services, which provide care or support to veterans and service families across the UK.

On the 1st January 2020, the directory of services included **15,940** markers, each representing a service available to veterans or service families.

During December 2019 the directory attracted **704** individual searches for services.
- A total of **203** cases were from the Alfresco platform. The Alfresco platform enables multiple trusted partners to engage and update the directory in real-time.
- A total of **2** cases were from the mobile version of the directory.
- A total of **497** cases were from the online directory of services (Local Support) on Veterans' Gateway.
- A total of **2** cases had no referrer recorded.
- Because the mobile version of the directory was still in internal testing, the analysis for December 2019 focus on usage from the online directory of services (N= 497).
  - Among **497** cases that had the online directory of services as the referrer, a total of **25** cases had users located outside of the UK, and a total of **472** cases had users located within the UK.

Table 1 provides an overview of the general criteria of searches made UK-wide through the directory during December 2019. This table combines all searches made into general categories of search criteria.
- 'Mental Wellbeing', followed by 'Housing', followed by 'Employment' and 'Finances' were the primary general search criteria for users located in the UK during December 2019.

Table 2 provides a more detailed breakdown of the exact criteria of all searches made UK-wide through the directory during December 2019. The top ten search criteria accessed by users located in the UK during December 2019 are highlighted.
- 'Mental Wellbeing - Accessing Support', followed by 'Mental Wellbeing - Support Groups and Emotional Support', followed by 'Housing - Homelessness' were the primary search criteria.

Figures 1 to 3 illustrate the spatial distribution of all users located across the UK during December 2019, and the spatial hotspots and outliers in terms of usage throughout December 2019.

Table 3 provides an overview of the usage across each country/region of the UK during December 2019.
- South East, followed by North West, followed by London were the regions with the highest usage during December 2019.

Table 4 provides an overview of the 20 local authorities with the highest usage during December 2019.

- Carlisle, followed by Welwyn Hatfield, followed by Preston were the local authorities with the highest usage.

Table 5 provides a detailed breakdown of user top search criteria within each region of the UK during December 2019. Tables 6 and 7 provide an overview of the searches that were located outside of the UK.

- 'Employment' followed by 'Housing', followed by 'Finances' were the primary general search criteria for users located outside of the UK during December 2019.

Usage of the directory of services

Table 1. General search criteria from users located in the UK (December 2019)
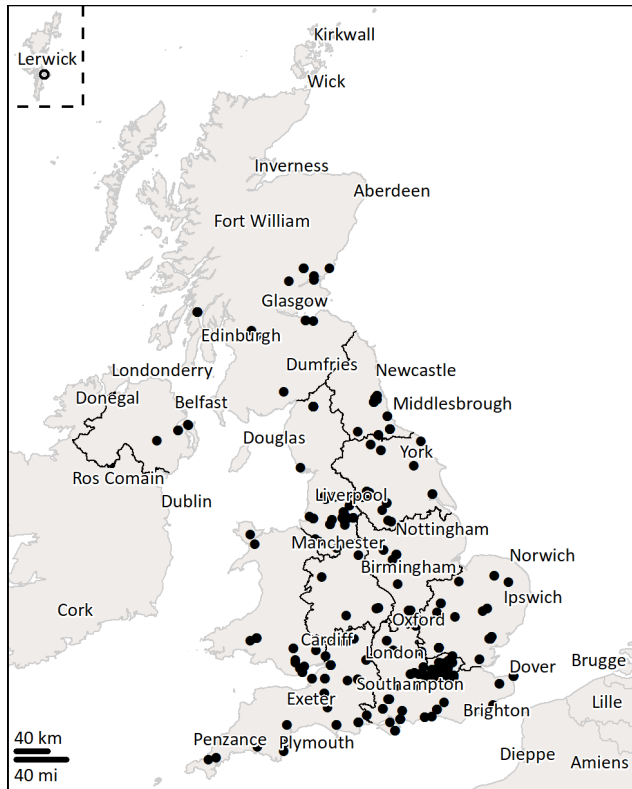
Search Criteria	Search Count	Search Percentage
Mental Wellbeing	144	30.51%
Housing	61	12.92%
Employment	53	11.23%
Finances	53	11.23%
Family and Communities	42	8.90%
Physical Health	33	6.99%
Local Government Support	30	6.36%
Specific search for an organisation	25	5.30%
National Charities/Organisations	19	4.03%
Legal Support and Advocacy	12	2.54%
Total	**472**	**100.00%**

Table 2. A detailed breakdown of exact search criteria from users located in the UK (December 2019)

Search Criteria	Search Count	Search Percentage
Mental Wellbeing - Accessing Support	63	13.35%
Mental Wellbeing - Support Groups and Emotional Support	46	9.75%
Housing - Homelessness	29	6.14%
Employment - Job Seeking	26	5.51%
Specific search for an organisation	25	5.30%
Finances - Grants	18	3.81%
Family and Communities - Support Groups and Emotional Support	15	3.18%
Mental Wellbeing - GPs	15	3.18%
Finances - Pensions and Compensation	14	2.97%
Housing - Housing Advice and Support	12	2.54%
Family and Communities - Recreation	11	2.33%
Employment - Education and Training	10	2.12%
Family and Communities - Support for Carers	10	2.12%
Legal Support and Advocacy - Legal Advice	10	2.12%
Finances - Benefits	9	1.91%
Local Government Support - Wales	9	1.91%
National Charities/Organisations - ASDIC Drop In Centres	9	1.91%
Local Government Support - South East	8	1.69%
Mental Wellbeing - Treatment	8	1.69%
Housing - Eviction and Repossession	7	1.48%
Employment - Support for Offenders	6	1.27%
Finances - Money and Debt Advice	6	1.27%
Mental Wellbeing - Drug and Alcohol Services	6	1.27%
Physical Health - Home and Mobility Aids	6	1.27%
Physical Health - Nursing and Dementia Care	6	1.27%
Employment - Self Employment	5	1.06%
Finances - Financial Services	5	1.06%
Physical Health - Support Groups and Emotional Support	5	1.06%
Housing - Independent Living	4	0.85%
Housing - Supported Living	4	0.85%
Mental Wellbeing - Sports	4	0.85%

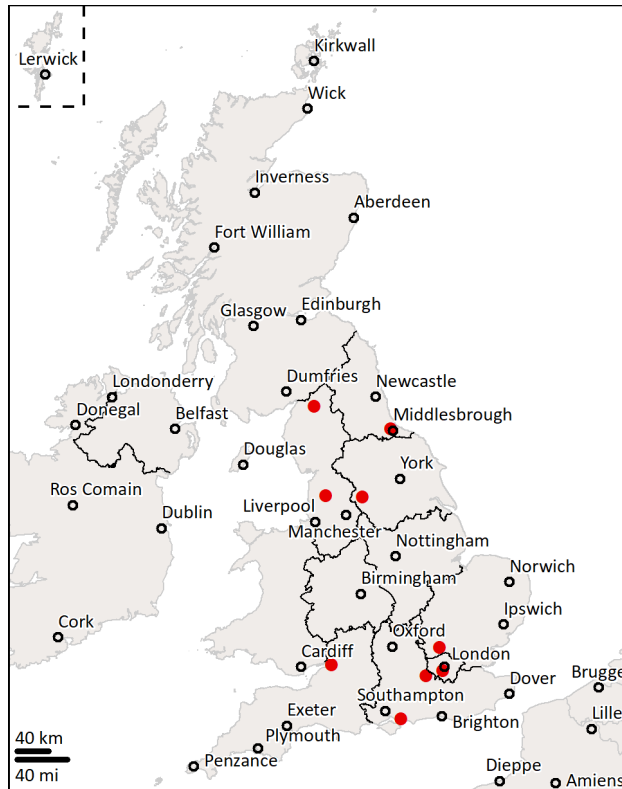| Search Criteria	Search Count	Search Percentage
National Charities/Organisations - SSAFA	4	0.85%
Physical Health - GPs	4	0.85%
Employment - Transition	3	0.64%
Employment - Volunteering	3	0.64%
Family and Communities - Bereavement	3	0.64%
Local Government Support - East of England	3	0.64%
Local Government Support - South West	3	0.64%
Local Government Support - West Midlands	3	0.64%
National Charities/Organisations - Help for Heroes	3	0.64%
National Charities/Organisations - Royal British Legion	3	0.64%
Physical Health - Healthcare Services	3	0.64%
Physical Health - Rehabilitation and Recovery	3	0.64%
Family and Communities - Drug and Alcohol Services	2	0.42%
Housing - Respite Care (Day Care and Respite)	2	0.42%
Housing - Retirement	2	0.42%
Legal Support and Advocacy - Legal Aid	2	0.42%
Local Government Support - North East	2	0.42%
Mental Wellbeing - Bereavement	2	0.42%
Physical Health - Drug and Alcohol Services	2	0.42%
Family and Communities - GPs	1	0.21%
Finances - Support for the Gurkha Community	1	0.21%
Housing - Nursing and Dementia Care	1	0.21%
Local Government Support - East Midlands	1	0.21%
Local Government Support - Northern Ireland	1	0.21%
Physical Health - Blind Veterans	1	0.21%
Physical Health - End of Life Care	1	0.21%
Physical Health - Limb Loss	1	0.21%
Physical Health - Sports	1	0.21%
Total	472	100%

Figure 1. User locations in the UK (01/12/2019 - 31/12/2019)

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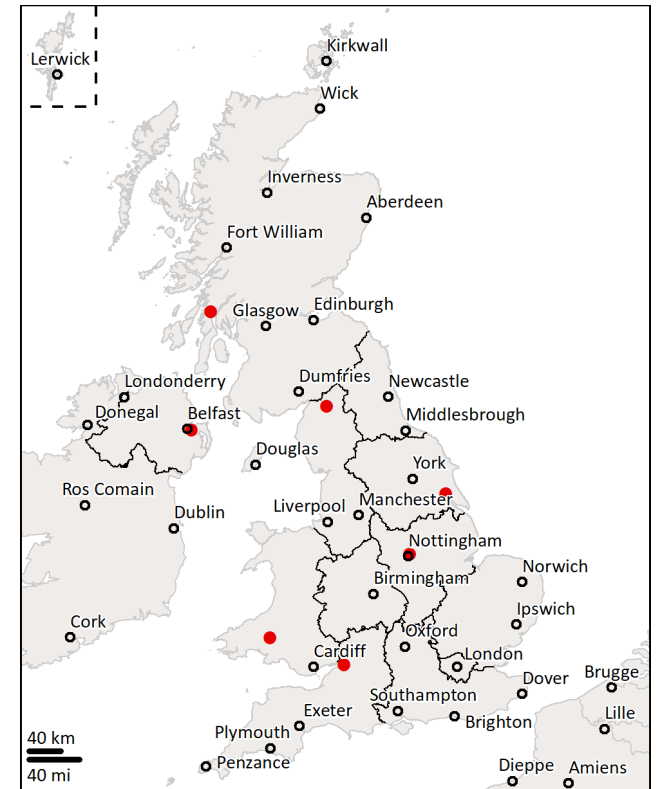*The figure above shows the location of all the postcode districts with directory users during December 2019.*

Figure 2. User hotspots in the UK (01/12/2019 - 31/12/2019)

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The figure above shows postcode districts that can be considered to be hotspots, because they have a high number of directory users in comparison with the remanaining postcodes. This pattern is not attributable to random chance.

Figure 3. User outliers in the UK (01/12/2019 - 31/12/2019)

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The figure above shows postcode districts that can be considered to be outliers, because they have a high number of directory users and are surrounded by postcode districts with a low number of directory users. This pattern is not attributable to random chance.
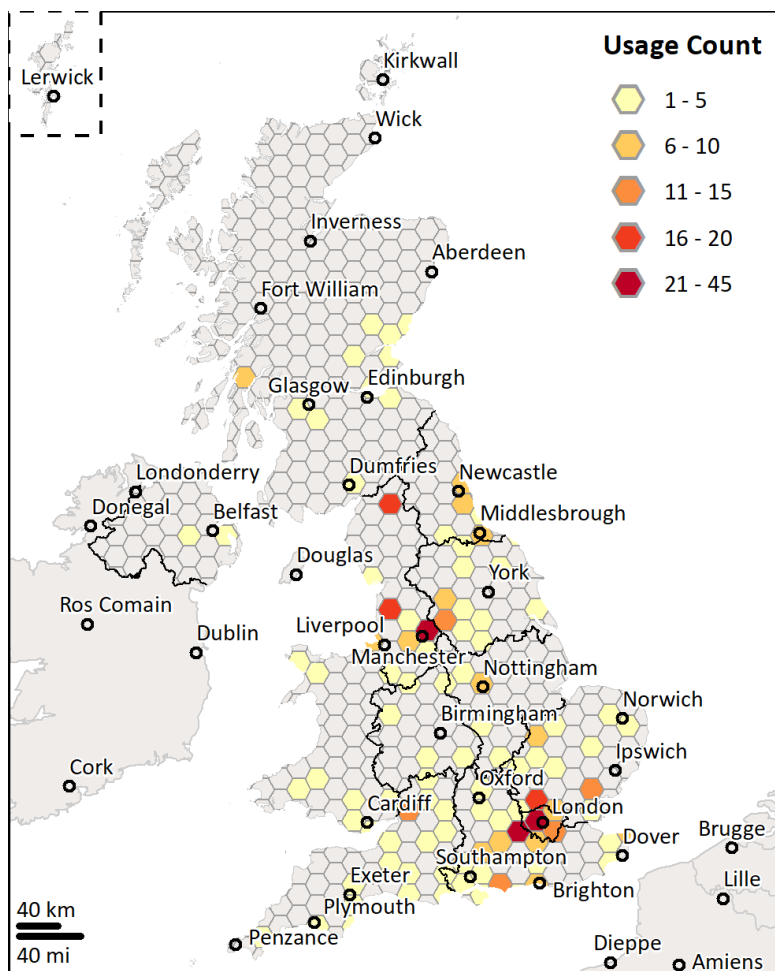
Figure 4. User locations in the UK (01/12/2019 - 31/12/2019)

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The figure above shows the location and count of usage across the UK. Each hexagonal area is represented with the count of usage on that same area.

Table 3. UK regional usage between 01/12/2019 - 31/12/2019

N = 472

Region	Usage Count	Usage Percentage
South East	92	19.49%
North West	84	17.80%
London	64	13.56%
East of England	50	10.59%
South West	45	9.53%
Yorkshire and The Humber	38	8.05%
North East	28	5.93%
Scotland	26	5.51%
Wales	19	4.03%
East Midlands	13	2.75%
West Midlands	7	1.48%
Northern Ireland	6	1.27%

Table 4. Main local authorities for usage (01/12/2019 - 31/12/2019)

N = 472

Top 20 Local Authorities	Usage Count	Usage Percentage
Carlisle	19	4.03%
Welwyn Hatfield	18	3.81%
Preston	17	3.60%
Bradford	13	2.75%
Wandsworth	13	2.75%
Colchester	12	2.54%
South Gloucestershire	12	2.54%
Manchester	11	2.33%
Portsmouth	11	2.33%
Runnymede	11	2.33%
Calderdale	10	2.12%
Elmbridge	9	1.91%
Stockton-on-Tees	9	1.91%
Tower Hamlets	9	1.91%
Argyll & Bute	8	1.69%
Richmond upon Thames	8	1.69%
Bury	7	1.48%
Gateshead	7	1.48%
Huntingdonshire	7	1.48%
Thanet	7	1.48%

Table 5. A detailed breakdown of top 3 search criteria by region from users located in the UK (December 2019)

Region	Top 3 Search Criteria	Usage Count	Percentage of Regional Usage
East Midlands	Housing - Eviction and Repossession	5	38.46%
	Mental Wellbeing - Support Groups and Emotional Support	2	15.38%
	Mental Wellbeing - Treatment	2	15.38%
East of England	Mental Wellbeing - Support Groups and Emotional Support	17	34.00%
	Mental Wellbeing - Accessing Support	7	14.00%
	National Charities/Organisations - ASDIC Drop In Centres	6	12.00%
London	Mental Wellbeing - Accessing Support	9	14.06%
	Family and Communities - Recreation	6	9.38%
	Employment - Support for Offenders	4	6.25%
North East	Mental Wellbeing - Accessing Support	9	32.14%
	Family and Communities - Recreation	2	7.14%
	Family and Communities - Support Groups and Emotional Support	2	7.14%
North West	Mental Wellbeing - GPs	14	16.67%
	Mental Wellbeing - Accessing Support	11	13.10%
	Mental Wellbeing - Support Groups and Emotional Support	10	11.90%
Northern Ireland	Finances - Pensions and Compensation	3	50.00%
	Finances - Grants	1	16.67%
	Mental Wellbeing - Bereavement	1	16.67%
Scotland	Family and Communities - Support for Carers	8	30.77%
	Local Government Support - South East	4	15.38%
	Mental Wellbeing - Support Groups and Emotional Support	4	15.38%
South East	Employment - Job Seeking	15	16.30%
	Mental Wellbeing - Accessing Support	13	14.13%
	Housing - Homelessness	6	6.52%
South West	Finances - Grants	10	22.22%
	Housing - Homelessness	4	8.89%
	Mental Wellbeing - Accessing Support	4	8.89%
Wales	Finances - Pensions and Compensation	3	15.79%
	Employment - Self Employment	2	10.53%
	Local Government Support - Wales	2	10.53%

Region	Top 3 Search Criteria	Usage Count	Percentage of Regional Usage
West Midlands	Employment - Job Seeking	2	28.57%
	Local Government Support - West Midlands	2	28.57%
	Housing - Housing Advice and Support	1	14.29%
Yorkshire and The Humber	Housing - Homelessness	9	23.68%
	Mental Wellbeing - Accessing Support	6	15.79%
	Specific search for an organisation	5	13.16%

Table 6. An overview of general search criteria from users located outside of the UK (December 2019)

Search Criteria	Search Count outside of the UK	Search Percentage
Employment	9	36%
Housing	8	32%
Finances	3	12%
Local Government Support	2	8%
Mental Wellbeing	2	8%
Physical Health	1	4%
Total	**25**	**100%**

Table 7. A detailed breakdown of exact search criteria from users located outside of the UK (December 2019)

Search Criteria	Search Count outside of the UK	Search Percentage
Housing - Homelessness	7	28%
Employment - Education and Training	4	16%
Employment - Job Seeking	3	12%
Employment - Volunteering	2	8%
Finances - Grants	1	4%
Finances - Pensions and Compensation	1	4%
Finances - Support for the Gurkha Community	1	4%
Housing - Independent Living	1	4%
Local Government Support - West Midlands	1	4%
Local Government Support - Yorkshire/ The Humber	1	4%
Mental Wellbeing - Drug and Alcohol Services	1	4%
Mental Wellbeing - Treatment	1	4%
Physical Health - Home and Mobility Aids	1	4%
Total	**25**	**100%**