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Evaluation of the Ex-Service Personnel in the Criminal Justice System Programme

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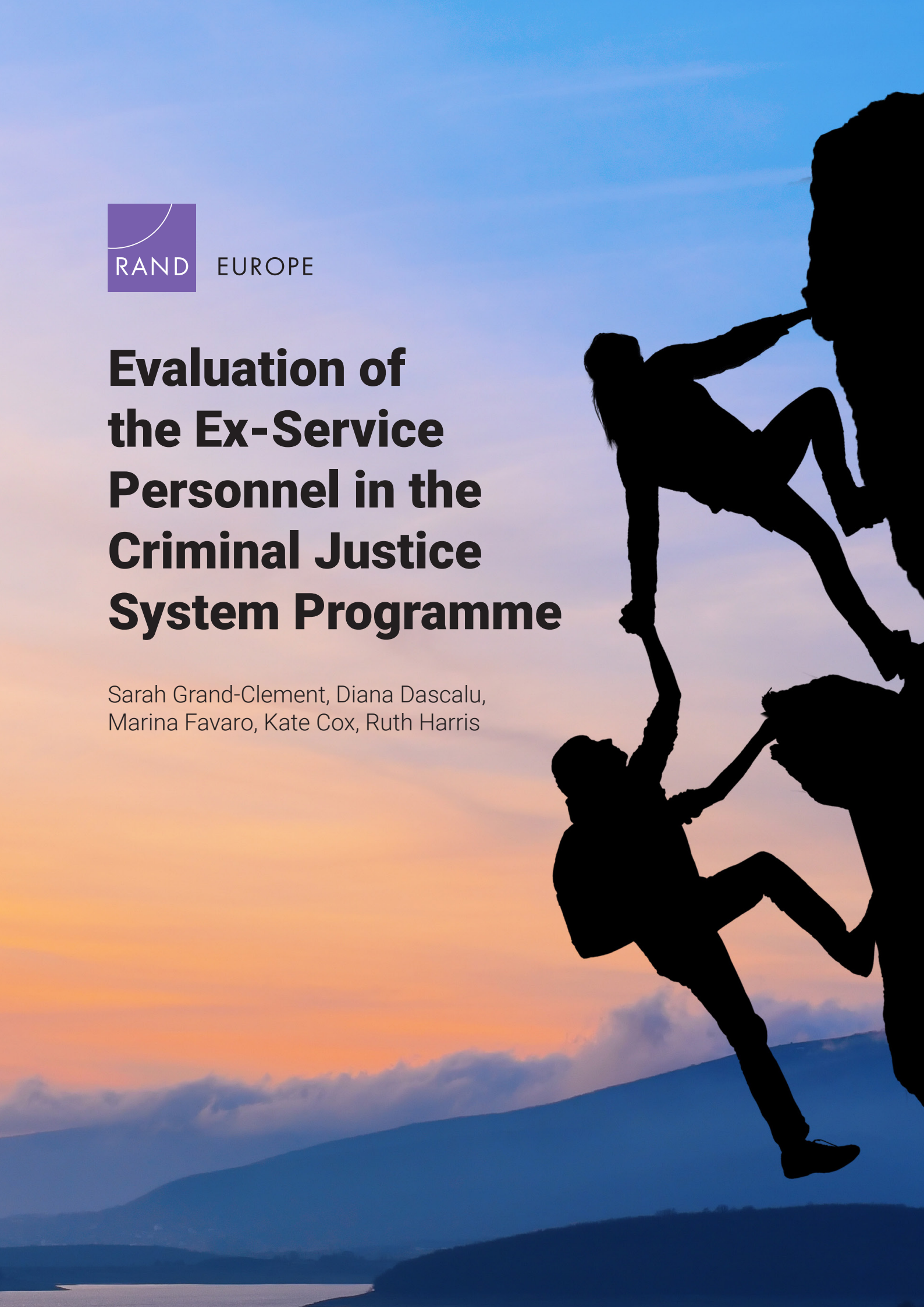

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Preface

This is the final report of a study evaluating the Ex-Service Personnel in the Criminal Justice System (CJS) Programme, run by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust. The aim of this Programme is to reduce reoffending and provide help and support to ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS. The evaluation provides an overview and assessment of the Programme by analysing the projects that have been funded, with specific regard to the needs targeted, how support is provided, the extent to which positive changes relating to ex-Service personnel have occurred, the sustainability of the projects, the use of data and the referral pathways used, as well as lessons learnt and areas of good practice that are applicable at the Programme-level.

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Summary

This evaluation focuses on the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust's Ex-Service Personnel in the Criminal Justice System (CJS) Programme

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (henceforth referred to as the Trust) provides grants across a number of different programmes, including the Ex-Service Personnel in the CJS Programme (henceforth referred to as the Programme). Through this Programme, the Trust awarded £4.6 million in 2015 to 14 projects that support ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS, followed by a further £1.1 million of continuation grants in 2018 to seven of the 14 projects.[1] RAND Europe was commissioned to evaluate this Programme.

The aim of the Programme is to reduce reoffending and provide support to ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS. The projects and services funded under the Programme are dedicated to helping identify and support ex-Service personnel throughout the various stages of the CJS, including custody, pre-sentencing, the point of sentence and post-release from custody. This includes specialised projects to prevent reoffending, address substance abuse and mental health issues, and enable employment opportunities. The evaluation is guided by 11 evaluation questions (EQs), nine of which focus on the individual projects, and two of which are programme-level questions, as presented in Table S.1.

[1] The seven projects that obtained continuation funding are Project Nova – Supporting Veterans in the Criminal Justice System (Walking with the Wounded), Network for Ex-Service Personnel (National Offender Management Service Co-financing Organisation), Veterans in the Criminal Justice System (SSAFA), Positive Futures (Venture Trust), Integrated Offender Management Cymru: Veterans Pathfinder (National Probation Service in Wales), Remember Veterans (West Mercia Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner), and London Veterans' Prison In-Reach Service (Camden and Islington NHS Trust). The seven projects that obtained Phase I funding only are LifeWorks in Custody (RBLI), Cobseo Directory of Veterans' CJS Support Services (RBLI), Military-Veterans Achieving & Realising Continued Health (Lifeline, then Change Grow Live), National Veterans Community Recovery (Mersey Care NHS Trust), Serving Those Who Have Served (Cheshire and Greater Manchester Rehabilitation Company), Active Plus WorkForce (Active Plus), and Veterans' Family Support Service (Barnardo's).

Table S.1 Evaluation questions

N°	Evaluation question	Scope
1	What are the needs of ex-Service Personnel, what are their complexities, and are the projects aligned with these needs?	Project-level
2	How do the projects support the beneficiaries?[2] *(This includes a consideration of coherence with wider services, and nature of pathways and outcomes of the support.)*	
3	To what extent do beneficiaries (i.e. ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS) perceive that they have been supported to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?	
4	To what extent do professionals perceive that (i) beneficiaries have been supported to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices, and (ii) where applicable, the support professionals have been offered helps beneficiaries reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?	
5	To what extent do carers and family members perceive that (i) beneficiaries have been supported to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices, and (ii) where applicable, the support carers and family members have been offered helps beneficiaries reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?	
6	How likely are projects awarded a continuation and sustainability grant to be sustainable?[3]	
7	What are the risks and barriers to the future sustainability of the projects?	
8	How have the projects used data to inform and show the impact of their work?	
9	What is (i) the number, and (ii) the complexity of wider referral pathways[4] with which funded projects engage to support beneficiaries?	
10	What lessons and areas of good practice from the Programme with relevance for wider public policy can be identified from the answers to EQ1–9?	Programme-level
11	What lessons and areas of good practice from the Programme with applicability for other relevant services and projects can be identified from the answers to EQ1–9?	

A logic-model-based approach was used to conduct this evaluation. This evaluation is based on a mix of primary and secondary data collection and analysis, with primary data forming the majority of the analysis. A structured literature review was undertaken to develop a wider understanding of the context, while primary data collection was undertaken with the projects via pre-interview questionnaires followed by semi-structured interviews. The research team also conducted interviews with three sets of beneficiaries: (i) ex-

[2] In the context of this evaluation, 'beneficiary' refers to ex-Service personnel.

[3] 'Sustainable' in this context is defined as the ability of a project to ensure the same level of delivery of services and support upon conclusion of the grant funding.

[4] The 'complexity of referral pathways' refers to the offering of the projects to beneficiaries, i.e. whether the projects offer a variety of help or support options to beneficiaries.

Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS and received support from one or more of the 14 projects funded by the Trust (11 interviewees from two projects); (ii) carers and family members of the latter (three interviewees from one project); and (iii) professionals (e.g. police and probation officers, medical staff) working with ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS (11 interviewees from five projects).

A summary of the evaluation findings is presented below

EQ1: What are the needs of ex-Service personnel, what are their complexities, and are the projects aligned with these needs?

The 11 interviewed ex-Service personnel identified areas of support offered by the projects as relevant to addressing their needs, including assistance with legal processes, finances, housing, employment, obtaining medical help, mental health and substance abuse issues, as well as general emotional support needs, such as companionship. These were in broad agreement with the needs identified in the literature review. However, there is limited knowledge, in both academic and grey literature, with regard to ex-Service personnel needs, constraining our ability to assess whether the projects are aligned with these needs.

Overall, the findings showed that ex-Service personnel have complex needs (e.g. mental and/or health issues, unemployment, substance abuse), many of which co-occur; as a result, several projects attempt to address more than one need, with six projects addressing five or more needs. Some of the needs of ex-Service personnel increased as a result of COVID-19, with projects observing an increasing number of ex-Service personnel requiring assistance with finding accommodation upon leaving prison and with mental health.

Based on these findings, the RAND evaluation team suggested that more research and systematic data collection related to the identification of ex-Service personnel in the CJS is needed in order to uncover (i) the needs of ex-Service personnel; (ii) whether serving in the Armed Forces creates specific needs and how, if at all, these needs differ from the needs of other vulnerable cohorts in the CJS; and (iii) where these needs stem from, how they interact, and which tend to co-occur.

EQ2: How do the projects support the beneficiaries (i.e. ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS)?

Most projects target ex-Service personnel as primary beneficiaries and family members and/or carers as secondary beneficiaries. Taken as a whole, the projects provide support across the entire CJS pathway. However, most projects focus on providing support in prison (11), as well as post-custody/post-sentencing (11). Only four projects provide support at the pre-offending stage. This raises the questions of whether: (i) projects are overlooking beneficiaries that do not enter the prison system; (ii) there is a need for an increased focus on awareness-raising and on training CJS professionals to recognise and address the needs of ex-Service personnel earlier in the CJS pathway; and (iii) more direct support to ex-Service personnel provided at the pre-offending stage could help reduce the number of ex-Service personnel that enter the CJS.

Projects provide varied, wide-ranging support, aiming both to address immediate needs and to enact system-wide changes within the CJS. While there exists a level of overlap between the projects, in terms of the needs addressed and the services provided, differences in the ways the projects have been set up (such as geographic scope, beneficiary focus, types of activities carried out and types of outcomes sought) lead to

broad coherence, as well as areas of coordination and cooperation, between the projects sponsored by the Trust.

The projects identified several challenges in terms of the delivery of activities, including: (i) challenges specific to ex-Service personnel, most commonly, difficulties in identifying ex-Service personnel within the CJS; and (ii) challenges specific to the custodial set-up, the main issue being that the specific needs of ex-Service personnel are not considered as part of core organisational resource allocations. The projects also identified several gaps in the support provided to ex-Service personnel in the CJS, including: (i) consistent and continuous support; (ii) the provision of complex services on mental health and substance abuse; and (iii) cohesion, collaboration and communication in the wider landscape of support to the cohort.

EQ3: To what extent do beneficiaries perceive that they have been supported to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?

Based on feedback from 11 beneficiaries across two projects, the ex-Service personnel interviewed for the evaluation perceive the support provided by the projects to have been very beneficial, in particular with regards to the support provided by their caseworker, the extent of the support and the length of the support provided. None of the ex-Service personnel interviewed explicitly stated that projects helped reduce their offending behaviour, but rather focused on the fact that the support enables them to have a more stable life.

Anecdotal evidence indicates areas where ex-Service personnel identified some gaps in the type of support provided and the lack of continuous support. However, given the small number of interviewees, this data has limitations and the findings cannot be generalised across the wider beneficiary population; and despite the positive feedback from the interviewed beneficiaries, we are unable to provide an assessment as to the wider extent to which beneficiaries across all projects have been supported to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices. Projects themselves noted difficulties in obtaining accurate, formal, and long-term feedback from beneficiaries that would allow them to understand the longer term effects of the support they provide.

EQ4: To what extent do professionals perceive that (i) beneficiaries have been supported to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices, and (ii) where applicable, the support professionals have been offered helps beneficiaries reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?

Professionals interviewed appear to have limited awareness as to the support provided by the projects for ex-Service personnel, although anecdotal changes in the behaviour of ex-Service personnel were perceived among the interviewees, such as improved confidence.

The support provided by the projects directly to professionals such as prison officers appears to be beneficial, in particular with regards to making staff in the CJS more aware of veteran-specific issues, however this finding is based on feedback provided by only six professionals involved in four of the projects, so we cannot comment on whether this positive view is widely held among professionals. Additionally, there is no data to ascertain the extent to which the support to professionals has an effect on the ex-Service personnel within the CJS. Overall, the interview data indicates that professionals – both external to the project and project staff – have limited knowledge as to the actual impact of project support on the reduction of offending behaviour and the ability of ex-Service personnel to make positive life choices.

EQ5: To what extent do carers and family members perceive that (i) beneficiaries have been supported to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices, and (ii) where applicable, the support carers and family members have been offered helps beneficiaries reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?

Only three family members – all of whom were supported by one project – were interviewed for this evaluation. They were all very positive about the impact of the support provided. We found that the need for holistic support that encompasses both the ex-Service person and their family has become more apparent to projects themselves over their lifetime. However, reaching out to family members – whether it be to obtain feedback on the impact of the support or to offer them support – is challenging for some projects as most are not able to easily achieve contact. Overall, given the small number of family members consulted as part of the evaluation, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which family members more generally perceive project support to help beneficiaries reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices.

EQ6: How likely are projects awarded a continuation and sustainability grant to be sustainable?

Projects aim to achieve primarily two types of sustainability: (i) sustainability of the projects as organisations; and (ii) sustainability of the projects' impact. The two types of sustainability are interrelated, as achieving continued impact is often dependent on the projects' continued existence, especially in the case of those that aim to provide on-the-ground support.

Projects reported that they aim to achieve project sustainability by embedding ex-Service personnel support activities as a core service of their parent organisation; synchronising activities on a national level so as to fill the aforementioned gap of continuous and consistent support; ensuring continued awareness among stakeholders about the support offered; developing a wider strategy to guide support provision; and using diverse funding sources. Projects reported that they aim to achieve impact sustainability by developing e-learning tools that can be used even once the project finishes, generating self-sustaining awareness of the needs and issues specific to ex-Service personnel in the CJS. These actions have the potential to ensure sustainability in the short-term, but could be hampered by external risks and barriers.

Based on the findings, the RAND evaluation team's assessment is that projects that focus on enacting system-wide changes within the CJS are the most promising in terms of impact sustainability, as they are less dependent on funding in the long-term. By contrast, projects that provide immediate, on-the-ground support (be it financial, material, job-related or social in nature) will continue to be dependent on the renewal of funding.

EQ7: What are the risks and barriers to the future sustainability of the projects?

The most frequently mentioned potential challenge to sustainability is that of obtaining funding and dealing with running costs. Most of the factors posing challenges to both project and impact sustainability are the same factors posing challenges to the projects' abilities to conduct their activities. This is because if projects are hindered from providing the support that they have been set up to provide, they will be unable to achieve the desired outcomes and to demonstrate expected impact and corresponding value for money. Interviewed professionals and projects have claimed that funding needs to be awarded on a longer term basis in order to ensure that the projects can create a positive impact, especially when it comes to addressing recurring on-

the-ground needs. Issues around funding also mean that some projects rely on volunteers, and a potential reduction in the numbers of volunteers can also be a future barrier to sustainability.

EQ8: How have the projects used data to inform and show the impact of their work?

Overall, the evaluation finds that there is no consistency in the type of data that is collected, the ways in which it is collected, or the ways in which it is used to inform project delivery and demonstrate project impact. Projects collect a variety of data that is meant to inform project delivery and measure project impact. Most often, projects collect the data through formal and informal feedback from beneficiaries and partners, with some projects also using specific data-collection and evaluation tools.

Projects use the data internally to assess initial needs; measure behavioural change and outcomes; and demonstrate progress and project impact to beneficiaries, partners and sponsors. Projects also use the data to increase internal awareness and understanding around the needs of ex-Service personnel and the activities that best address those needs, allowing them to adapt project delivery accordingly. Projects use the data externally to increase awareness of the available support; enact system-wide change by highlighting progress and gaps; and improve the delivery of landscape-wide support by disseminating lessons learned.

The RAND evaluation team suggests that more coordination, direction and guidance surrounding the collection and use of data would be needed to ensure that project delivery is based on and closely aligned with the needs of the cohort. In particular, encouraging the collection and sharing of data on the needs of ex-Service personnel in the CJS – and the activities that the projects have assessed as appropriate in addressing these needs – could lead to a more comprehensive understanding of this cohort and the activities that have the most positive impact.

EQ9: What is (i) the number, and (ii) the complexity of wider referral pathways with which funded projects engage to support beneficiaries?

The varied landscape of support – which contains a range of different actors acting as referral sources, signposting services, and general partners in the delivery of activities – is mainly determined by the complexity of the needs of ex-Service personnel involved in the CJS. Projects' referral sources are varied, with most projects receiving referrals from charities (7) and prison officers (7), followed by probation officers (4). Rich referral pathways allow projects to complement the support they are offering and can lead to beneficiaries being provided with holistic support.

Projects continue to raise awareness and conduct organisational outreach for the project, and form partnerships on the basis of identified needs or gaps. Partnerships, for example with Magistrates and Crown Courts, provide projects with a clearer view and more comprehensive understanding of the inner working processes of the CJS agencies, as well as the landscape of support in general. The projects reported that in the long run, this could help them (i) better pinpoint and understand the needs of ex-Service personnel in the CJS and to adapt project delivery accordingly; (ii) provide more responsive and more accurate referrals; and (iii) learn from other organisations' experiences.

The most significant challenges when working with CJS agencies are competing organisational priorities and inadequate resource allocation for ex-Service personnel. The most significant challenges when working

with organisations outside of the CJS include ensuring quality of services and preventing the beneficiaries from being overwhelmed by the complex landscape of support.

EQ10: What lessons and areas of good practice from the Programme with relevance for wider public policy can be identified from the answers to EQ1–9?

A number of lessons and areas of good practice were identified by the projects when undertaking their activities in order to reach their outcomes and by interviewees. These include the benefits of collaborative working with other agencies, including other charities, referral sources and CJS agencies, provided collaboration works well; productive engagement with Veterans in Custody Support Officers (ViCSOs), given their focus on ex-Service personnel; fostering an increasing awareness of ex-Service personnel and the Covenant; encouraging ex-Service personnel to work with those in the CJS, to increase the engagement of this cohort with the support that is available; and educating CJS professionals on veteran-specific issues to improve project delivery.

EQ11: What lessons and areas of good practice from the Programme with applicability for other relevant services and projects can be identified from the answers to EQ1–9?

Lessons and areas of good practice identified by the projects and interviewees include the fact that the Trust allows projects a degree of flexibility to best adapt their activities, enabling them to be reactive to evolving circumstances and need; the provision of tailored support by projects to beneficiaries; the positive awareness-raising of ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS away from the 'mad, bad and sad' stereotype; and the move towards the provision of increasingly holistic support that includes the family as well as the ex-Service personnel undertaken by projects regarding ex-Service personnel in the CJS.

This report presents a set of recommendations and advocacy areas based on the evaluation findings

A set of recommendations was developed for the Trust and other stakeholders – including government bodies such as the various government ministries including the Ministry of Justice, police forces, non-governmental organisations – in order to improve the wider CJS with regard to ex-Service personnel. The recommendations have applicability for the Trust, and we also suggest a wider set of topics and issues in which the Trust could undertake advocacy to change national policy and practice. These are summarised in Table S.2.

Table S.2 Advocacy areas and recommendations

Stakeholder type	Advocacy areas/recommendations
	Advocacy areas
Cross-government	• Improve the identification of ex-Service personnel. • Enhance data collection on ex-Service personnel. • Increase the availability of complex services and accessibility by ex-Service personnel. • Design interventions targeted towards the earlier stages of the CJS pathway.
Ministry of Justice and associated agencies	• Expand the ViCSOs role by making it permanent as well as ensuring that there is a ViCSO equivalent in police forces, courts and tribunals. • Encourage CJS agencies to be Covenant signatories. • Establish a primary contact point for all organisations working with ex-Service personnel in the CJS, to help manage relationships and information effectively. • Define a support pathway for ex-Service personnel in the CJS so as to streamline the support that is provided. • Establish an automated referral system between the police and projects offering support. • Conduct further research on ex-Service personnel in the CJS, to reduce the gap in knowledge around this cohort and their needs.
Non-governmental organisations	• Increase communication among projects and organisations that provide support to ex-Service personnel in the CJS.
	Recommendations
The Trust	• Embed evaluation approaches within Programmes by developing a theory of change and logic model for the Programme prior to its launch. • Ensure the capture of data from projects in a systematic way. • Increase collaborative working and communication between projects that have obtained funding from the Trust. • Raise the profile and sustainability of the Programme. • Identify regional areas that are underserved and consider expanding existing projects in these areas. • Provide more flexible funding options to enhance sustainability.

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Abbreviations

ACE	Adverse Childhood Experience
CATS	Case Management Tracking System
CFO	Co-Financing Organisation
CGL	Change Grow Live
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CRC	Community Rehabilitation Company
CTP	Career Transition Partnership
DASA	Defence Analytical Services Agency
EQ	Evaluation question
ESL	Early Service Leavers
FiMT	Forces in Mind Trust
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HIS	Mental Health High Intensity Service
HMPPS	Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service
IOM	Integrated Offender Management
L&D	Liaison and Diversion
MARCH	Military-Veterans Achieving & Realising Continued Health
MCTC	Military Corrective Training Centre
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
NAPO	National Association for Probation Officers
NESP	Network for Ex-Service Personnel
NPS	National Probation Service

OMF	Outcomes Measurement Framework
PIR	Prison In-Reach
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RBLI	Royal British Legion Industries
VCJS	Veterans in the Criminal Justice System
VCR	Veterans Community Recovery
ViCSO	Veterans in Custody Support Officer

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Within RAND, the team would like to thank our quality-assurance reviewers Dr Alex Sutherland, Dr Emma Disley and Luke Huxtable for their constructive feedback.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Most ex-Service personnel transition effectively into civilian life, but some face challenges – including poor mental and/or physical health, unemployment, financial hardship and homelessness[5] – that hinder a successful transition. This can lead to some individuals committing crimes and finding themselves within the criminal justice system (CJS).[6] In 2014, a review commissioned by the UK government examined the issue of ex-Service personnel within the CJS. The review found that there was a lack of robust data and knowledge regarding this cohort within the CJS, leading to inconsistent efforts in rehabilitating and resettling them.[7] The review also stated that improved identification of ex-Service personnel in the CJS and increased knowledge of their specific rehabilitation needs is part of the remit of the Armed Forces Covenant (henceforth referred to as 'the Covenant'), and its implementation is important for both the ex-Service personnel and their families.

The Covenant is a pledge created in 2001 between the government, the nation and the Armed Forces, articulating the nation's obligations to the Armed Forces Community – which consists of serving personnel, reservists, ex-Service personnel and the families of these groups. At its core, the Covenant acknowledges that the Armed Forces Community should be treated fairly and with respect, and should not face discrimination as a result of their (or their family member's) military service.[8] Under the Covenant, the Covenant Fund is a set of funds administered by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (henceforth referred to as the Trust) to support the Armed Forces Community.[9]

The Trust provides grants to a number of different programmes, including the Ex-Service Personnel in the CJS Programme, which is focused on ex-Service personnel in the CJS. Through this programme the Trust

[5] Cox et al. (2018).

[6] A review of the various estimated numbers of ex-Service personnel in the CJS is provided in Chapter 2.

[7] Phillips (2014).

[8] Armed Forces Covenant (2020b).

[9] Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (2020a).

awarded £4.6 million in 2015 to 14 projects that support ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS, followed by a further £1.1 million of continuation grants in 2018 to seven of the 14 projects.[10]

The projects and services funded under the Ex-Service Personnel in the CJS Programme are dedicated to helping identify and support ex-Service personnel throughout the various stages of the CJS, including custody, pre-sentencing, at the point of sentence and post-release from custody.[11] This includes specialised projects to prevent reoffending, to address substance abuse and mental health issues, and to enable employment opportunities.[12] The aim of the Programme is to reduce reoffending and provide help and support to ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS.

1.2. Purpose and evaluation approach

The aim of the study was to undertake an evaluation of the 14 projects funded under the Trust's Ex-Service Personnel in the CJS Programme. The evaluation is guided by 11 evaluation questions (EQs); nine of which are project-level questions, and two of which are programme-level questions. Presented in Table 1.1, these EQs were developed based on a set of statements that the Trust wished to explore via this evaluation.

[10] For a detailed description of these projects, please see Chapter 3.

[11] Armed Forces Covenant (2020a).

[12] Armed Forces Covenant (2020a).

Table 1.1 Evaluation questions

N°	Evaluation question	Scope
1	What are the needs of ex-Service Personnel, what are their complexities, and are the projects aligned with these needs?	Project-level
2	How do the projects support the beneficiaries?[13] *(This includes a consideration of coherence with wider services, and nature of pathways and outcomes of the support.)*	
3	To what extent do beneficiaries (i.e. ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS) perceive that they have been supported to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?	
4	To what extent do professionals perceive that (i) beneficiaries have been supported to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices, and (ii) where applicable, the support professionals have been offered helps beneficiaries reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?	
5	To what extent do carers and family members perceive that (i) beneficiaries have been supported to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices, and (ii) where applicable, the support carers and family members have been offered helps beneficiaries reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?	
6	How likely are projects awarded a continuation and sustainability grant to be sustainable?[14]	
7	What are the risks and barriers to the future sustainability of the projects?	
8	How have the projects used data to inform and show the impact of their work?	
9	What is (i) the number, and (ii) the complexity of wider referral pathways[15] with which funded projects engage to support beneficiaries?	
10	What lessons and areas of good practice from the Programme with relevance for wider public policy can be identified from the answers to EQ1–9?	Programme-level
11	What lessons and areas of good practice from the Programme with applicability for other relevant services and projects can be identified from the answers to EQ1–9?	

A logic-model-based approach was used to conduct this evaluation. This approach is widely recognised as being rigorous and particularly well-suited to evaluations of complex interventions in complex environments, including criminal justice programmes.[16] A logic model 'graphically represent[s] the "theory

[13] In the context of this evaluation, 'beneficiary' refers to ex-Service personnel.

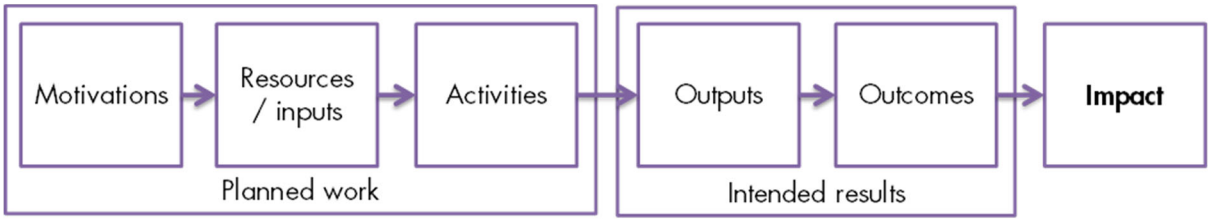
[14] 'Sustainable' in this context is defined as the ability of a project to ensure the same level of delivery of services and support upon conclusion of the grant funding.

[15] The 'complexity of referral pathways' refers to the offering of the projects to beneficiaries, i.e. whether the projects offer a variety of help or support options to beneficiaries.

[16] Craig et al. (2008); Tilley (2004).

of change" of how an intervention works',[17] illustrating the various stages and causal pathway for an intervention to succeed. A logic modelling approach can examine how project objectives translate into activities, outputs and outcomes; the extent to which these have been realised in practice; and understand how and why each step of the project leads to the other to achieve the Programme's aim. Figure 1.1 illustrates the main components found in a logic model.

Figure 1.1 High-level representation of a logic model



Source: RAND Europe.

The research team developed an overarching logic model to map and describe the long-term goals of the Programme, along with the requirements necessary to achieve these goals, and the activities undertaken. Project-specific logic models were also developed.[18] While the evaluation focused on all 14 projects, tailored logic models were developed for the seven projects that received continuation funding, as agreed with the Trust. This decision was taken due to the other projects, aside for one,[19] having concluded previously. These projects were therefore unlikely to have the project team available to respond to queries, as well as having more limited data available to inform the evaluation. In the context of this evaluation, the logic models have also helped generate detailed evidence for each of the EQs regarding what has been achieved through the projects and the Programme, what has or has not worked, and what could be improved or altered.

1.3. Methodology

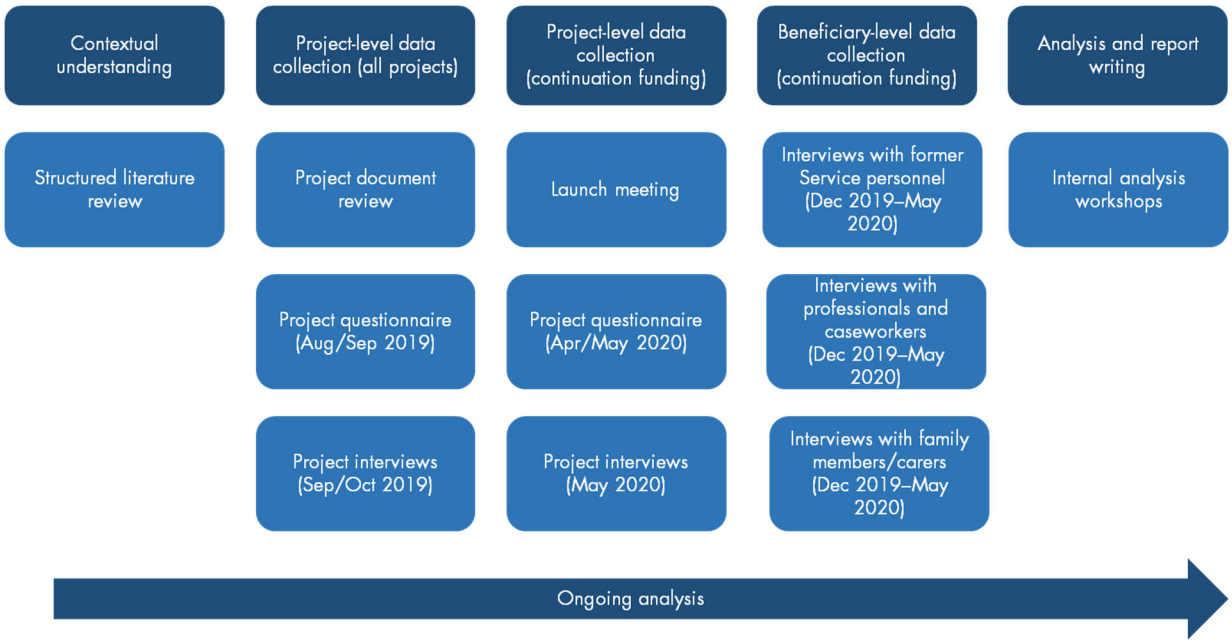
The evaluation started in March 2019 and ran until August 2020 and was based on a mix of primary and secondary data collection and analysis, with primary data forming the majority of the analysis. Outreach was undertaken across all projects at the outset of the evaluation, before focusing on projects that obtained continuation funding for the remainder of the evaluation. Figure 1.2 visualises the data collection effort, and each component is briefly described below.

[17] Public Health England (2018).

[18] The Programme logic model can be found in Chapter 3, while the project-level logic models can be found in Annex B.

[19] The organisation in charge of the project 'Military-Veterans Achieving & Realising Continued Health (MARCH)', Lifeline, collapsed in 2017 and the project suffered delays in the intervening period before another organisation, Change Grow Live, took over the project.

Figure 1.2 Project methodology overview



The paragraphs below describe each component of the evaluation. A more detailed methodological description for each component can be found in Annexes A to E.

- **Structured literature review**: The research team conducted a **structured literature review** of existing academic and grey literature[20] on military-to-civilian transition experiences and challenges, and on ex-Service personnel in the UK CJS. The aim of the literature review was to develop a wider understanding of the context surrounding the Trust's Programme and supported projects, as well as inform a response to the first EQ. A total of 52 sources were included in the literature review, 20 of which were academic literature and 32 of which were grey literature.
- **Project-level data collection (all projects)**: The research team first **reviewed relevant documentation** for each of the 14 projects as well as the overall Programme. This included the original grant application (and continuous grant funding application where applicable), the Trust's assessment of the application, relevant email exchanges between the projects and the Trust, quarterly reports from the projects and external evaluations of the projects. The list of key documents reviewed for each project is provided in Annex A. This review provided the research

[20] 'Grey literature' is defined as literature that is not published in peer-reviewed academic journals, and includes policy papers, research reports, government white papers, doctoral theses, workshop transcripts, evaluation reports and other forms of substantive work. Although grey literature is generally considered to be less reliable than peer-reviewed academic journal articles, it nonetheless often includes informative and rigorous publications that complement and build on the available academic literature. Source: Cornell University Library (2017). A structured literature review enables researchers to examine a topic or area of research while keeping a constrained scope (e.g. through a specific research question or hypothesis), without undertaking a comprehensive literature review in the nature of a fully fledged systematic review. Source: Temple University (2020).

team with an understanding of the different projects and served as the basis from which project-level logic models were created. The research team then developed **pre-interview questionnaires** that were piloted with two projects before being sent to all projects in August 2019. These questionnaires sought to improve the research team's understanding of the projects, and, in the case of projects which obtained continuation funding, aid in the creation of their logic models and collect data through which to answer the EQs. This was followed in September 2019 by a round of **semi-structured interviews**[21] with all projects once they had completed the questionnaire, to clarify their responses and seek any additional detail and further examples. For projects with continuation funding, this data-collection exercise focused mainly on the first round of their grant funding. While all projects were contacted, not all projects provided a response. Participation rates are detailed in Chapter 4.

- **Project-level data collection (projects with continuation funding)**: **A launch meeting** was held in July 2019 for all funded projects, to establish a positive working relationship between the research team and the projects, present the evaluation timelines and gain additional understanding regarding each project. The research team then conducted a second round of data collection with the projects receiving continuation funding. The research team developed a Round 2 **pre-interview questionnaire** to understand whether – and why – there were any changes with regard to the project's focus in the second round of funding compared to the first, and to gain a better understanding as to how the continuation funding was being delivered. These questionnaires were shared among projects in April 2020 and were followed in May 2020 by a round of **interviews** with all projects once they had completed the questionnaire.
- **Beneficiary-level data collection**: The research team conducted **interviews** with three sets of beneficiaries: (i) ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS and received support from one or more of the 14 projects funded by the Trust; (ii) carers and family members of the latter; and (iii) professionals (e.g. police, probation officers and medical staff) working with ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS. The aim of these interviews was to understand the impact of the support provided by the projects, what worked, and what did not work. These interviews were conducted over the phone between December 2019 and June 2020.
- **Analysis and report-writing**: Following the conclusion of the data-collection phase, the research team reviewed all the data and held two **internal analysis workshops** in order to draw out the main findings regarding each EQ and develop conclusions and recommendations for the Trust.

1.3.1. Caveats and scoping considerations

The following caveats should be noted with regard to the Programme evaluation:

[21] Semi-structured interviews, as opposed to structured or unstructured interviews, combine specific questions with the flexibility to ask unplanned follow-up questions.

- The evaluation is based on self-reporting by the partner organisations who took part in the data collection and, to some extent, on the data provided through the independent evaluations conducted on the projects. The evaluation was not set up to compare the data provided by projects with wider data on ex-Service personnel within the CJS or (re)offending rates more widely. As such, the evaluation primarily focuses on qualitative data about perceptions. This offers rich data using a wide stakeholder lens and reports on the *perceived* impact of the projects only, based on data collected from project representatives and the three beneficiary groups.
- While outreach was done for all projects, some projects that did not obtain continuation funding were not able to respond to our questionnaire and/or follow-up interview.[22] All projects with continuation funding responded to both rounds of questionnaires and follow-up interviews. All project responses are provided in an aggregated, anonymised format and, unless otherwise indicated, data draws upon responses from both projects with and without continuation funding. Details regarding the ex-Service personnel, family members/carers and professionals who took part in beneficiary interviews are provided in Annex D.
- The project beneficiary sample is both small and mainly originates from one project, particularly regarding the ex-Service personnel and their family members/carers. This sample should therefore not be regarded as representative of the wider beneficiary population, nor should the experiences reflected through these interviews be seen as illustrative of the experiences of the wider beneficiary population. In particular, it should be noted that ex-Service personnel and their family members/carers who agreed to interviews have all had positive experiences with the projects. It is likely that the individuals who accepted to take part in these interviews are all currently at a point in their lives where they feel comfortable and content to share their stories, and are also capable of doing so. This therefore means that we may be missing perspectives of those who have faced more challenges and are less willing to discuss these experiences with external evaluators.
- Family members were reached via the ex-Service personnel that were interviewed; each person was asked whether they would be happy for us to speak with a family member or carer. The decision first rested on the ex-Service person as to whether or not they were happy for us to speak to a relative, before the family member or carer could take a decision. Furthermore, two of the ex-Service people did not wish for us to speak to their families; one mentioned that his family was not

[22] One organisation, which did not receive continuation funding, no longer had the original project staff to respond to our request – they shared the project's final evaluation report with us instead; one organisation that did not receive continuation funding responded to our questionnaire but did not take part in a follow-up interview; one organisation that did not receive continuation funding took part in the follow-up interview but did not provide a written response to the questionnaire; one organisation that did not receive continuation funding did not respond to our questionnaire or request for interview.

aware that he had come in contact with the CJS,[23] while another mentioned that it had been years since they last had contact with their family.[24]

1.3.2. Contextual background

While there have been a number of wider policy and contextual changes, two factors in particular should be noted, as these have been highlighted by the projects as having an impact on their activities.

Restructuring of the probation service

Starting in 2020, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has been implementing a restructuring of the probation service in England and Wales, which is expected to be completed in 2023.[25] From 2014 up until 2020, the probation service was split into the state-run National Probation Service (NPS), which managed high-risk criminals, and 21 private-run Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs), which managed approximately 150,000 medium- and low-risk offenders.[26] As a result of the ongoing probation reforms, from spring 2021 all sentence management responsibility in England and Wales will be transferred to the NPS,[27] thus returning probation services to public ownership and control.[28] These changes have and will continue to impact the landscape of the CJS, and will have implications on the delivery of support to ex-Service personnel in the CJS. The restructuring of the probation services was mentioned by projects as affecting project delivery, especially in terms of reshuffled organisational priorities, since the probation service's resources are now consumed with the reform, and in terms of significant staff changes. Furthermore, as the landscape around probation services changes, it is highly likely that projects will need to adapt their service-delivery accordingly.

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted a lockdown across the UK, although timings and measures varied across the four regions of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. England, Scotland and Wales went into lockdown on 26 March 2020, and Northern Ireland followed suit on 28 March. Lockdown measures began to be lifted in England from May 2020, followed by the three other governments.

The impact of COVID-19 and the various lockdown measures that were imposed has affected the CJS sector, in particular courts and prisons. A backlog of court cases is expected, as courts have had to reduce their operating capacity, which will impact individuals awaiting justice.[29] Prisons and individuals within prisons have also been particularly impacted. To reduce the risk to prisoners, low-risk prisoners have been

[23] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 4, 3 April 2020.

[24] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 8, 19 May 2020.

[25] HM Prison and Probation Service (2020).

[26] Grierson (2020).

[27] Clinks (2020).

[28] Grierson (2020).

[29] Bermingham (2020).

offered early release.[30] Additionally, prison visits have been halted in the UK, and prisoners have had to pause recreational activities. Furthermore, there have been COVID-19 outbreaks within prisons, further reducing staff capacity.[31]

The lockdown measures have impacted all projects, with projects needing to adapt their service-delivery in accordance with lockdown and social distancing measures. In addition to social distancing measures, which prevented projects from meeting beneficiaries, projects were also unable to provide support to beneficiaries in the prison estate. Additionally, pressures on CJS staff increased over the lockdown period, making it harder for some projects to retain their usual networks within the CJS.

1.4. Report structure

In addition to this introductory chapter, the report contains an additional four chapters and four annexes:

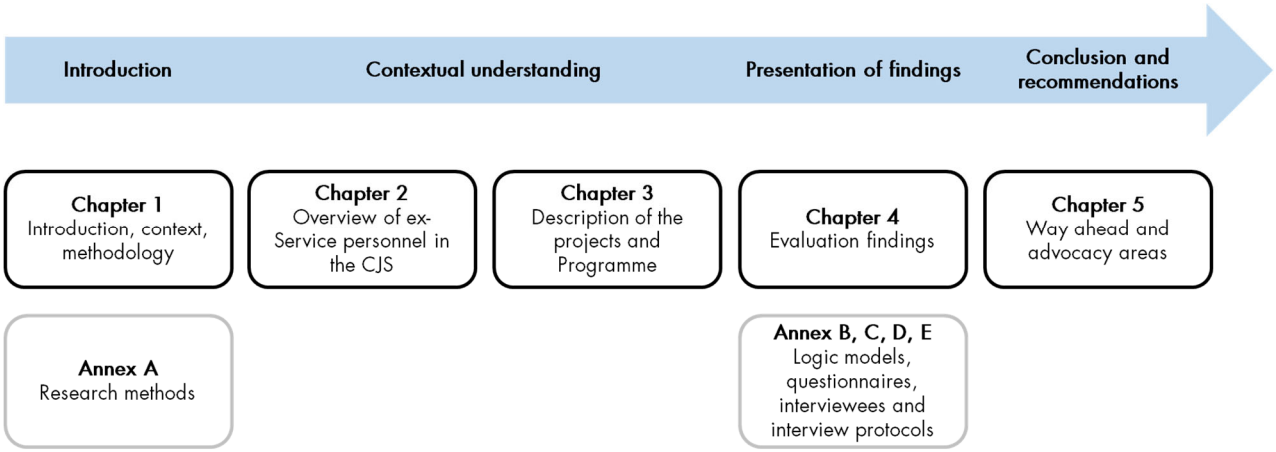
- Chapter 2 summarises our findings from the structured literature review on ex-Service personnel within the CJS.
- Chapter 3 provides an overview of the Ex-Service Personnel in the CJS Programme and the 14 projects.
- Chapter 4 presents the findings for each of the EQs.
- Chapter 5 concludes the report and provides recommendations for the Trust and wider policymakers.
- Annex A provides a more in-depth description of the literature- and document-review approaches.
- Annex B contains the project-level logic models.
- Annex C presents the questionnaires completed by projects during the course of the evaluation.
- Annex D lists the interviewees who contributed to the beneficiary-level interviews (ex-Service personnel, family members/carers and professionals).
- Annex E provides the interview protocols used with each of the beneficiary-level groups.

A graphical representation of the report structure is presented in Figure 1.3.

[30] Ministry of Justice & HM Prison and Probation Service (2020a).

[31] Cogman et al. (2020); Bermingham (2020); Ministry of Justice & HM Prison and Probation Service (2020b).

Figure 1.3 Report structure



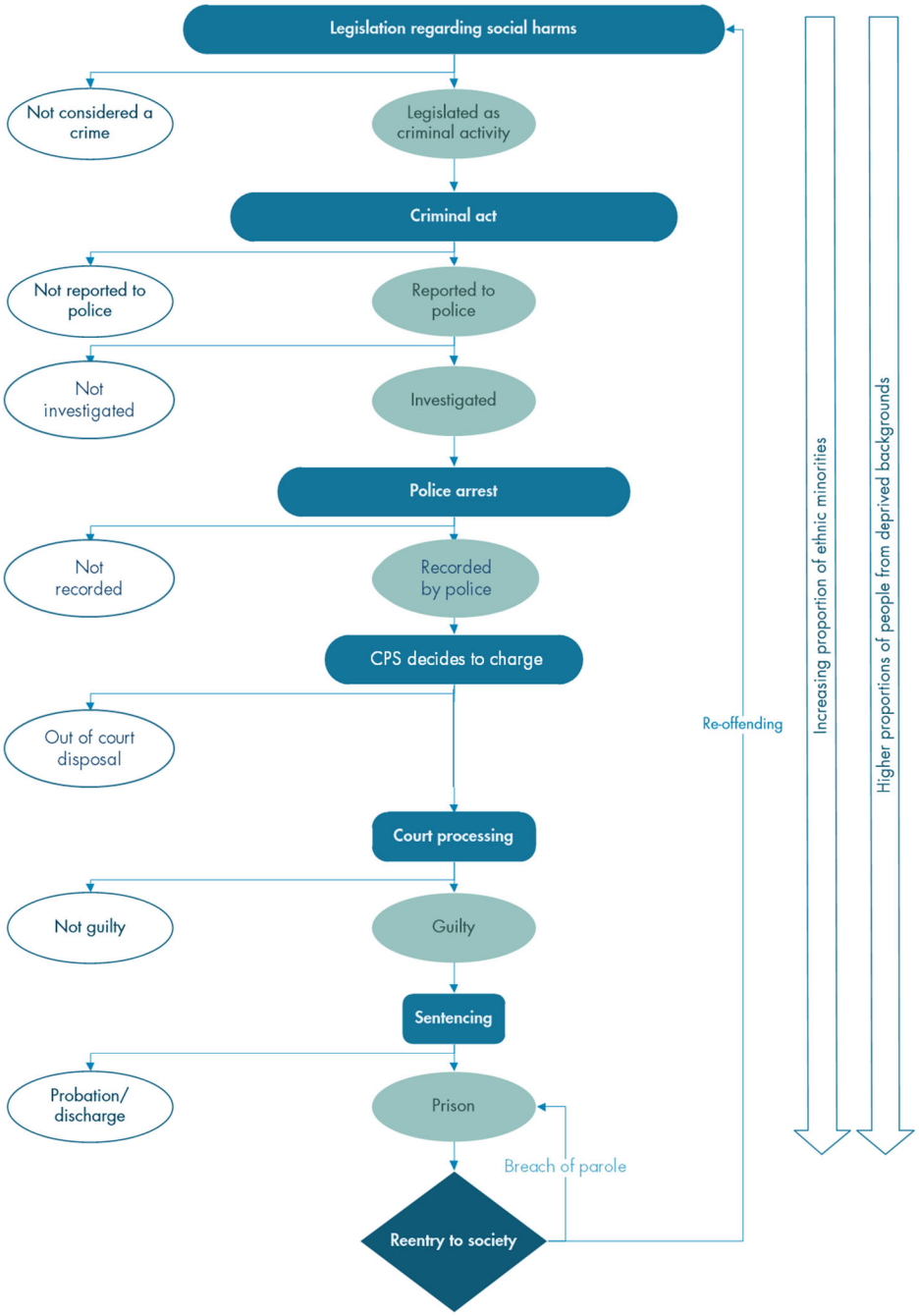
2. Ex-Service personnel within the criminal justice system

This chapter provides the contextual understanding of ex-Service personnel within the CJS, to provide background on the issues underpinning the EQs, and help contextualise the Programme and its projects. In particular, this chapter focuses on what is currently known regarding this cohort, military-to-civilian transition experiences and associated challenges that can lead to offending by ex-Service personnel. The focus of this chapter spans the full lifecycle of ex-Service personnel within the CJS, inclusive of those at risk of offending, to those who have been released from custodial sentences or who are serving community sentences. This chapter is based on a structured literature review, which is detailed in Annex A.

2.1. There is a lack of data available and knowledge on ex-Service personnel in the CJS

Figure 2.1 illustrates the conventional pathway of the CJS from legislation to imprisonment, and key decision points where individuals may be diverted from the CJS. Figure 2.1 also demonstrates that throughout the pathway, although fewer individuals remain implicated in the CJS, there is an increasing proportion of ethnic minorities and individuals from lower socio-economic groups.

Figure 2.1 The criminal justice pathway



Source: adapted from Figure 1.3: The Criminalisation Model of Criminal Justice (Shelden et al. 2015).

There is a lack of definitive figures for the ex-Service personnel population in prison in England and Wales.[32] A 2008 National Association for Probation Officers (NAPO) report estimated that in excess of 20,000 ex-Service personnel were serving a sentence in either prison or the community in England and

[32] Albertson et al. (2017).

Wales.[33] While the NAPO report generated wider research interest in this topic, the initial quantitative assessments have since been contested by subsequent research.[34] The NAPO estimated that just under ten per cent of English and Welsh prisoners have served in the Armed Forces,[35] while the Defence Analytical Services Agency (DASA) used a more robust method of record linkage between prison census data and Ministry of Defence (MOD) records from England and Wales to estimate the figure at 3.5 per cent.[36] This figure derived from matching a database of all prisoners aged 18 and over with a database of Regular Service leavers from all three branches of the Armed Forces.

The DASA report found that although ex-Service personnel are less likely than the general population to offend, they are more likely to be in prison for violent and sexual offences.[37] Nonetheless, these findings have been criticised as one-dimensional, considering that they do not offer any insights into the factors contributing to offending.[38] Violent behaviour is sometimes assumed to directly result from the deployment experiences of military personnel; however, what is lacking is more robust research into the pathways that might lead to military personnel committing violent offences and the effect of pre-military risk factors, deployment experiences – particularly combat exposure – and post-deployment mental health problems.[39] Furthermore, contact with the CJS is not merely defined by being in prison, but also by those who have contacts with other parts of the CJS, outside of custodial sentences.

These studies directed further policy attention to the question of the CJS and ex-Service personnel, who were increasingly understood to have a distinct identity that should be recognised and considered in criminal justice practice.[40] This was emphasised by the Howard League's 2011 report, which noted that this cohort represented the largest occupational subset of the male prisoner population in the UK.[41] The government and policy response to the issue of ex-Service personnel in the CJS is manifested in the Phillips Review (2014), Lord Ashcroft's Veteran's Transition Reviews (2014, 2016, 2017), and two associated MoJ reports,[42] which made a range of recommendations relating to the collection of data on ex-Service personnel in the CJS and coordination of support services. In 2015, this led to all individuals entering custody being

[33] NAPO (2008).

[34] See Bray et al. (2011); NAPO (2008); DASA (2010).

[35] NAPO (2008). This estimate is extrapolated from surveys completed in a small sample of prisons, so it might not be representative of the whole CJS in the UK.

[36] Bray et al. (2011); DASA (2010).

[37] Whereas the US data is quite comprehensive on the types of offences committed, the UK data is not as granular. However, the 2010 DASA report found the most common offences among veterans in prison to be violence against the person at 33 per cent, followed by sexual offences at 25 per cent and drug offences at 11 per cent. There is no data on non-prison sentencing in the UK or any further sub-categorisation. Source: DASA (2010).

[38] MacManus & Wessely (2011).

[39] MacManus et al. (2013).

[40] Murray (2013).

[41] Howard League for Penal Reform (2011).

[42] Kelly (2014); Lyne & Packham (2014).

asked, as part of their Basic Custody Screening, whether they have been a member of the Armed Forces (covering both regular and reserve service, as well as countries other than the UK).

Recent statistics from the MoJ suggest that nearly 4 per cent (2,105) of ex-Service personnel were part of the prison population as at the end of June 2019, 1,885 of which stated they were British nationals (3.5 per cent).[43] However, **there is little knowledge as to the numbers of ex-Service personnel at other key junctures within the CJS**, given that it is not compulsory to enquire about individuals' membership within the Armed Forces. Additionally, **the literature reviewed does not clearly distinguish between the needs of ex-Service personnel in the CJS and the factors that brought them into contact with the CJS** in the first place. As such, the following sections examine the challenges faced by ex-Service personnel in the CJS as a product of the unique circumstance they face, rather than a direct causal link from transition-related challenges to offending.

2.2. Transitioning from military to civilian life can be challenging

While the majority of Service personnel transition from military to civilian life without any issues, experiences and challenges faced by ex-Service personnel during their transition can, in some cases, contribute to offending.[44] This is particularly true when considered amidst the complex interplay of social, cultural and economic factors associated with transition.[45] However, considering that most of the personnel who leave Service successfully transition back into civilian life, it would be incorrect to present a direct causal link from transition-related challenges to offending. Additionally, contact with the CJS after transition is variable – it can happen soon after transition as well as many years later.[46] This is particularly relevant considering the lack of data available on ex-Service personnel offending, such as on the amount of time a person was in service for, or the amount of time between the end of their service and their entry into the CJS.

Recent statistics from the UK MOD across all Services show that, when looking only at the outflow of trained personnel, nearly 63 per cent voluntarily exited 'before the end of their agreed engagement or commission period', while nearly 16 per cent left upon the end of their engagement or commission.[47] The remaining 22 per cent left due to a number of reasons, including medical, misconduct, dismissal or compassionate. Of the 757,805 people who served as Regulars in the British Armed Forces between 1991

[43] This data has a number of caveats, including the fact that only individuals entering custody as of 1 January 2015 were asked this question (meaning that 79 per cent of the prison population was included in this analysis), as well as the fact that this relies on self-reporting, and does not include those individuals who did not want to disclose their status. Additionally, this data only pertains to England and Wales, and does not include Scotland or Northern Ireland. Source: Ministry of Justice (2019).

[44] CSJ (2014).

[45] Albertson et al. (2017).

[46] Fossey et al. (2017).

[47] Ministry of Defence (2020). These statistics are based on the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

and 2014, it has been estimated that at least 66,090 may need to access support services such as career transition support, pension schemes and welfare services, among others, to ease their transition; this is equivalent to 1 in 11 people.[48] A 2013 report estimates that the direct costs to public bodies and third sector agencies of poor transition are in the order of £100 million per year.[49]

The challenges encountered by ex-Service personnel in the CJS are broadly similar to those faced when reintegrating into civilian society upon leaving service.[50] Box 2.1 offers a high-level overview of some of the changes that ex-Service personnel experience as part of their transition back into civilian society.

Box 2.1 Changes experienced by ex-Service personnel during transition

Ex-Service personnel might experience a range of changes during their transition from military to civilian life, including:

- **Rehousing**, e.g. the need to obtain stable accommodation.
- **Relocation**, e.g. a physical change in location away from the military base.
- **Independent living**, e.g. managing personal finances, registering for healthcare services.
- **Employment,** e.g. the need to find and maintain civilian employment; lack in transferrable skills or inability to translate these into language that are understandable to a civilian employer.
- **Relationships**, e.g. challenges in maintaining existing relationships in the context of transition; forming new relationships with others outside of the military; challenges pertaining to returning to families.
- **Identity change**, e.g. challenges relating to self-perception and self-definition, as well as those relating to the loss of the culture and dynamics of the Armed Forces.
- **Physical health**, e.g. blood pressure, risk of morbidity, substance abuse.
- **Mental and emotional challenges**, e.g. emotional issues, depression, PTSD.

The literature indicates that similar challenges affect comparator civilian groups, i.e. bereaved individuals, migrants, former prisoners, divorcees, foster care leavers, and individuals experiencing involuntary job loss, amongst others.

Source: Cox et al. (2018); FiMT (2013); Grand-Clement (2019).

Additionally, ex-Service personnel might feel **disenchanted with civilian life** and feel reluctant to reintegrate fully.[51] These reintegration barriers can lead to a wide range of issues, including homelessness or contemplating suicide or dying by suicide.[52] Further, the **resilience** that is fostered during Service can adversely affect ex-Service personnel and act as an internal barrier to seeking support.[53] Despite the presence

[48] Diehle & Greenberg (2015).

[49] FiMT (2013).

[50] Lyne & Packham (2014).

[51] McGarry et al. (2015).

[52] For example, more British service personnel have taken their own lives since the termination of the Falklands War than died in combat. Source: Spooner (2002).

[53] King's Centre for Military Health Research (2017); Cox et al. (2018).

of employment support, such as the MOD's Career Transition Partnership (CTP)[54] and the availability of other psychological and welfare support opportunities (e.g. from military charities), many ex-Service personnel are unaware of the resources at their disposal.[55]

Overall, transition is not straightforward, nor is transition a binary or one-time event; a successful transition to civilian life does not necessarily mean that ex-Service personnel will not enter the CJS. The Howard League Report (2011) highlights that many of the stakeholders involved in their study could be regarded as having successfully transitioned[56] in the short term, only to commit offences a decade later.[57] The time lag between discharge from the military and committing an offence constitutes another pertinent – and as yet, unanswered – research question in this area.[58]

2.2.1. Ex-Service personnel in the CJS might possess particular characteristics that set them apart from civilian offenders

Challenges in the management of ex-Service personnel in the CJS might arise from experiences that are particular to members of the Armed Forces. Some of the specific institutional and individual challenges faced by ex-Service personnel are explored in the following sub-sections.

As is the case with all the challenges listed below, none in isolation is sufficient to explain the phenomenon of ex-Service personnel in the CJS. Additionally, while some ex-Service personnel in the CJS fit the more 'vulnerable'[59] categories that are more likely to experience transition challenges, many do not.[60]

[54] CTP (2015).

[55] Howard League for Penal Reform (2011); Reynolds (2016); Quilgars et al. (2018).

[56] There remains a research gap in defining what constitutes a 'successful' transition; however, in broad terms a good transition enables ex-Service personnel to adapt successfully to civilian life and display resilience in financial, psychological and emotional aspects of their lives. Source: Cox et al. (2018).

[57] Howard League for Penal Reform (2011).

[58] The length of time between discharge and the start of the point of sentence ranges from 0 to 41 years, with 6 per cent of veterans beginning their current prison sentence within one year of being discharged, 22 per cent within five years and 41 per cent within ten years. Some conjecture endeavours to explain the time lag between discharge and offending, including a theorisation of a delayed onset of PTSD. However, the gap between discharge and custody makes it difficult to associate any direct causal link between Service and imprisonment. Source: Howard League for Penal Reform (2011); Bray et al. (2011).

[59] Previous RAND research indicates that certain Service leaver categories are more vulnerable to transition challenges than others. These can include some Early Service Leavers (ESLs) who are vulnerable to mental health issues, employment difficulties, homelessness, and substance abuse but lack access to the full suite of UK resettlement support; individuals who have been involuntarily discharged and whose resettlement challenges are compounded by feelings of rejection; and Service leavers with deployment and/or combat experience through which they might have been exposed to traumatic events. Crucially, this finding bears the caveat that individual variability is significant; not all individuals in the aforementioned leaver categories will encounter transition difficulties. Source: Cox et al. (2018).

[60] Howard League for Penal Reform (2011).

Individual challenges

Socio-demographic characteristics of ex-Service personnel within the CJS generally mirror that of the general population

The literature reviewed indicates that there are predictors of integration challenges for ex-Service personnel as they return to civilian life. The socio-demographic characteristics of this cohort are not unlike the profile of general population offenders, namely younger males, disproportionately drawn from urban, deprived communities, often with low levels of education and with histories of previous offences.[61] British Army personnel in particular tend to join from some of the poorest communities in the UK[62] and thus may encounter socio-economic disadvantages upon returning from Service.[63] It has long been known there is a spatial concentration of crime in areas with high socio-economic disadvantage, further exacerbated by low education levels, drug and alcohol misuse, homelessness, poor health and family deprivation.[64] However, presenting offending behaviour as a continuation of individuals' pre-enlistment behaviour and/or engagement with crime has been criticised for depicting ex-Service personnel offending as the product of *individual* shortcomings, rather than a complex ecosystem of conflicting dynamics.

Mental health: PTSD dominates coverage, but depression and anxiety are often more prevalent for ex-Service personnel

The majority of media, political and research coverage of mental health in the Armed Forces focuses disproportionately on PTSD, at the expense of common mental disorders, such as depression and anxiety.[65] Comparisons between Service personnel and the general working population show that the prevalence of common mental health disorders was approximately double in the military.[66] The results were similar when the results were stratified by sex, age and other demographic variables.

Depression and anxiety disorders are identified in the literature as being the most common mental health problems among Service and ex-Service personnel.[67] The literature reviewed for this study identified a strong relationship between the physical and mental health of Service leavers.[68] A study found prevalence rates of around 27 per cent for common mental health disorders for Regular and Reserve UK Army personnel deployed to Iraq. Amongst these, alcohol misuse accounted for 18 per cent and neurotic disorders accounted for nearly 14 per cent.[69] Overall PTSD rates in the Services have grown in the past decade – amounting to

[61] MacManus et al. (2013); CSJ (2014); MacManus et al. (2014).

[62] British army recruiters have received criticism for disproportionately targeting young people from working-class backgrounds with limited opportunities. Source: Morris (2018).

[63] Howard League for Penal Reform (2011).

[64] Howard League for Penal Reform (2011).

[65] Goodwin et al. (2015).

[66] Goodwin et al. (2015).

[67] Fear et al. (2010).

[68] Cox et al. (2018).

[69] Iversen et al. (2009).

6 per cent in 2014–16 in the Services, compared to 4.4 per cent in the general population – with higher rates for Serving personnel and ex-Service personnel who have undertaken combat roles.[70] The percentage of those with mental health problems who have sought out and are receiving treatment while in Service has also increased; however, this could be related to a decrease in stigma in seeking medical attention for mental health issues.[71]

Experience in Service: Exposure to combat could lead to increased violent offending

While not all British Service personnel have been deployed, the psychological link between exposure to combat and poor mental health is increasingly seen as a fundamental issue for the British military.[72] PTSD and anger management issues are often cited as potential mental-health-related issues that link combat during deployment with subsequent violence after leaving the Services. Much of this research has been limited by self-reported measures of violence and cross-sectional study design.[73] A large-scale epidemiological study[74] in 2013 found that violent offenders were the most common type of offenders amongst ex-Service personnel, and the rate of offending in the post-deployment period was greater than in the in-Service pre-deployment and pre-military periods for all types of offending.[75] This finding implies that deployment or aspects of deployment increase offending and violent offending by Service personnel. Specifically, serving in a combat role and exposure to an increased number of traumatic events on deployment was found to confer an additional risk of violent offending. This finding bears the caveat that individuals who volunteer or are selected for a combat role are likely to have a propensity for risk taking and more aggressive behaviour. Therefore, to some extent, this particular group is self-selecting.[76]

Alcohol misuse: Excessive alcohol consumption is common in the Armed Forces affecting individuals' mental and physical health

Historically, alcohol has been used in the UK Armed Forces to encourage bonding and deal with difficult experiences.[77] Although alcohol use is on the decline in the Services, harmful drinking[78] is still double that of the general population,[79] qualifying alcohol misuse as a common issue in the UK Armed Forces.[80]

[70] Lord Ashcroft (2017b).

[71] Lord Ashcroft (2017b).

[72] McGarry et al. (2015).

[73] MacManus et al. (2013).

[74] The study used criminal records to investigate offending behaviour in a national cohort of Armed Forces personnel, thereby eliminating the problem of recall bias associated with the more common self-reported method.

[75] MacManus et al. (2013).

[76] MacManus et al. (2011).

[77] Goodwin & Puddephatt (2019).

[78] Harmful drinking is defined as a pattern of alcohol consumption causing health problems directly related to alcohol. Alcohol dependence is characterised by craving, tolerance, a preoccupation with alcohol and continued drinking in spite of harmful consequences. Source: O'Flynn (2011).

[79] Leightley et al. (2019); Murphy & Turgoose (2019); Stevelink et al. (2018).

[80] Hooper et al. (2008).

Statistics indicate that about 11 per cent of men and 5 per cent of women in the UK Armed Forces meet the criteria for alcohol misuse,[81] compared with about 4 per cent of men and 2 per cent of women in the general population.[82] In fact, alcohol misuse is more common in the Armed Forces than PTSD.[83]

Evidence suggests that excessive alcohol consumption is associated with significant adverse health implications, including a range of mood and anxiety disorders. In particular, the association between alcohol misuse and PTSD is well-established.[84] However, the complexity of dual diagnosis – often addiction and PTSD – is recognised as a barrier to recovery and admission to rehabilitation. Further evidence suggests that alcohol misuse persists beyond military service.[85] Finally, alcohol misuse is associated with violent offending, and alcohol can occasionally act as a link between serving in combat and exposure to combat and violent offending.[86]

Identity: Ex-Service personnel may be faced with conflicting identities

Leaving the Services entails a significant lifestyle change, involving more than just a change in employment. Upon leaving the military, ex-Service personnel might also relinquish their accommodation, community and familiar institutional dynamics.[87] Alongside other significant life changes, ex-Service personnel are grappling with an identity shift from serving member to veteran, which can culminate in a disorienting transition experience. Looking into the issue of ex-Service personnel identity, FiMT's transition mapping study (2013) suggests that the ex-Service personnel community should be given the opportunity to develop a sense of identity and purpose that reflects their present civilian circumstances and plans for the future, rather than rooting their identity solely in the past.[88] A dichotomy between past and present/future identity in an individual's self-perception can negatively affect their transition experience and increase the likelihood of offending.[89] While the transition mapping study does not provide a set time-frame as to when this should happen, the general message is that this is part of a wider process that should take place upon joining the Services.[90]

[81] Alcohol misuse is defined by the NHS as drinking in a way that is harmful, or alcohol dependency. Source: NHS (2020b).

[82] Stevelink et al. (2018); NHS (2016).

[83] Leightley et al. (2019).

[84] Murphy et al. (2017).

[85] Goodwin et al. (2017).

[86] MacManus et al. (2013).

[87] Howard League for Penal Reform (2011).

[88] FiMT (2013).

[89] St George's House (2014).

[90] FiMT (2013).

Furthermore, one's identity is informed in part by the perceptions of others.[91] Research has shown there is a tension between perceptions surrounding the 'veteran' and those of the 'offender'.[92] Both of these categorisations are social identities that create and sustain understandings about those to whom they are applied. As a consequence of the normative perceptions and externally imposed views about offenders and their criminality, ex-Service personnel can encounter significant identity challenges. This manifests as a contradiction between the stigmatic identity of 'being an offender' and the traditional celebration of Service personnel.[93]

Systemic challenges operating at macro and micro-levels

Barriers to seeking help include values institutionalised during Service life

Ex-Service personnel face significant barriers to accessing support services, and experience significant levels of social exclusion, as compared to the general population.[94] Military personnel, who are accustomed to functioning with 'high resilience' as a constituent part of their identity and occupation, might be less inclined from seeking help and caring for themselves.[95] The same ideals of self-sufficiency and resilience that are demanded of soldiers in their day-to-day operations can lead to feelings of anxiety, fear and a perception of failure around disclosing emotions and feelings.[96]

A previous study found that resilience is framed both positively and negatively in the literature. Many studies indicate that resilience can better equip individuals to adapt to change, cope with issues around transition, and better handle uncertainty. But several other sources found that the 'can-do' attitude institutionalised through military service might, in some cases, act as a barrier to seeking support in civilian life.[97] In this sense, fostering resilience in soldiers during their service has the potential to stigmatise expressions of physical or emotional weakness and act as a barrier to receiving support after they leave the Armed Forces.[98]

The Armed Forces have recently started providing mental resilience training to Service personnel; however the efficacy of this measure has not been evaluated.[99] Data from the voluntary mental health services of Combat Stress in the United Kingdom revealed that British veterans take an average of 11 years after discharge before they seek support for their mental health difficulties.[100] Thus, the unique challenges that

[91] Jenkins (2008).

[92] Murray (2013).

[93] Murray (2013).

[94] Albertson et al. (2017).

[95] King's Centre for Military Health Research (2017).

[96] King's Centre for Military Health Research (2017); Cox et al. (2018).

[97] Cox et al. (2018).

[98] McGarry et al. (2015).

[99] Bond (2017).

[100] Murphy et al. (2015).

are faced by ex-Service personnel are further exacerbated by issues of stigma, barriers to seeking help and degree of responsiveness to interventions.[101]

Public perceptions of ex-Service personnel can lead to overemphasis of the issues this cohort face

One challenge faced by ex-Service personnel is public perception. Lord Ashcroft's 2014, 2016 and 2017 Veterans' Transition Review reports have consistently highlighted the ability for public perceptions to act as a barrier to the successful transition of ex-Service personnel to civilian life.[102] Members of the public responding to surveys undertaken as part of the Veterans' Transition Review estimate that over half of ex-Service personnel have some kind of physical, emotional or mental health problem. During the data collection, mental health was mentioned unprompted and most often by respondents as a common problem faced by people leaving the Armed Forces,[103] alongside 'problems adjusting to a civilian environment'.[104] This indicates that the public overestimates the problems suffered by ex-Service personnel. These opinions are gleaned overwhelmingly from documentaries and television news – sources that might not be authoritative and have the potential to generate stigma that can adversely affect an individual in their transition from military to civilian life.[105]

2.2.2. Identifying the unique needs of ex-Service personnel in the CJS could better enable their access to relevant or tailored support

Having explored the issues that could contribute to offending by ex-Service personnel, it is also important to consider what the subsequent needs of this population might be, should they find themselves within the CJS.

The needs of ex-Service personnel in the CJS are not well known

A 2018 study by Short et al. sought to characterise ex-Service personnel in Liaison and Diversion (L&D) Services.[106] While this study only focused on individuals with specific vulnerabilities[107] and therefore cannot be generalised to all ex-Service personnel within the CJS, it nonetheless provides a number of interesting insights. While the study found that ex-Service personnel in the CJS have needs that are broadly similar to those of the general offending population – such as 'mental health needs; alcohol/substance use; and other

[101] MacManus et al. (2014).

[102] Lord Ashcroft (2017b).

[103] Lord Ashcroft (2017b). 82 per cent of respondents chose mental health among the top three problems they thought were most often faced by ex-Service personnel.

[104] Lord Ashcroft (2017b). 65 per cent of respondents chose problems adjusting to a civilian environment among the top three problems they thought were most often faced by ex-Service personnel.

[105] Lord Ashcroft (2017a).

[106] Short et al. (2018). The findings from this study also informed the Continuation and Sustainability Programme.

[107] L&D services 'identify people who have mental health, learning disability, substance misuse or other vulnerabilities when they first come into contact with the criminal justice system as suspects, defendants or offenders.' Source: NHS (2020a).

vulnerabilities (learning, physical, or social and communication difficulties)' – the prevalence of these needs varies. Demographically, the study found that the majority of the individuals analysed were male, white British, more likely to be older and in employment than the civilian individuals, and with similar rates of homelessness across both civilians and ex-Service personnel. The study also noted a number of health needs that differed when compared to the civilian cohort; notably, ex-Service personnel tended to have a higher propensity to suffer from a mental health disorder, in particular anxiety, depression, adjustment disorder and dementia. Additionally, data showed that a higher proportion of ex-Service personnel tended to possess co-occurring mental health issues compared to the civilian cohort. This could be compounded by ex-Service personnel being less likely to ask for help, as mentioned above.

When taking these factors together, recognising the unique needs of ex-Service personnel as a population might give rise to an improvement in the design and delivery of support services.[108] Identifying the needs earlier could enable more preventative steps to be taken, particularly when considering the potential for these challenges to occur simultaneously – for example, co-occurring PTSD and alcohol use disorders have become increasingly prevalent in military populations.[109]

There is more research on the needs of ex-Service personnel at certain junctures of the CJS compared to others

In addition to the lack of data regarding the needs of ex-Service personnel in the CJS, the literature reviewed focused primarily on ex-Service personnel within prisons as opposed to at other points of the CJS (such as arrest, charging, court processing or sentencing).[110] The emphasis on ex-Service personnel in prisons, as opposed to at other junctures of the CJS pathway, points to a potential gap in the evidence base. Pre-custody support – which helps to ensure that ex-Service personnel who find themselves involved with the police will have access to all available resources and services – is one form of proactive intervention. Intervening at the start of an individual's journey through the CJS has the potential to help identify areas where ex-Service personnel and their families require support.[111]

Overall, there is a gap in knowledge regarding the needs of ex-Service personnel within the various junctures of the CJS. While there is more knowledge on the needs of this cohort at certain stages – such as custody and prison – it remains under-researched. A better understanding of causal and correlated factors in the context of ex-Service personnel in the CJS is necessary in order to build upon the existing evidence base for effective solutions to reduce offending (and reoffending).[112]

The following chapter describes the aims of the Ex-Service Personnel in the CJS Programme and its role in helping fund support for ex-Service personnel in the CJS.

[108] Albertson et al. (2017).

[109] Head et al. (2016).

[110] Phillips (2014).

[111] Ministry of Justice (2013a).

[112] MacManus et al. (2014).

3. Overview of the Ex-Service Personnel in the CJS Programme

This chapter provides an overview of the Ex-Service Personnel in the CJS Programme and each of the 14 projects that are funded through it.

3.1. Programme overview

The Trust runs the Covenant Fund, which has four overall aims that inform decision making with regards to Programmes and funding priorities[113]:

1. Non-core healthcare services for veterans;
2. Removing barriers to family life;
3. Extra support after service for those that need help; and
4. Measures to integrate military and civilian communities and allow the Armed Forces community to participate as citizens.

The Ex-Service Personnel in the CJS Programme was launched in 2015, with the aim of providing two- and three-year grants to support projects involving ex-Service personnel, with the ultimate aim of reducing reoffending.[114] The aims of the Programme are:

> *To support ex-Service personnel who are at risk of offending.*
>
> *To encourage the lasting sustainability of projects that offer good support to ex-Service personnel who are in the criminal justice system.*
>
> *To encourage collaboration and effective cross-sector working that reduces duplication and provides the best possible pathways for ex-Service personnel.*[115]

Under this Programme, 14 grants totalling £4.6 million were awarded. In 2018, the Trust launched a Continuation and Sustainability Programme, under which grant holders from the Ex-Service Personnel in

[113] Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (2020a).

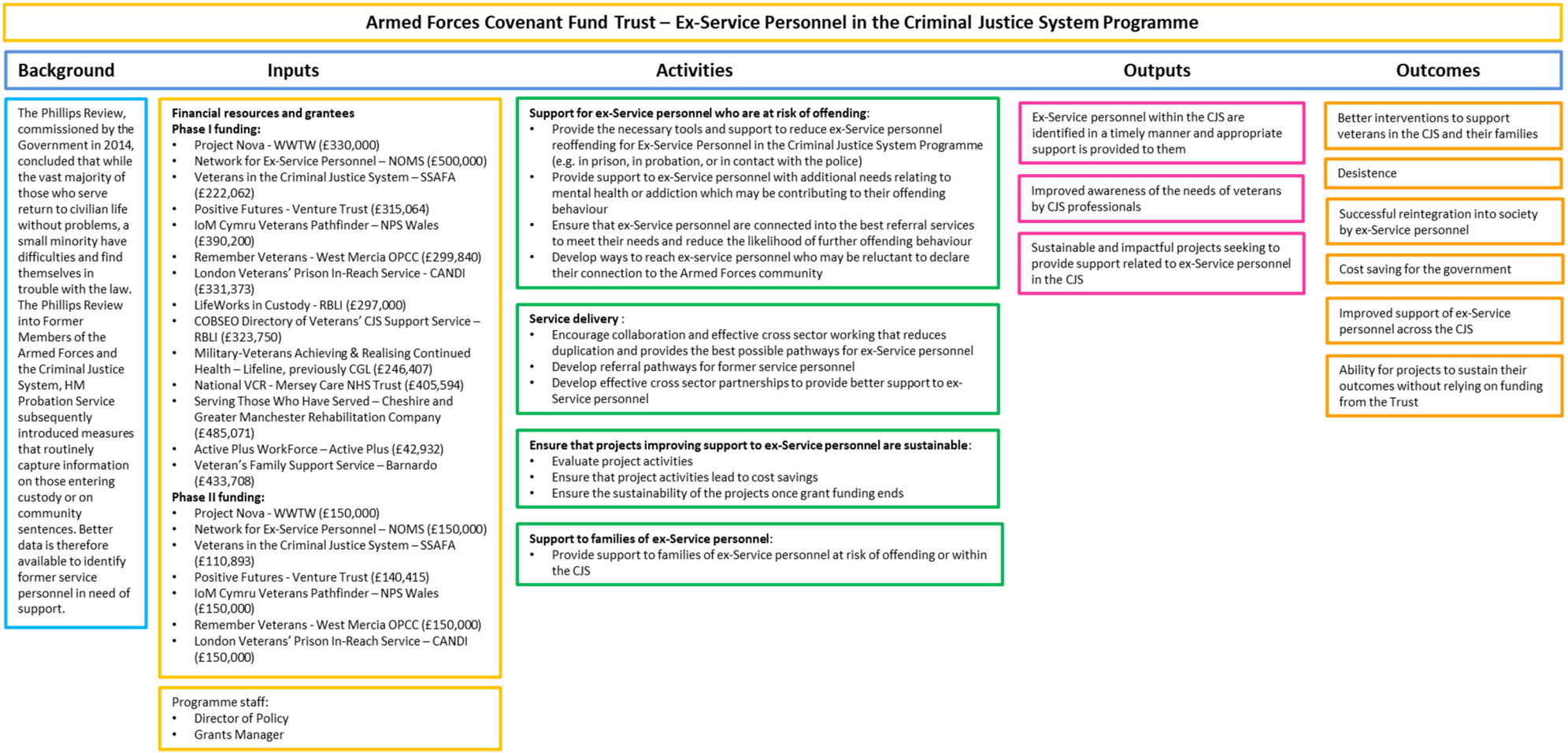
[114] Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (n.d.).

[115] Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (n.d.).

the CJS Programme could apply for continuation funding for up to two further years. Under the Continuation and Sustainability Programme, seven grants totalling £1.1 million were awarded.

As part of the evaluation, a logic model outlining the Ex-Service Personnel in the CJS Programme was developed, and is provided in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 Ex-Service Personnel in the CJS Programme logic model



Source: RAND Europe

3.2. Overview of the 14 projects

As discussed in Chapter 1, the Ex-Service Personnel in the CJS Programme includes seven projects that have received continuation funding, and seven projects that have not. All 14 projects are presented below, and the logic models for the projects that obtained continuation funding can be found in Annex B.

3.2.1. Descriptions of the seven projects that obtained continuation funding

Project Nova – Supporting Veterans in the Criminal Justice System (Walking with the Wounded)

Project Nova was given a £330,000 grant in the first phase of funding and £150,000 in the second phase of funding, and provides direct support to ex-Service personnel, focusing on the East of England, North West England, North East England and South Yorkshire and Humberside. This project identifies ex-Service personnel via police staff and NHS L&D personnel. Once identified, and if the ex-Service person accepts the support provided, Project Nova allocates a caseworker who conducts a needs assessment to shape a tailored pathway of support for the individual. The caseworker also provides support to the family of the individual where possible and where requested. As part of their continuation funding application, Project Nova stated it is seeking to support 500 direct beneficiaries.

Network for Ex-Service Personnel (National Offender Management Service Co-Financing Organisation)

Network for Ex-Service Personnel (NESP) was provided with a £500,000 grant in the first phase of funding and a £150,000 grant in the second phase of funding. NESP aims to identify ex-Service personnel in the custodial estate, with a particular focus on HMP Chelmsford, HMP Holloway and Military Corrective Training Centre (MCTC) Colchester[116] in order to offer resettlement support for individuals in custody, once released into the community, and on license. NESP also offers resettlement support to individuals with community discharges from the MCTC. In the second phase of funding, NESP is also seeking to embed their activities as part of mainstream delivery, to allow them to continue once project funding comes to an end. As part of their continuation funding application, NESP stated it is seeking to support 60 direct beneficiaries.

Veterans in the Criminal Justice System (SSAFA)

Veterans in the Criminal Justice System (VCJS) was given a £222,062 grant in the first phase of funding and £110,893 in the second phase of funding. VCJS is led by volunteers who are trained to provide prison in-reach support nationally to ex-Service personnel and ensure that this cohort have access to the necessary resources, while preparing them for release. VCJS also seeks to raise awareness amongst CJS professionals

[116] The MCTC is an 'establishment that provides corrective training for those servicemen and women sentenced to periods of detention; it is not a prison.' Source: Army (2020).

regarding ex-Service personnel in the CJS. In the second phase of funding, VCJS has also expanded to provide support to prison staff working with ex-Service personnel and family members who may require it. As part of their continuation funding application, VCJS stated it is seeking to support 1,000 direct beneficiaries.

Positive Futures (Venture Trust)

Positive Futures was given a £315,064 grant in the first phase of funding and £140,415 in the second phase of funding. Positive Futures operates in Scotland and, similarly to Project Nova, provides support to ex-Service personnel who sit outside of custody but have come – or are at risk of coming – into contact with the CJS. It receives referrals from a range of partners, including veterans' associations, job centres and housing associations, and aims to raise awareness among professional services about this cohort. Positive Futures aims to address the needs of ex-Service personnel via a 'wilderness residential course' to build core skills, focusing on civilian reintegration as well as employment support. In the second phase of funding, Positive Futures has increased the support provided to the families of the individuals who participate in their course. As part of their continuation funding application, Positive Futures stated it is seeking to support 50 direct beneficiaries.

Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Cymru: Veterans Pathfinder (National Probation Service in Wales)

IOM Cymru: Veterans Pathfinder was allocated a £390,200 grant in the first phase of funding and £150,000 in the second phase of funding. The aim of this project is to improve the identification and support provision for ex-Service personnel in Welsh prisons, as well as raising awareness regarding this cohort among CJS professionals. This includes training 'champions' within the CJS to embed good practice, improve partnership working, and increase awareness regarding services aimed at ex-Service personnel. As part of their continuation funding application, Veterans Pathfinder stated it is seeking to support 528 direct beneficiaries.

Remember Veterans (West Mercia Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner)

Remember Veterans, which operates in the West Midlands, was given a £299,840 grant in the first phase of funding and £140,415 in the second phase of funding. The first phase of funding focused primarily on improving training and awareness-raising of CJS professionals within the prison system, and on strengthening and creating new referral routes and means through which to identify ex-Service personnel. The second phase added a focus on providing direct support for ex-Service personnel via caseworkers, creating a 'Champion network', ensuring that there is a strategic partnership in place between the CJS system and military charities, and providing support to the family members of the ex-Service personnel. As part of their continuation funding application, Remember Veterans stated it is seeking to support 500 direct beneficiaries.

London Veterans' Prison In-Reach Service (Camden and Islington NHS Trust)

London Veterans' Prison In-Reach (PIR) Service was given a £331,373 grant in the first phase of funding and £150,000 in the second phase of funding. The London Veterans' PIR works across all London prisons (HMPs Brixton, Thameside, Isis, Belmarsh, Wormwood scrubs, Wandsworth and Pentonville) as well as

the London L&D service. Unlike the other projects, the focus of the project's first phase of funding is different to that of the second phase. In the first phase of funding, the London Veterans' PIR Service focused on providing direct support to ex-Service personnel by identifying more individuals, assessing identified individuals and providing mental health support as required. In the second phase of funding, the project focused on training and raising CJS staff awareness regarding the mental health needs of ex-Service personnel in prisons, in order to raise the profile and encourage further referrals to the Veterans Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service in London. As part of their continuation funding application, the London Veterans' PIR stated it is seeking to support 500 direct beneficiaries.

3.2.2. Descriptions of the seven projects that obtained Phase 1 funding only

LifeWorks in Custody (RBLI)

LifeWorks in Custody was given a £297,000 grant from the Trust, ran from April 2016 until June 2018 and was aimed at ex-Service personnel in custody. LifeWorks was due to be run in Category B and C prisons nationally; however, it faced implementation challenges and only ran in 11 of 40 prisons contacted. This project involved developing a pathway for ex-Service personnel within prisons, focused on two aspects: (i) improving individuals' mental wellbeing and changing their attitudes and behaviours, and (ii) delivering an employability coaching course for those within 12 months of release, and a Living In Prison course for those with longer sentences. The aim of the project was to lay the foundations to ex-Service personnel's future employment upon leaving prison. In the original application, it was anticipated that the project would directly benefit 264 people; at the conclusion of the project, there were 82 beneficiaries.[117]

Cobseo Directory of Veterans' CJS Support Services (RBLI)

The Confederation of Service Charities, Cobseo's, Directory of Veterans' CJS Support Services was a project led by RBLI alongside two other organisations: Anglia Ruskin University Veterans & Families Institute and the Cobseo CJS Cluster, headed by SSAFA. The Directory was given a £323,750 grant from the Trust and ran from April 2016 until March 2018. The project consisted of mapping services catering to ex-Service personnel in the CJS nationally. The aim of the project was to raise awareness within the sector of what support services are available and where in order to create clearer pathways for ex-Service personnel, as well as improve collaboration between services to avoid duplication of effort. The project resulted in an online tool, hosted on the HMPPS website.[118] Due to the output of the project being a tool, there is no data on the number of beneficiaries.

Military-Veterans Achieving & Realising Continued Health (Lifeline, then Change Grow Live)

Military-Veterans Achieving & Realising Continued Health (MARCH) was a project initially led by Lifeline, taking place in Yorkshire and Humberside. MARCH was given a £246,407 grant from the Trust, started in June 2016 and was due to conclude in June 2018. However, Lifeline ceased operations in May

[117] Patmore (2018).

[118] See Network for Ex-Service Personnel II (2020) to access the tool.

2017; the project was subsequently taken over by Change Grow Live (CGL), which focused the geographical scope of the project to cover Bradford, Calderdale and Rotherham. Due to the changeover, the project was still ongoing at the start of the evaluation (March 2019). Originally, the aim of the project was to provide support to ex-Service personnel in the CJS affected by alcohol and drug abuse, as well as to offer support to their family members/carers, with outcomes aimed not only at reducing substance misuse, but also improving individuals' employability, their health and wellbeing and their family relationships. When taking over the project, CGL agreed to maintain the same outcomes, albeit with some small changes in scope (geographic and implementation-related) that were accepted by the Trust.

National Veterans Community Recovery (Mersey Care NHS Trust)

The National Veterans Community Recovery (VCR) project involved RBLI and specialist facility Tom Harrison House in addition to Mersey Care NHS Trust. The project was given a £405,594 grant from the Trust and ran from 2016 until March 2018. It delivered its activities in Merseyside, but it could be accessed nationally by beneficiaries. It aimed to provide care to ex-Service personnel through detoxification and mental health interventions via a 'holistic, community-based, quasi-residential recovery centre'.[119] The project also aimed to provide support to family members of the ex-Service personnel engaged in the recovery programme. As of end of 2017, the National VCR had provided support to 146 beneficiaries, of which 13 accessed their detoxification services, 44 accessed the 12-week Recovery Programme, and 44 accessing the follow-on support provided.[120]

Serving Those Who Have Served (Cheshire and Greater Manchester Rehabilitation Company)

Serving Those Who Have Served was given a £485,071 grant from the Trust and ran from April 2016 until December 2018 (originally it had been due to end in April 2018). Operating in the North West of England, the project acted as a sign-posting service for ex-Service personnel and aided in obtaining appointments with various support services (e.g. health services). The project also provided a peer mentoring service to help raise beneficiaries' self-esteem and promote their resettlement, helped ex-Service personnel develop community projects, and helped organise drop-in surgeries for ex-Service personnel in prison. The project also developed tools for professionals to help them identify the needs of ex-Service personnel. No data was provided on the total number of beneficiaries, but the application had anticipated a minimum of 2,000 individuals.

Active Plus WorkForce (Active Plus)

Active Plus WorkForce was given a £42,932 grant from the Trust and ran from June 2016 until May 2017. The project was originally intended for ex-Service personnel who had come into contact with the CJS but were back in the community, but over time it came to include ex-Service personnel in prison. The project

[119] From the project's funding application form.

[120] Tom Harrison House (2017).

worked with prison staff to deliver courses to ex-Service personnel, focusing on rebuilding individuals' confidence, skills and motivation for work. The courses ran for eight sessions and were delivered in Cornwall and Devon. In the original application, it was anticipated that the project would directly benefit 40 people; at the conclusion of the project, there had been 43 beneficiaries.[121]

Veterans' Family Support Service (Barnardo's)

The Veterans' Family Support Service project was given a £433,708 grant from the Trust and ran from June 2016 until May 2018 – it had originally been anticipated to end in March 2018. The project, which operated in Wales only, provided tailored support to families and children of ex-Service personnel, as well as ex-Service personnel themselves. It focused on family resettlement and reunification, parenting and providing support on wider issues faced by the ex-Service personnel, such as substance misuse. No data was provided on the total number of beneficiaries.

Having described the remit of the Programme and the projects that have benefitted from its funding, the next chapter presents the findings of the evaluation.

[121] Active Plus (n.d.).

4. Evaluation findings

This chapter provides answers to the 11 EQs set out in Chapter 1 (Table 1.1). The EQs are divided into two parts: EQs 1 to 9 relate to project-level questions, while EQs 10 and 11 relate to programme-level questions. The findings presented in this chapter are based on pre-interview questionnaires completed by representatives of the projects, follow-up interviews with representatives of the projects, and beneficiary-level interviews with ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS, family members/carers of ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS, and professionals working with ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS. Unless specified otherwise, data relates to all projects evaluated.[122]

[122] Projects have all been anonymised. Projects A to G are projects that obtained Phase 2 continuation funding; Projects H to N are projects that obtained Phase 1 funding only.

4.1. Project-level research questions

4.1.1. What are the needs of ex-Service personnel, what are their complexities, and are the projects aligned with these needs?

Box 4.1 EQ1 overview and assessment

A summary of the main aspects pertaining to this EQ is provided below:

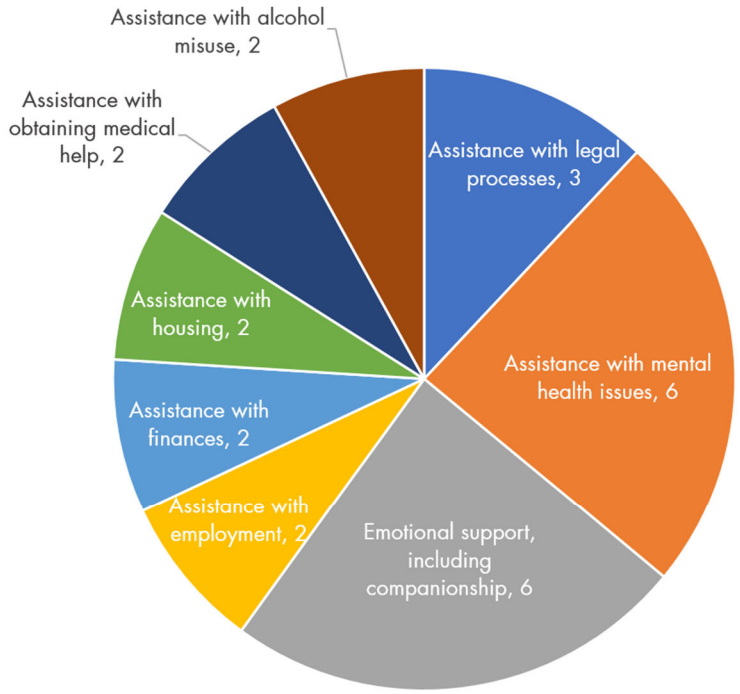
- **Ex-Service personnel identified areas of support offered by the projects as relevant to addressing their needs**, including assistance with legal processes, finances, housing, employment, obtaining medical help, mental health and substance abuse issues, as well as general emotional support needs, such as companionship. These were in broad agreement with the needs identified in the literature review. However, the limited knowledge, in both academic and grey literature, with regard to ex-Service personnel needs, constrains our ability to assess whether the projects are aligned with these needs.
- From both the literature review in Chapter 2 and the interviewee and project data, it can be inferred that **ex-Service personnel have complex needs, many of which co-occur**; as a result, several projects attempt to address more than one need, with six projects addressing five or more needs.
- Some of the needs of ex-Service personnel increased as a result of COVID-19, with projects observing an **increasing number of ex-Service personnel requiring assistance with finding accommodation upon leaving prison and with mental health**.
- The RAND evaluation team suggested that more research and systematic data collection related to the identification of ex-Service personnel in the CJS is needed in order to uncover **(i) the needs of ex-Service personnel; (ii) whether serving in the Armed Forces creates specific needs and how – if at all – these needs differ from the needs of other vulnerable cohorts in the CJS; and (iii) where these needs stem from, how they interact, and which tend to co-occur.**

The literature review in Chapter 2 presents the existing evidence-base on the challenges that ex-Service personnel might face during transition; how, if at all, these challenges contribute to offending (and reoffending); the range of overlapping needs between ex-Service personnel and other cohorts in the CJS; and how military service might translate into specific needs and vulnerabilities that will affect individuals during and post interaction with the CJS.

The ex-Service personnel who were interviewed to inform this evaluation reported needs similar to those identified in Chapter 2. This includes assistance with legal processes, finances, housing, employment, obtaining medical help and mental health and substance abuse issues, as well as general emotional support needs, such as companionship. Nonetheless, as mentioned in Section 1.3, this interviewee sample might not necessarily be representative of the wider beneficiary population. As such, the experiences reflected through these interviews should not be seen as illustrative of the experiences of all ex-Service personnel who have interacted with the CJS. Figure 4.1 provides a snapshot of the areas of support – which can serve, to

some extent, as proxies for areas of need – identified by ex-Service personnel as having been provided by the projects,[123] while Figure 4.2 shows the needs targeted by 13 of the projects.[124]

Figure 4.1 Overview of areas of support provision identified by ex-Service personnel



Source: RAND Europe analysis. Based on 11 interviews with ex-Service personnel who benefitted from two projects, out of which six mentioned more than one area of support provision. Numbers refer to the number of interviewees who mentioned having received the particular support.

Although Figure 4.1 suggests that ex-Service personnel found the areas of support already offered by the projects to be relevant, **this does not imply that only these areas are important or that the projects address the needs of ex-Service personnel comprehensively**. For example, one ex-Service personnel noted a support gap around 'basic skills', such as cooking, which individuals are less likely to have learned while in the Armed Forces. This suggests the existence of potential vulnerabilities around independent living that might not be as prevalent in other populations in the CJS. In general, it is **difficult to determine whether ex-Service personnel have needs that are not being addressed and to pinpoint what those needs are.** The literature on the topic is not comprehensive and our interviewee sample might not be representative. In particular, individuals are not always aware of their own needs, and since most needs are co-occurring, it is possible that addressing one might alleviate others, thus making it even more difficult for individuals to

[123] A caveat to note is that these areas might not be exhaustive – some individuals interviewed had difficulty discussing areas of support, given that it revealed some of the issue areas they were or had been dealing with.

[124] One of the 14 reviewed projects failed to return the completed questionnaire, which led it to be excluded from this part of the evaluation.

retrospectively self-analyse their full set of needs. One project has already identified this gap, and, as a result, is seeking to increase connections and interactions with individuals and organisations that can help identify the needs of ex-Service personnel, so as to help the project adapt its delivery as needed.[125]

Figure 4.2 Overview of the needs addressed by the projects

Source: RAND Europe analysis. Based on questionnaire data provided by 13 projects.[126] Numbers indicate the total number of projects which address the specific area of need.

The 'other' category in Figure 4.2 includes a broad range of less concrete emotional-support needs, including enhancing self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-worth, enabling an understanding of change, avoiding the breakdown of family relationships and avoiding social isolation.

From both the literature review in Chapter 2 and the data presented above, it can be inferred that **ex-Service personnel have complex needs, many of which can and usually do occur simultaneously**. For example, one project stated that many ex-Service personnel use self-medication in the form of alcohol or drugs to ease mental health issues.[127] This view is supported by research suggesting that co-occurring PTSD and alcohol use disorders have become increasingly prevalent in military populations.[128] Likewise, more than

[125] Project B.

[126] Two projects in the first round of data collection failed to return their questionnaire. One was excluded from this section of the analysis. The other project provided an evaluation report, from which this data was extracted.

[127] Project A.

[128] Head et al. (2016).

one project emphasised that ex-Service personnel are often released from prison not only without accommodation, but also with insufficient funds.[129] As a result, most of the 13 projects reviewed address more than one need, with six projects addressing five or more needs.[130] However, it is important to understand that not all projects have the capacity to address multiple needs, with some having been set up to target only specific areas. Therefore, projects should not be assessed solely on the number of needs for which they provide support.

More research and systematic data collection related to the identification of ex-Service personnel in the CJS is needed in order to uncover **(i) the needs of ex-Service personnel; (ii) whether serving in the Armed Forces creates specific needs and how, if at all, these needs differ from the needs of other vulnerable cohorts in the CJS;** and **(iii) where these needs stem from, how they interact, and which tend to co-occur.** Such knowledge would form a basis to accurately evaluate whether the projects are aligned with ex-Service personnel's needs, and, as a result, whether the projects can be expected to provide impact, in the sense of reducing reoffending rates and/or increasing ex-Service personnel's quality of life following rehabilitation.

Some of the needs of ex-Service personnel intensified as a result of COVID-19

In the second phase of data collection, the seven projects that received continuation funding reported no major changes in the needs they address. However, two projects noted an **increasing number of ex-Service personnel requiring assistance with finding accommodation upon leaving prison**,[131] a need that was potentially exacerbated by the early releases carried out due to COVID-19.[132] The projects describe accommodation as a complicated yet crucial need to address, emphasising that the cycle of reoffending cannot be broken unless people are provided with basic needs, including shelter.[133] Furthermore, stable housing might be a need with more relevance to the veteran cohort, who, compared to the rest of the population within the CJS, might be less equipped to deal with the uncertainty and difficulty surrounding independent living, including finding accommodation. To this end, one project relayed that some ex-Service personnel compared being in prison to being on tour, describing it as an environment they are mostly accustomed to, in terms of being provided with accommodation, prepared meals and dedicated but restricted 'outside time'.[134]

One project that was awarded continuation funding emphasised the **increasing volume of ex-Service personnel requiring assistance with mental health** when contacted during the second round of data collection.[135] COVID-19 has affected mental wellbeing, leading to increasing feelings of isolation due to

[129] RAND Europe interview with Dawn Civill-Williams, 21 May 2020.

[130] Three out of thirteen projects did not provide specific areas of need and were therefore excluded from this part of the analysis.

[131] Project A; Project C.

[132] RAND Europe interview with Bob Zeller, 27 May 2020.

[133] Project C.

[134] Project C.

[135] Project F.

restrictions on freedom of movement and of seeing family, friends and support groups.[136] This was echoed by one ex-Service person who claimed that their mental health issues had worsened since the lockdown was instituted.[137] Relatedly, also due to COVID-19, some specialised services dealing with mental health or substance abuse closed down or prioritised emergency/high-risk cases due to a reduction in the ability to provide their services,[138] leaving vulnerable individuals at risk. As a result, projects providing direct support to ex-Service personnel have adapted some aspects of their delivery in an attempt to continue to address ex-Service personnel's needs, for example by forming virtual support groups.[139] Furthermore, all of the seven projects that were awarded continuation funding reported high flexibility in adapting to the new environment, demands, and needs brought about by COVID-19, suggesting that they understand and are prepared to deal with the complexity surrounding co-occurring individual and systemic challenges.

[136] Project F.

[137] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 5, 14 May 2020.

[138] Project D; Project F.

[139] Project A; Project F.

4.1.2. How do the projects support the beneficiaries? *(To include a consideration of coherence with wider services, and nature of pathways and outcomes of the support)*

Box 4.2 EQ2 overview and assessment

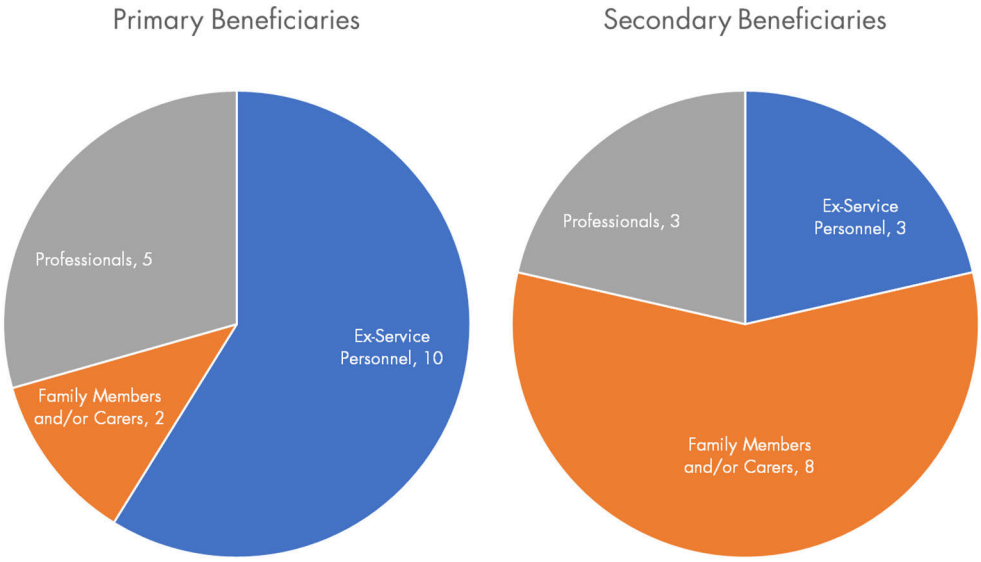
A summary of the main aspects pertaining to this EQ is provided below:

- **Most projects target ex-Service personnel as primary beneficiaries** and family members and/or carers as secondary beneficiaries.
- Taken as a whole, the projects provide support across the entire CJS pathway. However, most projects focus on providing support in prison (11), as well as post-custody/post-sentencing (11). Only four projects provide support at the pre-offending stage. This raises the questions of whether: **(i) projects are overlooking beneficiaries that do not enter the prison system; (ii) there is a need for an increased focus on awareness-raising and on training CJS professionals** to recognise and address the needs of ex-Service personnel at earlier points in the CJS pathway; and **(iii) more direct support to ex-Service personnel provided at the pre-offending stage could help reduce the numbers of ex-Service personnel that enter the CJS.**
- Projects provide varied, wide-ranging support, aiming both to address immediate needs and to enact system-wide changes within the CJS.
- While a level of overlap exists between the projects – in terms of the needs addressed and the services provided – differences in the ways the projects have been set up (such as geographic scope, beneficiary focus, types of activities carried out and types of outcomes sought) lead to **broad coherence**, as well as **areas of coordination and cooperation**, between the projects sponsored by the Trust.
- Most often, the desired primary outcome is that of reintegration into society, followed by desistance. During the second round of data collection, **five projects felt they had achieved the outcomes they had sought through their activities 'to a great extent'**.
- During the second round of data collection, projects claimed to have achieved impact **'to a great extent': ex-Service personnel (four projects); professionals (three projects); and family members and/or carers (one project).** The relatively low self-reported impact in the case of families possibly comes from a reduction in the quantity, not quality, of support, as well as challenges regarding family engagement. The fact that only one project felt they had an impact on families is consistent with our findings that the other projects did not provide very extensive services to families, and it was reported by all projects that engaging with families could be challenging.
- The projects identified several challenges in terms of the delivery of activities, including: **(i) challenges specific to ex-Service personnel**, most commonly difficulties in identifying ex-Service personnel within the CJS; **(ii) challenges specific to the custodial set-up**, the main issue being that the specific needs of ex-Service personnel are not considered as part of core organisational resource allocations.
- The projects identified several gaps in the support provided to ex-Service personnel, including: **(i) consistent and continuous support; (ii) the provision of complex services for mental health and substance abuse**; and **(iii) cohesion, collaboration and communication in the wider landscape of support to ex-Service personnel involved in the CJS.**

Projects targeted ex-Service personnel, family members and/or carers, and professionals

While all projects are aimed at improving outcomes for ex-Service personnel in the CJS, the projects target different categories of beneficiaries in order to achieve this aim: ex-Service personnel, family members and/or carers, and professionals. Projects target one or more of these categories as either primary or secondary beneficiaries.[140] As Figure 4.3 shows, ex-Service personnel tend to be the primary intended beneficiaries for the majority of the projects, while family members and/or carers tend to be the secondary intended beneficiaries for the majority of projects.

Figure 4.3 Overview of projects' primary and secondary beneficiaries



Source: RAND Europe analysis. Based on questionnaire data from the first and the second rounds of data collection.[141] Based on data from 13 projects.[142] Numbers refer to the number of projects which provide support for each beneficiary group.

Projects provide support across the CJS pathway, but focus support in prison and post-custody/post-sentencing

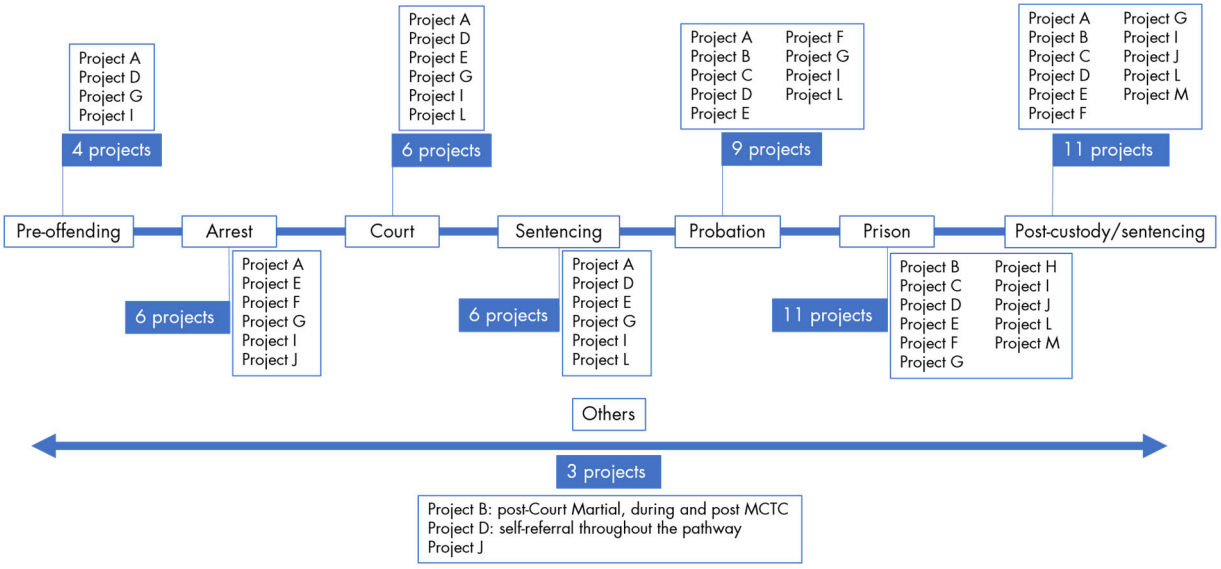
Regarding the points along the CJS pathway where projects provide beneficiary support, Figure 4.4 shows that, as a whole, the projects cover all points of interaction between ex-Service personnel and the CJS. Three projects also provide support at all points of the CJS pathway as needed, including: with self-referral, once the participant becomes aware of the project; post-Court Martial; and during and post the MCTC.

[140] Primary beneficiaries are the individuals or groups the project is targeting as a priority as part of their activities. Secondary beneficiaries are other individuals or groups that the project might be indirectly targeting or helping.

[141] Note that one project focused on ex-Service personnel in Phase 1 of funding and on Professionals in Phase 2.

[142] Two projects in the first round of data collection failed to return their questionnaires. One was excluded from this section of the analysis. The other project provided an evaluation report, from which this data was extracted.

Figure 4.4 Overview of projects' points of intervention along the CJS pathway



Source: RAND Europe analysis. Based on questionnaire data from 12 projects,[143] 11 of which provide support at more than one point of intervention.

The majority of projects focus on providing support in and post-prison, with 11 projects targeting prison and an equal number targeting the post-custody/post-sentencing point. The majority of projects that provide support in prison also provide support post-prison, with the exception of two projects, which provide support in prison and post-prison, respectively. Conversely, the fewest number of projects focus on providing support at the pre-offending stage (four in total).

The above analysis suggests an uneven spread of support across the pathway, raising the questions of whether: (i) projects are overlooking beneficiaries who do not enter the prison system; (ii) there is the need for an increased focus on awareness-raising and on training CJS professionals to recognise and address the needs of ex-Service personnel at earlier points in the CJS pathway; and (iii) more direct support to ex-Service personnel provided at the pre-offending stage could help reduce the numbers of ex-Service personnel who enter the CJS. One project has also noticed that support provision is not equal across the CJS pathway. Towards this end, the project mentioned working to strengthen connections with Magistrates and Crown Courts to raise awareness regarding the help that is available to ex-Service personnel. This focused on help that would otherwise not be available, in the same form or at all, if these individuals receive a custodial sentence (for example, one professional noted that mental health support is inadequate in custody[144]). As a result, the project expressed the hope that legal personnel could be encouraged to consider referring

[143] Two projects in the first round of data collection failed to return their questionnaires, so they were excluded from this section of the analysis.

[144] RAND Europe interview with Anne MacKinnon, 27 May 2020.

individuals to support services that can help address the core problem that led to the offence (for example, mental health[145]), as opposed to immediately handing out a punishment, especially upon a first offence.[146]

Additionally, two projects claimed to have identified a gap in support at the pre-offending stage.[147] As a result, one of them has trialled a new model of delivery offering support to veterans throughout the CJS pathway, including pre-offending, in which they plan to identify beneficiaries using a combination of self-referrals and referrals from community-based organisations.[148] The need for more support at the pre-offending stage was also highlighted by a number of ex-Service personnel[149] and professionals. They claimed that improving transition to civilian life – including by providing adequate mental health support at the pre-offending stage – could prevent ex-Service personnel from coming into contact with the CJS in the first place.[150] To this end, one project highlighted its work to engage with the Defence Transition Services, so that people who are at risk can be identified as they transition out of the Armed Forces.[151]

Overall, the increase of support provision as individuals advance into the CJS pathway could be due to several factors. Firstly, there might be difficulties around the identification of ex-Service personnel at the pre-offending stage, when they are not yet registered in the CJS. Secondly, there might be a lack of awareness regarding the available support among the general at-risk ex-Service personnel cohort, or a lack of willingness to seek support if the individual has not yet come into contact with the CJS. Indeed, three of the beneficiaries interviewed noted that they were not aware that the project existed until the project contacted them.[152] Thirdly, projects targeting professionals and family members/carers as primary beneficiaries tend to target them later in the CJS process. As a result, projects might prefer to provide support in or post-prison, where ex-Service personnel are easier to identify and awareness can be more easily raised regarding the type of support offered to all three categories of beneficiaries.

Projects provide varied, wide-ranging support, aiming both to address immediate needs and to enact system-wide changes

Within the CJS pathway the projects provide varied, wide-ranging support, conducting activities that include, but are not limited to, the following:

[145] RAND Europe interviews with Dawn Civill-Williams, 21 May 2020; with Bob Zeller, 27 May 2020.

[146] Project F.

[147] Project A; Project C.

[148] Project A.

[149] RAND Europe interviews with beneficiary 9, 22 May 2020; with beneficiary 1, 20 February 2020.

[150] RAND Europe interview with Anne MacKinnon, 27 May 2020.

[151] Project E.

[152] RAND Europe interviews with beneficiary 1, 20 February 2020; with beneficiary 2, 19 February 2020; with beneficiary 7, 15 May 2020.

- **Providing on-the-ground support**: helping ex-Service personnel with needs ranging from financial support, help with finding accommodation, emotional support and signposting/referrals to more specialised services.[153]
- **Providing job-related support**: helping ex-Service personnel to consolidate skills and experience and identify future development and employment goals, so as to be in a strong position to secure training and work opportunities;[154] providing courses run by ex-Service personnel to rebuild confidence, skills and motivation to work.[155]
- **Providing health and mental-health-related support**: bringing medical specialists into prison and referring ex-Service personnel to existing specialised support.[156]
- **Providing social reintegration support**: offering peer mentoring services;[157] offering and helping veterans develop community-benefit projects.[158]
- **Helping to enact system-wide changes by making the CJS more 'veteran-friendly'**: increasing professionals' awareness of the needs of ex-Service personnel[159] and working to develop a consistent approach for the identification of ex-Service personnel in the CJS.[160]
- **Helping to enact system-wide changes by making charities more 'veteran friendly'**: training charities to work with veterans.[161]
- **Helping to enact system-wide changes by bringing more coherence and coordination to ex-Service personnel support services**: creating an online tool mapping out the support offered in specific geographical areas and the organisations that provide this support. [162]

Judging by the types of activities carried out, the projects can be separated into two main categories: **projects that provide immediate, on-the-ground support to ex-Service personnel** (including financial or varied material support, job- and health-related support, and social support), and **projects that provide support to enact institutional changes in the CJS and in the wider landscape of support** (including increasing awareness of and responsiveness to the needs of ex-Service personnel; removing long-standing barriers to

[153] Project C.
[154] Project H.
[155] Project M.
[156] Project G; Project L.
[157] Project L.
[158] Project A; Project L.
[159] Project E; Project G; Project L.
[160] Project E.
[161] Project E.
[162] Project I.

project delivery, such as identification of ex-Service personnel in the CJS; and embedding support complementary to the projects' activities, such as enhancing coherence and coordination among projects).

While areas of overlap exist, there is broad coherence, as well as areas of coordination and cooperation, between the projects

As demonstrated in the section above, the projects provide a broad range of support by carrying out various clusters of activities. While there are similarities in the services provided by these projects, differences in the ways the projects have been set up (such as geographic scope, beneficiary focus, types of activities carried out, types of outcomes sought) lead to **broad coherence between the projects**. Five projects, in fact, claim that the combination of beneficiary focus and support that they provide is unique,[163] and six projects report that they refer individuals to other projects sponsored by the Trust that offer complementary services to theirs, so as to fill gaps and provide comprehensive support to beneficiaries.[164] In one case, two projects collaborated to create and deliver a training programme to CJS staff, combining one project's expertise in conducting training with another's first-hand knowledge of the needs of ex-Service personnel involved in the CJS system.[165]

However, there have also been **cases of near overlap between projects funded by the Trust**. There were only two identified cases in which there was an obvious overlap. In the first case, two projects were providing the same support at the point of arrest and police custody in the same geographical area. However, this duplication of effort was recognised early on, albeit incidentally, and the two projects managed to deconflict, with one of them reconfiguring its activities to focus on providing support in court and onwards on the CJS pathway.[166] In the second case, two projects were working separately to map out the support – and the organisations that provide it – offered in specific geographical areas. As in the first case, this overlap was noticed – also fortuitously – and the projects agreed to collaborate on the initiative.[167]

Outcomes and impact

The projects aim to achieve both primary and secondary outcomes. As can be seen in Table 4.1, the most-sought primary outcome is that of **reintegration into society**, followed by **desistance**. The former outcome is often seen as the most relevant, with one project claiming that resettlement results in a 'circular benefit' that then spills over into other positive outcomes, including desistance.[168] In terms of secondary priorities, the most-sought outcome is that of **cost-saving for the government**. Projects also reported seeking a range of other outcomes, including:

[163] Project A; Project B; Project E; Project F; Project H.

[164] Project A; Project B; Project F; Project G; Project L; Project M

[165] Project G.

[166] Project L.

[167] Project I.

[168] Project D.

- minimising the risk to the public;[169]
- improving pathways of care and ensuring continuity of care; [170]
- providing housing and employment; [171]
- improving family relationships;[172]
- reducing substance misuse; [173]
- providing community benefit projects;[174]
- training CJS professionals to recognise ex-Service personnel and provide them with support that is sensitive to their specific needs;[175]
- raising awareness of ex-Service personnel in the CJS;[176]
- increasing the accuracy of data on ex-Service personnel in the CJS; [177]
- strengthening risk management procedures between stakeholders (MOD, MoJ, legal, procedural).[178]

Table 4.1 Overview of outcomes sought by the projects

Outcome Sought	Primary	Secondary
Desistance	8	2
Reintegration into society	10	2
Cost-saving for the government	1	6
Other	5	2

Source: RAND Europe analysis. Based on questionnaire data from the first and second rounds of data collection. Based on data from 12 projects.

Aside from these main outcomes, two projects also claimed to be working towards helping ex-Service personnel improve and develop a range of essential, 'soft' life skills, such as: developing the ability to set and

[169] Project B.
[170] Project G.
[171] Project A.
[172] Project A.
[173] Project A.
[174] Project A.
[175] Project G.
[176] Project B.
[177] Project B.
[178] Project B.

work towards goals; improving attitudes to negative behaviours; dealing with challenge; improving mental wellbeing; accepting personal responsibility; improving confidence; improving relationships; improving self-care; giving and receiving feedback; improving time management.[179] While both projects acknowledged that these outcomes are hard to record, both also agreed that they are important, with one project highlighting that they represent 'the pathways to achieving the hard outcomes'.[180] In this sense, simple improvements can have a big impact – for example, improved self-esteem and an enhanced sense of personal responsibility can stop a person from going into debt and reoffending.[181]

When measuring outcomes, it must be acknowledged that **issues surrounding obtaining feedback and maintaining contact with ex-Service personnel once they have left the CJS mean that the extent to which outcomes have been achieved is ultimately difficult to measure** (see Section 4.1.8). Furthermore, the extent to which we can determine that the outcomes and impact observed are due to the projects themselves is relatively low, considering the multitude of factors that can effect change in a person's life.[182] While outcomes such as system-wide changes (e.g. increasing awareness across the CJS of the needs of ex-Service personnel) could be measured and attributed to the projects in question, to some extent, wider changes and other contextual factors would also need to be recorded in order to ascertain the level of impact by these projects. This is especially true regarding the provision of on-the-ground support to individual beneficiaries, especially ex-Service personnel and family members and/or carers.

Having said this, as can be seen in Figure 4.5, during the first round of data collection eight of the 12 projects felt that they had achieved the stated outcomes 'to some extent', while during the second round of data collection, five projects out of seven felt they had achieved the stated outcomes 'to a great extent'. This difference is likely related to the fact that the first and second round of data collection targeted different projects, which were in different lifecycle stages. The projects that received continuation funding and were part of the second round of data collection were in the beginning phases of activity, thus suggesting that the outcomes have been incrementally achieved with time.

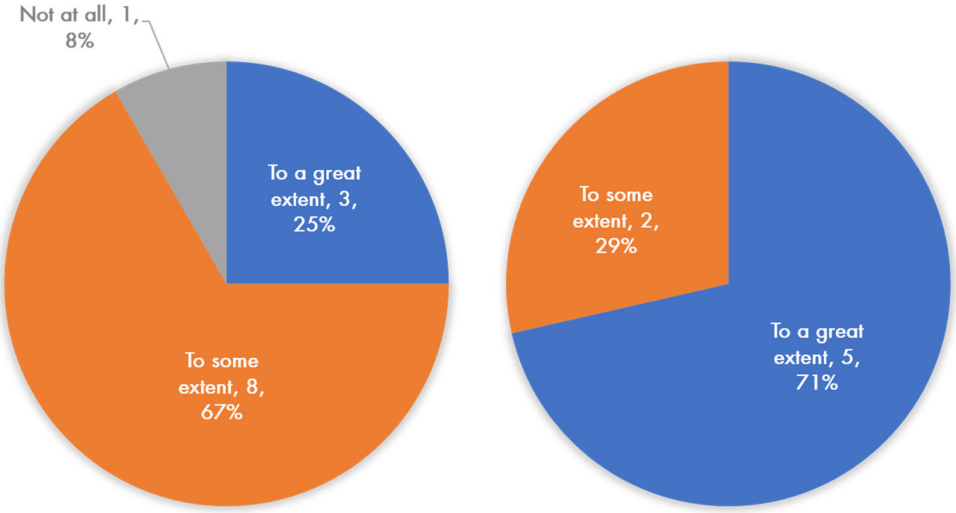
[179] Project A; Project D.

[180] Project A.

[181] Project A.

[182] Project G.

Figure 4.5 Overview of the extent to which outcomes were achieved according to projects' self-reported assessments



Source: RAND Europe analysis. Based on data from the first and second rounds of data collection. Based on data from 12 projects. The numbers (and percentages) refer to the number of projects which have indicated the level of achievement of the outcomes.

Regarding individual outcomes, **projects had different views with regard to the outcomes that they found to be most challenging**. It should be noted that projects' perception of challenging outcomes might stem from the projects being unable to achieve these outcomes as well as not being able to measure them. Projects generally described challenging outcomes as those that were difficult to assess, but we cannot determine if these assessment difficulties are due to data availability, measurement issues or the fact that the projects were not successful in achieving the outcomes. For example, one project claimed that desistance was the hardest to assess, given the aforementioned difficulties in maintaining contact with people once they leave the CJS,[183] while another project claimed that they have good desistance rates that were relatively easy to achieve.[184] One project explained how they used data to assess desistance in its geographical remit by working with the local police, and stated that, prior to COVID-19, it was seeking to engage with the Police National Database to confirm national reconviction rates.[185] Another example is of a project that claimed reintegration was the hardest to achieve, having encountered difficulties in getting beneficiaries involved in non-veteran-specific groups and activities,[186] while other projects saw reintegration as the least challenging outcome.[187] One of these projects suggested that its high rates of community reintegration were connected

[183] Project F.

[184] Project A; Project L.

[185] Project A; Project L.

[186] Project L.

[187] Project F; Project J.

to the fact that most of the professionals involved are ex-Service personnel themselves, which can help them establish a stronger connection with the beneficiaries, and guide them towards reintegration.[188]

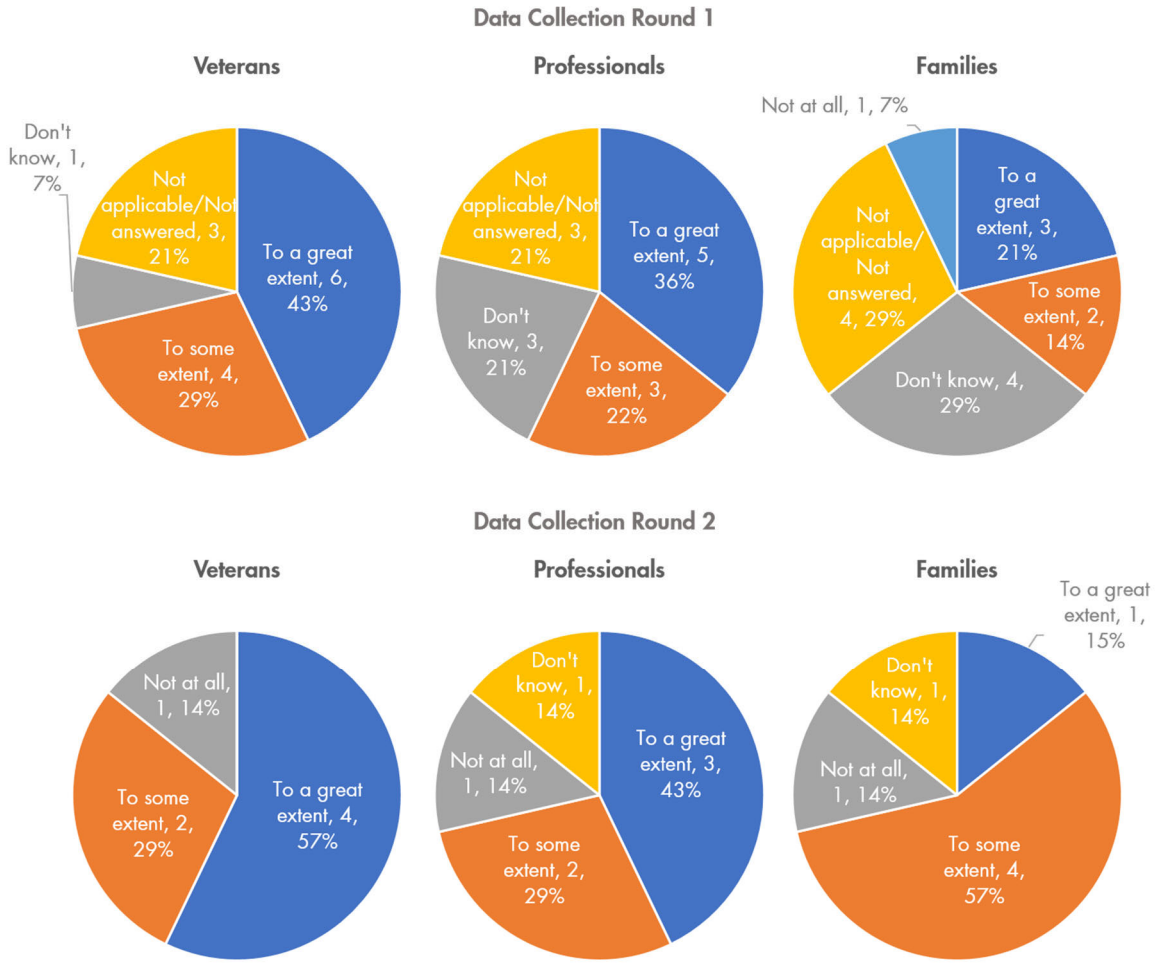
Other outcomes that have been highlighted as challenging to achieve have been the 'soft' outcomes, where progress has been reported to be more incremental. This is not only because 'soft' outcomes are often difficult to define, but also because they depend on a range of factors that do not always lie within the direct control of the project or the beneficiaries, and whose individual influence is often hard to untangle. For example, increased confidence, stability and wellbeing can be affected all at once by housing and employment status, relationships and recurring mental health issues.[189]

In terms of impact, or the extent to which the projects feel that the activities they carry out have led to a positive change in beneficiaries, the self-reporting data shows that family members and/or carers are the hardest to support. As can be noted in Figure 4.6, when it comes to ex-Service personnel, six projects out of 12 reported to have led to a positive change 'to a great extent' during the first round of data collection, and four projects out of seven during the second round. When it comes to professionals, five projects out of 12 reported to have led to a positive change 'to a great extent' during the first round, and three during the second round. Finally, when it comes to family members and/or carers, three projects reported to have led to a positive change 'to a great extent' during the first round, and only one project during the second round. This reduction might have come as a result of the fact that none of the projects that were awarded continuation funding target family members and/or carers as primary beneficiaries; all but one project target them as secondary beneficiaries. As such, it is possible that the drop in self-assessed impact comes from a reduction in the quantity, and not the quality, of support offered to this category of beneficiaries.

[188] Project F.

[189] Project D.

Figure 4.6 Overview of projects' self-assessed impact



Source: RAND Europe analysis. Based on questionnaire data from the first and second rounds of data collection. Based on data from 12 projects. The numbers (and percentages) refer to the number of projects which have indicated the level of achievement of the outcomes.

Challenges encountered in providing support to families

It is important to note that while multiple projects assess families as essential to an individual's recovery and desistance, especially when familial relations are close,[190] one project claimed that it has failed to engage very much with this workstream.[191] Others mentioned difficulties in engaging with this group of beneficiaries. More specifically, one project highlighted that at family centres, there is an overwhelming amount of information explaining the support offered by different sources, while families often have concerns that stop them from seeking support, such as not calling attention to the fact that their loved ones are in prison.[192]

[190] Project A; Project C.

[191] Project E.

[192] Project C.

The project also points out that, even with the consent of the veteran, the caseworkers are not allowed to contact families.[193] Furthermore, one project also mentioned that it had encountered difficulties in using the same caseworkers to support both the veteran and the family, especially when familial relationships are poor, due to the risk of sharing information told in confidence to either side.[194]

Challenges encountered in providing support to ex-Service personnel in the CJS

In delivering activities to support ex-Service personnel, the projects encountered several challenges, the most significant of which are detailed below.

Challenges specific to ex-Service personnel

Regarding challenges specific to the cohort in question, the **projects highlighted difficulties in identifying and engaging with ex-Service personnel in the CJS**.[195] The lack of a consistent way of identifying ex-Service personnel has been raised by a number of projects and interviewees, as it means individuals fall through the gaps and projects are not able to offer them support.[196] This issue was also noted in some of the projects' final evaluation reports.[197] While a number of changes have occurred since the Phillips Review (2014), not least the fact that all individuals entering the prison system are asked whether they have served, there is still a reliance on self-identification. Overall, identification was reported to be one of the most significant factors limiting the projects' ability to provide support,[198] and it was mainly attributed to the following factors:

- Aside from prison, where it is mandatory, many entities that ex-Service personnel come into contact with along the CJS pathway do not enquire about veteran status in standard registration forms.[199]
- Issues surrounding misunderstanding/misuse of the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) causes some entities to be reluctant to disclose information regarding veteran status to third parties.[200]
- Verifying veteran status can be difficult, and some people who have not served claim status to gain access to support they are not eligible for.[201]

[193] Project C; RAND Europe interview with Dawn Civill-Williams, 21 May 2020.

[194] Project A.

[195] This lack of a consistent strategy for other parts of the CJS has been highlighted as a gap in relation to the probation service in particular by Ford et al. (2016).

[196] Project C, Project E, Project G, Project H; RAND Europe interviews with Gary Smith, 20 December 2019; with anonymous, 18 May 2020; with David Seeley, 3 June 2020.

[197] Patmore (2018); Active Plus (n.d.).

[198] Project D; RAND Europe interviews with anonymous, 12 May 2020; with David Seeley, 3 June 2020.

[199] Project G; RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 11, 29 June 2020.

[200] Project A.

[201] RAND Europe interview with SSAFA Caseworker, 22 May 2020.

- Ex-Service personnel often do not disclose veteran status due to feelings of shame surrounding the idea that the offence reflects on the military or associated unit as a whole.[202]
- The prison environment can lead to a fear of retribution, especially towards personnel who served in Afghanistan and Iraq, thus potentially making it unsafe for them to disclose veteran status.[203]

Importantly, problems surrounding identification of ex-Service personnel in the CJS also impact the ability to reach an accurate assessment of the numbers of ex-Service personnel in the CJS, which – in turn – has implications when it comes to the prioritisation of this cohort.

To this end, one project is working to develop a consistent approach for the identification of ex-Service personnel in the CJS.[204] Continued awareness-raising and training among professionals in the CJS is necessary to ensure that ex-Service personnel are encouraged and supported in accessing the services available to them. Professionals also mentioned the need to continuously conduct awareness-raising, both with ex-Service personnel as well as with other professionals.[205]

Challenges specific to the institutional set-up of the CJS

One of the most important challenges highlighted by the projects has been **a relatively unsupportive institutional climate towards ex-Service personnel in the CJS**.[206] Projects suggested that relatively low numbers of ex-Service personnel in the CJS and limited awareness of their needs lead to them having to compete with the weight given to other vulnerable populations (such as women and young offenders). As a result, this cohort is not prioritised,[207] and **the specific needs of ex-Service personnel are not considered as part of core organisational resource allocations**, both in terms of financial resources and staff time.[208] Therefore, when faced with difficult or busy times (such as the restructuring of probation service and COVID-19, detailed in Section 1.3.2), organisations and staff tend to return their focus to core activities, and supporting ex-Service personnel – or engaging with actors that can support ex-Service personnel – becomes a secondary concern.[209] This is exacerbated by the fact that staff, particularly in prison and probation, are often 'understaffed, underpaid and overworked' as well as the fact that there is high staff turnover within the prison estates.[210] Understaffing and/or overworked staff in particular meant that prison officers were not able to act as gatekeepers for one specific project. Ensuring that the project could access

[202] Project C; RAND Europe interviews with Bob Zeller, 27 May 2020; with Gary Smith, 20 December 2019; with anonymous, 12 May 2020.

[203] RAND Europe interview with Gary Smith, 20 December 2019.

[204] Project E.

[205] RAND Europe interviews with Anne MacKinnon, 27 May 2020; with anonymous, 20 March 2020; with Bob Zeller, 27 May 2020; with anonymous, 22 May 2020.

[206] Project F.

[207] Project F.

[208] Project E; RAND Europe interviews with Gary Smith, 20 December 2019; with anonymous, 20 March 2020.

[209] Project E.

[210] Project G; Project H; RAND Europe interview with Dawn Civill-Williams, 21 May 2020.

the beneficiaries was a lower priority compared to other duties they faced.[211] An additional issue mentioned by projects was the lack of consistent approach between prison estates, with a lot dependent on the prison governor and whether or not they were supportive of veteran-oriented initiatives.[212] The challenges with the set-up of the CJS agencies, and the lack of dedicated staff time, can make it very difficult for projects seeking access in order to provide support. One project event specifically stated that they were unable to access the prison to visit the ex-Service personnel that have requested support.[213]

This is a particularly sensitive issue in prisons, where **most projects are reliant on prison officers to both identify and liaise with ex-Service personnel**,[214] make them aware of the support available to them and facilitate contact between the prisoners and the projects. Within the prison system, providing support to ex-Service personnel is often an add-on role without additional financial compensation or dedicated time,[215] occurring in prisons that are already understaffed.[216] In this context, interviewees at several projects talked about Veterans in Custody Support Officers (ViCSO), a voluntary add-on role introduced in some prisons with the aim of providing in-prison support to ex-Service personnel.[217] Because the role is not permanent and not standardised across prisons, different interpretations of the role and its responsibilities by prison management leads to different levels of managerial support to the ViCSOs, which, in turn, leads to oscillating levels of support offered by the ViCSOs. As a result, some prisons have a ViCSO, while others do not. ViCSOs are supported by the management in some prisons and they can, in turn, provide significant support to ex-Service personnel. In others, they are unable to prioritise this role. Some prisons allow both the ViCSO and the third sector to support ex-Service personnel, while others allow only one, or neither. One project in particular claimed that the existence of the ViCSO role has made it difficult to gain access to beneficiaries, as some prison management officials feel that ex-Service personnel are already receiving the support they need from the ViCSOs.[218]

Furthermore, projects highlighted several recurring issues stemming from the institutional set-up of the CJS that are valid not just for ex-Service personnel, but for all categories of individuals involved in the system. One such recurring issue was **insufficient use of structured release plans for ex-Service personnel**. One project felt that prisoners are sometimes released unexpectedly and, if not released within the probation system, with minimal financial resources (around £48).[219] Access to benefits often requires a couple of days

[211] Project C; Project H.

[212] Project G.

[213] Project C.

[214] Project H.

[215] Project E.

[216] Project H.

[217] Project C; RAND Europe interviews with Gary Smith, 20 December 2019; with Steve Lowe, 19 February 2020; with anonymous, 20 March 2020; with anonymous, 22 May 2020.

[218] Project C.

[219] Project A; RAND Europe interviews with Bob Zeller, 27 May 2020; with Dawn Civill-Williams, 21 May 2020.

to be set up,[220] and if the prisoners are released before the weekend, arranging access to accommodation, training courses and job interviews can be very difficult.[221] Additionally, projects might not always be informed of prisoners' release because of oversights or issues surrounding data sharing and data protection.[222] However, one interviewee claimed that the first 48 hours following a person's release from prison is a crucial, vulnerable period that can easily lead to reoffending if the person in question does not have access to basic needs, such as food or accommodation.[223] Furthermore, one interviewee noted that upon release from prison, many ex-Service personnel might still suffer from mental health complications and/or addictions, which increases their vulnerability.[224] This suggests that while the lack of structured release plans is an issue relevant to all categories of individuals involved in the CJS, the unique needs and vulnerabilities caused by completing and leaving military service might cause it to manifest differently in ex-Service personnel. In response to this challenge, one project launched a new model of delivery through which they engage with prisoners 12 weeks before they are released. This allows the project to arrange post-release support – such as accommodation, training courses, and job interviews – by the time the prisoners are released; in a couple of cases, the project claimed that they were even able to provide people with a job before they were released from prison.[225] This project suggested that, if engagement prior to release from prison was a mandatory part of a structured release plan for ex-Service personnel, other projects and organisations providing support to this cohort would have to adapt to a similar model of delivery.[226]

A second important issue is related to **difficulties in maintaining contact with ex-Service personnel once they are released from prison**,[227] creating problems in providing continued support. One interviewee described ex-Service personnel involved in the CJS as a 'transient community',[228] and one of the projects acknowledged that they 'want to disappear'.[229] Furthermore, as explored in 4.1.3, ex-Service personnel were felt to be more reserved than the general population involved in the CJS and are reluctant to give feedback, even if it is anonymised.[230]

Challenges related to COVID-19

One of the most significant recent challenges described by the projects has been adapting to COVID-19. As detailed in Section 1.3.2, COVID-19 prompted a UK-wide lockdown starting at the end of March

[220] RAND Europe interview with Dawn Civill-Williams, 21 May 2020.

[221] Project A; RAND Europe interview with Bob Zeller, 27 May 2020.

[222] Project A.

[223] RAND Europe interview with Bob Zeller, 27 May 2020.

[224] RAND Europe interview with Bob Zeller, 27 May 2020.

[225] Project A.

[226] Project A.

[227] Project B; Project C; Project H.

[228] RAND Europe interview with Dawn Civill-Williams, 21 May 2020.

[229] Project C.

[230] Project C.

2020, prompting significant adaptations in the CJS. This has impacted project delivery, with the most significant consequence being access to, and engagement with, beneficiaries[231] and stakeholders.[232] A project providing direct support in prisons highlighted newfound difficulties in maintaining contact with ex-Service personnel once prison visits were cancelled.[233] Relatedly, activities that projects were undertaking to raise awareness about the needs of ex-Service personnel in the CJS were also put on hold.[234] Outside of prison, projects also highlighted the importance of face-to-face contact,[235] especially for conducting comprehensive needs assessments – where a lot can be learned from the beneficiary's environment[236] – and especially since, as a cohort, ex-Service personnel in the CJS were described as distant in answering phone calls and/or emails.[237]

Outside of the custodial set-up, **COVID-19 also led to issues in helping beneficiaries access skills training and jobs**, because a number of training centres closed doors and organisations stopped recruiting, choosing instead to focus on existing employees.[238]

Furthermore, **the provision of complex support was also affected by COVID-19**. Referring beneficiaries on to specialised mental health and substance-abuse support became complicated because most such centres closed due to the lockdown,[239] and others prioritised emergency or high-risk cases.[240] This came in spite of one project registering an increase in mental health issues – brought on by restrictions on freedom of movement that prevented people from seeing family, friends and support groups – and consequent feelings of isolation.[241] The delivery of specialised services was also affected by issues surrounding working from home, particularly regarding difficulties of handling confidential information during lockdown, which providers were reported to manage differently.[242]

Furthermore, COVID-19 has also **raised concerns regarding the continued availability of an already restricted amount of funding**. As priorities are reshuffled across the CJS and the wider policy environment, it is possible that the needs of ex-Service personnel will be deprioritised, with one project describing the post-COVID-19 funding landscape as 'bleak'.[243]

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[231] Project A; Project C; Project F; RAND Europe interview with Dawn Civill-Williams, 21 May 2020.

[232] Project E.

[233] Project C.

[234] Project E.

[235] Project E.

[236] Project A.

[237] Project C.

[238] Project D.

[239] Project A; Project F.

[240] Project F.

[241] Project F.

[242] Project B.

[243] Project A.

Despite these difficulties, it should be noted that **most projects managed to adapt delivery of services to ensure continuity of support**. For example, one project ensured continued contact with prisoners through email and written letters.[244] However, the project in question highlighted that such contact is dependent on having prisoners' identification numbers and claimed it had deployed funding to support locating these numbers.[245] Outside of prison, projects started using phone calls, emails and online platforms[246] – such as social media,[247] WhatsApp[248] and video conferencing[249] – in order to maintain awareness of the existing support, and to ensure continued contact with beneficiaries. One project started using WhatsApp to create peer support groups, while another mentioned using Zoom to create a 'virtual community' that allowed beneficiaries to engage with other ex-Service personnel.[250] For beneficiaries who do not have access to IT or are unable to use it, one project reported an increase in phone calls, especially for emotional support, and claimed to have adapted to allowing contact in the evenings or on the weekends.[251] Furthermore, this project also decided to continue offering support, including to cases that had been due to end before COVID-19, so as to ensure that those beneficiaries were still able to access services.[252] As COVID-19 is a developing situation, two projects claimed they are still identifying how they can adapt and continue to support,[253] including planning on how project delivery will have to change and account for social distancing once a new normal emerges.[254]

Gaps in providing support to ex-Service personnel in the CJS

In providing support to ex-Service personnel and interacting with the wider CJS landscape, the projects identified several gaps.

Consistent and continuous support

One of the most important gaps identified by the projects has been that of consistent and continuous support, both across the entire CJS pathway and at individual points of intervention within the CJS pathway. It is important to ensure that this support is offered to every category of individual regardless of gender, time served, offence, prison, geographical location and other such factors. One of the projects emphasised that consistency, while important in general, is essential when working with ex-Service

[244] Project C.
[245] Project C.
[246] Project D.
[247] Project B; Project F.
[248] Project A.
[249] Project B.
[250] Project F.
[251] Project F.
[252] Project F.
[253] Project E.
[254] Project A.

personnel; as a result, regardless of how much funding is provided, the support offered will not be sufficient unless it is consistent and continuous. [255]

Projects suggested that the absence of consistency – within prisons and across other locations of the CJS – when it comes to awareness and interest in the needs and issues of ex-Service personnel is **impacting the ability of this cohort to access support**. In particular, projects highlighted inconsistencies in the level and the type of support available to ex-Service personnel across prisons, which can negatively impact prisoners who are transferred from one prison to another.[256] Furthermore, since prison management can change every couple of months, these oscillations happen not only across prisons, but also within prisons.[257] One interviewee highlighted the differences between prison systems in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and that, even within these systems and individual prisons, official policies are interpreted differently by individual prison governors. This leads to differences in the priority awarded to addressing the needs of ex-Service personnel, but also in the way ex-Service personnel are identified and the ways in which projects are allowed to raise awareness and engage with the prisoners.[258]

In this sense, **staff changes, especially when it comes to upper organisational management, was highlighted as an issue with many ramifications**.[259] As in the case of ViCSOs, the prioritisation of ex-Service personnel within an organisation, and good engagement rates with the projects, depend on key staff. When these staff are replaced, advocacy on behalf of the needs of ex-Service personnel often has to start from scratch,[260] which might not only strain the projects' resources, but also working relationships and success of the project. To this end, projects expressed that the ViCSO role in prisons must either become permanent and standardised or be removed entirely.[261] Furthermore, one interviewee felt that their project would benefit from more access and more respect from the management of the UK-wide prison system as a whole, as opposed to only from individual prisons or professionals in those prisons.[262] As a result, CJS organisations would benefit from a standardised point of contact who is responsible for engaging both with ex-Service personnel and with the projects aiming to support ex-Service personnel.

[255] Project C.

[256] Project C.

[257] RAND Europe interviews with Gary Smith, 20 December 2020; with David Seeley, 3 June 2020; with SSAFA Caseworker, 22 May 2020.

[258] RAND Europe interview with Bob Zeller, 27 May 2020.

[259] Project F; Project G; RAND Europe interview with SSAFA Caseworker, 22 May 2020.

[260] Project C; Project G.

[261] Project C.

[262] RAND Europe interview with Bob Zeller, 27 May 2020.

Provision of complex services

A second large gap identified related to **the provision of complex services for individuals dealing with mental health issues** (ranging from mild anxiety to PTSD) and/or alcohol and substance abuse.[263] Firstly, waiting lists of several months were common – a situation that is incompatible with people who find themselves in a mental health or substance abuse crisis.[264] This is combined with a common rule stating that, if an individual misses three appointments, they are excluded from receiving assistance from the programme in question, which can lead to excluding individuals in crisis or distress.[265] Secondly, one project described the process of referring people to specialised services as highly frustrating and time-consuming, as it is difficult to reach the right people in the right organisations.[266] Thirdly, the same project highlighted discrepancies in the quantity and quality of complex services available from different providers and in different geographical areas.[267] It was claimed that too often, specialised services are unable to provide more support than the project itself.[268] Finally, the project emphasised that such complex needs are often co-occurring, with a lot of ex-Service personnel self-medicating using alcohol and drugs in order to ease mental health symptoms; despite this, many mental health providers will refuse to help people who are self-medicating, leading to a cycle that is hard to break out of.[269]

Another gap relates to the **varying levels of support provided to ex-Service personnel depending on the type of offence committed**. For example, it was noted that ex-Service personnel who had committed sex offences were offered less support than other types of offenders.[270] However, the professional interviewed also stated that – based on his experience – men who committed sexual offences were more likely to reoffend, and that this cohort would therefore benefit greatly from more support to rehabilitate them and prevent them from reoffending.[271]

Cohesion, collaboration and communication

With regards to the wider landscape of organisations working to provide support to ex-Service personnel in the CJS, the projects identified several problems and challenges.

One interviewee suggested that there are many different ways support is provided for ex-Service personnel across the different regions in the UK. As a result, there is no country-wide strategic approach, and too

[263] RAND Europe interviews with Gary Smith, 20 December 2019; with David Seeley, 3 June 2020; with Dawn Civill-Williams, 21 May 2020; with Bob Zeller, 27 May 2020.

[264] Project A.

[265] Project A.

[266] Project A.

[267] Project A.

[268] Project A.

[269] Project A; RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 1, 20 February 2020.

[270] RAND Europe interview with anonymous, 18 May 2020.

[271] RAND Europe interview with anonymous, 18 May 2020. Data from the government shows that sexual offence is actually the offence with the lowest rate of reoffending. However, this data is not granular enough to show the proportion of offender by prior occupation. Source: Ministry of Justice (2020).

many organisations operate only regionally or locally.[272] Three of the most important and frequently highlighted issues were a lack of strategic perspective and coordination, and insufficient communication between the different actors aiming to provide support to ex-Service personnel in the CJS.[273] Insufficient awareness of the type of support that is being provided and unfamiliarity with the organisations providing this support leads to difficulties in referring beneficiaries and to an overlap of services,[274] which, in turn, leads to some needs being covered by multiple organisations, and others by none.[275] The projects also highlighted differences in the quality of support and services offered[276] and pointed out that, while funding is limited, some organisations, despite having relatively generous budgets, are not providing the corresponding expected impact.[277]

To this end, one project created an online tool mapping out the support offered in specific geographical areas and the organisations that provide this support, for use by CJS and third-sector professionals, as well as veterans.[278] However, this tool sits behind an HMPPS firewall and as such is not freely accessible, thus requiring continuous awareness-raising.[279] Furthermore, when building the tool, the project highlighted difficulties in obtaining data, thus suggesting that organisations were reticent to provide information.[280]

By contrast, four projects expressed optimism that communication and information sharing (both in terms of referral pathways and good practice) is improving among organisations, leading to enhanced awareness and an increased willingness to support ex-Service personnel in a collaborative manner.[281] The projects feel that this will ultimately translate to a positive impact on the beneficiaries, who will be provided with a simplified support landscape[282] and more responsive, holistic support.[283]

[272] RAND Europe interview with Bob Zeller, 27 May 2020.

[273] Project A; Project E; Project I.

[274] Project G.

[275] Project J.

[276] Project L.

[277] Project A.

[278] Project I.

[279] Project I.

[280] Project I.

[281] Project F.

[282] Project F.

[283] Project A; Project F; Project N.

4.1.3. To what extent do beneficiaries (i.e. ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS) perceive that they have been supported to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?

Box 4.3 EQ3 overview and assessment

A summary of the main aspects pertaining to this EQ is provided below:

- Based on feedback from 11 beneficiaries across two projects, the ex-Service personnel interviewed for the evaluation **perceive the support provided by the projects to have been very beneficial**, in particular with regards to the support provided by their caseworker, the extent of the support and the length of the support provided.
- **None of the ex-Service personnel interviewed explicitly stated that projects helped reduce their offending behaviour**, but rather focused on the fact that the support enables them to have a more stable life.
- Anecdotal evidence indicates areas where ex-Service personnel identified some gaps in the type of support provided and the lack of continuous support.
- However, given the small number of interviewees, **this data has limitations and the findings cannot be generalised across the wider beneficiary population**; and despite the positive feedback from the interviewed beneficiaries, we are unable to provide an assessment as to the wider extent to which beneficiaries across all projects have been supported to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices.
- **Projects themselves noted difficulties in obtaining accurate, formal and long-term feedback from beneficiaries**, which would allow them to understand the longer term effects of the support provided.

According to the 11 beneficiaries across two projects who took part in interviews, the overarching sentiment is that these **individuals perceive the support provided by the projects to have been very beneficial**. Beneficiaries commented on the fact that the support provided by the project in charge of their case changed their life around for the better:

> *If it wasn't for Project Nova, I wouldn't be here to talk to you today*[284]

> *They [the project] saved my life*[285]

Beneficiaries often credited the work of their caseworker in ensuring that their situation improves:

> *You get some caseworkers, they kind of look down on you, but [caseworker] was never like that … [Caseworker] is my guardian angel*[286]

[284] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 3, 18 February 2020.

[285] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 4, 3 April 2020.

[286] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 5, 14 May 2020.

> *[Caseworker] is always there*[287]

> *You know she [the caseworker] is there for you, she'd never turn you away […] she's the backbone behind everything for me currently*[288]

In some cases, it appears that simply knowing that their caseworker is there is helpful for beneficiaries:

> *[The support is] non-judgemental, there is a huge element of empathy, I am not looked at like a criminal*[289]

> *[Caseworker] takes time to speak to you, try to help you rather than tell you what to do. They listen to you more*[290]

This feedback highlights the importance of positive, friendly and humane relationships with the project staff, an aspect that was also highlighted in an evaluation of Project Nova's pilot model,[291] and which is well-recognised in desistance literature.[292] Another beneficiary commented on how helpful they found the contact time with project staff.[293]

All beneficiaries mentioned that **there was nothing they disliked about the support provided by the projects, instead noting a number of positive aspects**:

> *[Project] Nova has gone above and beyond*[294]

> *The support is unbelievable*[295]

In particular, **the lack of a deadline on the support was mentioned by some beneficiaries as a positive aspect**. While their cases might have been closed, beneficiaries mentioned that they are still in contact with their caseworker or know that they can get in touch at any time if they have a problem or need anything,[296] even if their cases were closed two or even three years ago. Lengthy timelines for support was explicitly mentioned as a positive factor.[297] One project providing direct support to ex-Service personnel stated that,

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[287] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 2, 19 February 2020.

[288] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 6, 28 May 2020.

[289] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 1, 20 February 2020.

[290] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 9, 22 May 2020.

[291] Fossey et al. (2017).

[292] See for example Ministry of Justice (2013b).

[293] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 10, 16 April 2020.

[294] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 1, 20 February 2020.

[295] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 6, 28 May 2020.

[296] RAND Europe interviews with beneficiary 1, 20 February 2020; with beneficiary 2, 19 February 2020; with beneficiary 3, 18 February 2020; with beneficiary 4, 3 April 2020; with beneficiary 8, 19 May 2020.

[297] RAND Europe interview with Dawn Civill-Williams, 21 May 2020.

ideally, support is provided for nine months to beneficiaries, while giving the caveat that certain needs – such as substance abuse – might make the road to recovery less linear, and therefore longer.[298]

However, **none of the interviewees explicitly stated that projects helped reduce their offending behaviour**. Rather, the interviewees focused on the direct support provided by the projects, emphasising these support mechanisms as gateways enabling them to have a more stable life – and thus, indirectly helping address root causes of offending behaviour and helping them make positive life choices. As described in EQ1 (Section 4.1.1), beneficiaries outlined the areas projects provided support with. This has included, for example, responding to suicide attempts,[299] helping with mental health issues,[300] substance abuse issues,[301] legal processes (e.g. court visits, talking to the beneficiary's legal team),[302] debts and other financial issues,[303] organising doctor's appointments,[304] assisting with housing and furniture needs[305] and providing them with the tools to obtain employment (e.g. obtain a forklift license) or signpost them to employment services,[306] showcasing the large variety of support provision that is required.

Beneficiaries tend to think that they would not have been able to obtain the same support from another project. One beneficiary mentioned that there were no other projects that offered support to ex-Service personnel at his prison estate,[307] while another beneficiary stated that:

> *As a veteran and someone suffering from PTSD, nothing has come close to Project Nova*[308]

However, it is hard to be conclusive as to whether another project could have helped in the same way. One beneficiary mentioned that while he was unsure whether another project could have provided the same level of support, he felt that the support might not have been 'as personal or meaningful'.[309] Another mentioned that, perhaps due to the combination of issues he needed help from (alcoholism and mental health issues),

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[298] Project A.

[299] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 1, 20 February 2020.

[300] RAND Europe interviews with beneficiary 1, 20 February 2020; with beneficiary 2, 19 February 2020; with beneficiary 3, 18 February 2020; with beneficiary 4, 3 April 2020; with beneficiary 5, 14 May 2020; with beneficiary 6, 28 May 2020; with beneficiary 8, 19 May 2020; with beneficiary 9, 22 May 2020.

[301] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 5, 14 May 2020; with beneficiary 8, 19 May 2020

[302] RAND Europe interviews with beneficiary 1, 20 February 2020; with beneficiary 3, 18 February 2020; with beneficiary 7, 15 May 2020.

[303] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 3, 18 February 2020; with beneficiary 11, 29 June 2020.

[304] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 3, 18 February 2020.

[305] RAND Europe interviews with beneficiary 3, 18 February 2020; with beneficiary 5, 14 May 2020; with beneficiary 11, 29 June 2020.

[306] RAND Europe interviews with beneficiary 5, 14 May 2020; with beneficiary 9, 22 May 2020.

[307] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 10, 16 April 2020.

[308] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 1, 20 February 2020.

[309] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 5, 14 May 2020.

he may not have received the same support elsewhere.[310] Indeed, the co-existence of substance abuse issues alongside mental health issues has been noted as being a gap, as mental health support services do not take on patients with substance abuse issues.[311] The same beneficiary also noted that he particularly appreciated the veteran-specific focus, mentioning that while there are other charities that could help him, this specific project (in this instance, Project Nova) has specific experience with veterans.[312]

One beneficiary did note that one gap in support provision is the lack of teaching ex-Service leavers 'basic' skills, such as cooking or knowing how to create a balanced meal.[313] This indicates that there might be a need for support regarding basic life skills – which individuals may never have had the chance to develop while in the Armed Forces – as well as addressing more complex needs, such as mental health or substance abuse issues. Another beneficiary also observed that for a time they stopped receiving support, as they had moved to another prison (although the support started again after a slight delay).[314] Indeed, being able to keep track of beneficiaries even within the prison system might be difficult for projects.

It should nonetheless be noted that this data is not representative of the wider beneficiary population. As noted in Section 1.3, the interviewee sample is not representative of the wider beneficiary population – for example, all beneficiaries interviewed were men – so the experiences reflected through these interviews should not be seen as illustrative of the experiences of the wider beneficiary population. While there clearly are success stories of projects offering direct support to ex-Service personnel with a very positive impact, it is not possible to provide a conclusive assessment of the wider extent to which beneficiaries have been supported to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices. Ideally, longitudinal data on a larger and more representative sample would be collected in order to assess whether and why offending behaviour prevails (or not), and whether the support offered enables beneficiaries to make long-term positive life choices.

The difficulty of assessing the longer term impact of the projects on the beneficiaries is an aspect that has also been reflected upon by the projects, and which has been raised as a particular barrier. Projects are faced with a number of challenges, namely:

- The fact that some of the feedback is anecdotal.[315]
- It can be difficult to maintain contact in the long-term with a beneficiary once they leave the CJS, such as if they change addresses or do not have a phone number.[316] One project stated that

[310] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 8, 19 May 2020.

[311] RAND Europe interviews with beneficiary 1, 20 February 2020; with Steve Lowe, 19 February 2020; Project A.

[312] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 8, 19 May 2020.

[313] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 8, 19 May 2020.

[314] RAND Europe interview with beneficiary 10, 16 April 2020.

[315] Project C; Project I.

[316] Project C; Project H.

beneficiaries 'want to disappear',[317] and an interviewee described them as a 'transient community'.[318]

- Projects help individuals when they are in crisis, and at that point in time it is too early to be able to assess longer term, sustainable impact.[319]

The projects who worked directly with beneficiaries and obtained feedback noted that these individuals appeared mostly positive about the support received. Examples of areas in which the projects are aware they have enabled a difference include support with employment,[320] improving beneficiaries' family life,[321] help with housing[322] and improved health and wellbeing.[323] However, projects also mentioned that the receptiveness of beneficiaries to support is an important factor as to whether the support will be perceived positively, or even undertaken by beneficiaries. The motivation to desist and change their lives has also been noted as a factor in helping individuals desist from crime in the wider literature.[324] Therefore, **the perception of beneficiaries might be dependent on how and when the support was provided or offered to them**. For example, a project noted that beneficiaries need to be ready to make changes, and that a good service or support provision does not necessarily work for an individual unless it is delivered at the right time,[325] and that beneficiaries need to want to be helped.[326] Another project mentioned that all the feedback they had received from the beneficiaries they had supported was positive – but gave the caveat that all beneficiaries had volunteered to take part in the support provided by the project.[327] This is supported by the findings of Project Nova's evaluation of their model project, which noted that there is a 'need for veterans to be ready to accept support'[328] in order for the support provided by projects to be perceived as helpful or impactful, and truly improve offending and reoffending rates and better lifestyle choices.

While the data cannot be generalised to the wider cohort, the beneficiaries interviewed do perceive the project support to be beneficial and, in some instances, crucial, to changing their circumstances. However, this finding must be taken with the caveat that it is ultimately difficult to attribute these successes solely to the project, as there may be other factors at play. Nonetheless, it does appear that should the support not have been provided for these individuals their outcomes would likely have been quite different.

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[317] Project C.

[318] RAND Europe interview with Dawn Civill-Williams, 21 May 2020.

[319] Project C.

[320] Project B; Project D; Project F; Project H.

[321] Project B; Project F.

[322] Project F.

[323] Project H.

[324] See for example Ministry of Justice (2013b).

[325] Project E.

[326] Project C.

[327] Project H.

[328] Fossey et al. (2017).

4.1.4. To what extent do professionals perceive that (i) beneficiaries have been supported to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices, and (ii) where applicable, the support they have been offered helps beneficiaries reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?

Box 4.4 EQ4 overview and assessment

A summary of the main aspects pertaining to this EQ is provided below:

- Professionals from five projects took part in interviews. This included project staff and volunteers (e.g. caseworkers) and individuals working within the CJS. The interviewed professionals who were external to the projects appear to **have limited awareness as to the support** provided by the projects to ex-Service personnel, although anecdotal changes in the behaviour of ex-Service personnel were perceived among the interviewees.
- The **support provided by the projects directly to professionals appears to be beneficial**, in particular with regards to making staff in the CJS more aware of veteran-specific issues. However, this finding is based on feedback provided by only six professionals involved in four of the projects, so we cannot comment on whether this positive view is widely held among professionals.
- Additionally, **there is no data to ascertain the extent to which the support to professionals has an effect on the ex-Service personnel within the CJS**.
- Overall, the interview data indicates that **professionals, both external to the project and project staff, have limited knowledge as to the actual impact of project support on the reducing of offending behaviour and the ability of ex-Service personnel to make positive life choices.**

Practitioners were not able to comment as to whether beneficiaries have been supported to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices

The evaluation team attempted to gain insight about the impacts of the projects by speaking with 11 practitioners from across five projects, including project staff and volunteers (e.g. caseworkers) and individuals working within the CJS in a variety of roles, including prison officers and healthcare providers. However, the professionals interviewed were not able to comment on the impact of projects aside from in an anecdotal capacity. For example, a consultant psychiatrist working in prisons noted how project support did appear to help ex-Service personnel be more confident.[329] This interviewee also acknowledged that projects helped ex-Service personnel with more practical issues – such as by providing clothing and housing.[330] This interviewee mentioned that he was made aware of this type of support by the ex-Service personnel themselves, and that he does not have knowledge as to the more long-term effects on positive life

[329] RAND Europe interview with David Seeley, 3 June 2020.

[330] RAND Europe interview with David Seeley, 3 June 2020.

choices and offending and reoffending behaviours.[331] This view is also shared by some of the caseworkers helping ex-Service personnel in prison.[332]

As with the engagement with ex-Service personnel, the sample has limitations with regards to its size and representation. There are barriers in obtaining perceptions from professionals with regards to how they felt project support impacted ex-Service personnel. Constraints around obtaining that data include the fact that resources in the CJS – and prisons in particular – are stretched.[333] Also, no single professional will have a long-term view of how a beneficiary is reacting to the support provision during their time in the CJS[334] and beyond, meaning that when responding, many are speculating as to the longer term outcomes.[335] As such, there appears to be limited value in seeking to obtain data from professionals as to the impact of the projects on ex-Service personnel.

Professionals have found support directed at them to be beneficial, but the long-term impact remains difficult to ascertain

As detailed in response to EQ2 (Section 4.1.2), five projects offered support directly to professionals working with ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS, such as prison officers.[336] Support provided to professionals predominantly revolves around raising awareness about issues specific to ex-Service personnel within the CJS, such as making professionals aware of the Armed Forces Covenant,[337] and educating them on the specific nature of the Armed Forces and the specific needs of ex-Service personnel. This includes, for example, improving professionals' knowledge of mental health issues, with a particular focus on PTSD[338] and pathways of care.[339] Additionally, one project offered direct support to professionals who are also ex-Service personnel themselves.[340]

One interviewee, a professional working within a prison, noted that this type of support was beneficial. In particular, he stated that the support provided professionals with an improved understanding on how to deal with ex-Service personnel, and could help prompt individuals to act as an Armed Forces Champion.[341]

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[331] RAND Europe interview with David Seeley, 3 June 2020

[332] RAND Europe interviews with anonymous, 22 May 2020; with Bob Zeller, 27 May 2020; with Anne MacKinnon, 27 May 2020.

[333] Project C; Project H.

[334] Project B.

[335] RAND Europe interview with Gary Smith, 20 December 2019

[336] With professionals as their primary beneficiaries.

[337] RAND Europe interview with Gary Smith, 20 December 2019; with anonymous, 18 May 2020.

[338] RAND Europe interview with anonymous, 20 March 2020.

[339] Project G.

[340] RAND Europe interview with Steve Lowe, 19 February 2020.

[341] RAND Europe interview with anonymous, 20 March 2020.

The same interviewee noted that prisoners have noticed a positive change in their interactions with the professionals, in particular around making staff more approachable to the prisoners.[342]

Interestingly, one interviewee noted that although one project's support provision was not oriented to professionals, they still noted a positive change amongst the professionals. In particular, the fact that the project was offering support in prison raised awareness among the prison staff about the particularities of ex-Service personnel, and helped raise the profile of this cohort among the professionals.[343]

However, as previously mentioned the sample size is too small to be representative, and these factors should be regarded as snapshots only, rather than generalised. Another limitation is the fact that **there is no data available to ascertain whether support provided to the professionals has either a long-term impact on their ways of working** with ex-Service personnel, or whether and to what extent this support has a broader impact on the beneficiaries' long-term outcomes as well. For example, one project obtains feedback from the professionals they provide support to immediately after the training session, but no further feedback is sought to understand any longer term impacts of this training.[344]

4.1.5. To what extent do carers and family members perceive that (i) beneficiaries have been supported to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices, and (ii) where applicable, the support they have been offered helps beneficiaries reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?

Box 4.5 EQ5 overview and assessment

A summary of the main aspects pertaining to this EQ is provided below:

- Only three family members were interviewed for this evaluation, and all were supported by one project. They **were all very positive about the impact of the support provided**.
- We found that the **need for holistic support that encompasses both the ex-Service person and their family** has become more apparent to projects themselves over their lifetime.
- However, reaching out to family members, whether it be to obtain feedback on the impact of the support or offer them support, is **a challenging area for some projects** as most are not able to easily achieve contact.
- Overall, given the small number of family members consulted as part of the evaluation**, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which family members more generally perceive project support to help beneficiaries reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices.**

Family members have a positive perception of the impact of the support on beneficiaries

Only a limited number (three) of family members responded to our request to participate in an interview, and all of them pertained to one project. All three family members we spoke with **were very positive about the impact of the support**:

[342] RAND Europe interview with anonymous, 20 March 2020.

[343] RAND Europe interview with anonymous, 12 May 2020.

[344] Project G.

> *[Project] Nova saved his life – they don't give up*[345]

> *It has helped [ex-Service person]. It's helped bring him back from a low point, giving him support, he's not on his own with [his issues]*[346]

In particular, the family members noted that the support enabled the beneficiaries to make 'positive life choices'[347] such as one beneficiary who now has a stable relationship and employment and whose money issues have been resolved.[348] The activities mentioned by family members that enabled this include the provision of on-going support, such as attending court visits and being in regular contact,[349] and providing mental health support.[350] One family member also noted how initially, the support was only meant to help the ex-Service person after they went to court, but that the support had gone far beyond that since.[351]

Feedback provided to projects by family members and/or carers also noted positive changes with regards to the beneficiary. For example, one project reported that:

> *Family members feel that they are 'no longer walking on eggshells waiting for an explosion' around a beneficiary of the programme*[352]

One project did note that perceptions by family members regarding the support to the beneficiaries is subjective and will vary even if the support offered to all beneficiaries is the same.[353] While this is the case for professionals as well, family members have a closer and more emotional connection to the Service person, which can impact how they perceive the support. This also ties back to what was mentioned in EQ3 (Section 4.1.3) regarding the timing of the support, and the acceptance of the support by beneficiaries. While the support that might be offered by projects remains constant across all beneficiaries, its effectiveness is also dependent on how the beneficiary themselves reacts to the support provided.

However, as with the professionals interviewed, **projects do not tend to, or are not able to, seek feedback from carers and/or family members with regards to the impact of their support on the beneficiary**. Part of this is due to operational and privacy issues; for example, one project noted that access to family members is a challenge.[354] Another noted that, while family members' views are very useful to gauge the success of

[345] RAND Europe interview with family member 2, 20 April 2020.

[346] RAND Europe interview with family member 1, 6 March 2020.

[347] RAND Europe interview with family member 1, 6 March 2020.

[348] RAND Europe interview with family member 1, 6 March 2020.

[349] RAND Europe interviews with family member 1, 6 March 2020; with family member 2, 20 April 2020;

[350] RAND Europe interview with family member 2, 20 April 2020.

[351] RAND Europe interview with family member 2, 20 April 2020.

[352] Project D.

[353] Project E.

[354] Project B.

the support, they are only able to get in touch with family members with the permission of the ex-Service person they are helping.[355]

Perception that carers and family members have been offered support to help beneficiaries reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices

As described in EQ2 (Section 4.1.2), some projects offer support to the families, alongside the support provided to ex-Service personnel. This includes help with coping with the issues faced by the Service person, and providing family members with wellbeing activities.[356] The support offered to family members by these projects includes a comprehensive support system via a caseworker to help with their needs and/or signpost them to other organisations,[357] family counselling and therapy,[358] and financial support to families to enable them to visit the ex-Service person in prison.[359] One project in particular noted that the needs of family members are the same, if not greater, than that of the ex-Service personnel.[360] Another project – which did not receive continuation funding – reported that support to family members and partners became an additional outcome that they had not foreseen.[361] Initially, this project aimed to support ex-Service personnel alone, but over time they came to support family members as well, mentioning that this change had occurred in an organic manner, with a caseworker who went to visit an ex-Service person and ended up responding to the family's request for help.

All three family members interviewed mentioned that they had been offered support by the project, and two stated that they took up the offer of support. The family member who did not take up the offer of support nonetheless understood support was available from the project if she wanted it.[362] In terms of the offer provided by the project to the family members, one interviewee mentioned that the project is her first port of call if she thinks anything is wrong with the ex-Service person,[363] indicating open lines of communications and a trusting relationship, as well as a source of advice and help:

> *They understand how I feel, they understand the situation […] they have been my main support, I don't know what I would have done without Project Nova*[364]

[355] Project D.

[356] Project F; Project N.

[357] Project C.

[358] Project J.

[359] Project C.

[360] Project A.

[361] Project L.

[362] RAND Europe interview with family member 1, 6 March 2020.

[363] RAND Europe interview with family member 2, 20 April 2020.

[364] RAND Europe interview with family member 2, 20 April 2020.

Another family member also mentioned that part of the support is simply having someone there to speak to,[365] but also how some of the support was very practical, such as helping the family move nearer to the ex-Service person's rehabilitation centre and providing them with furniture and school uniforms.[366]

> *We wouldn't be where we are now if it wasn't for them [the project]*[367]

However, one family member noted that, while she appreciated the support that had been offered by the projects, more generally **the family tends to be forgotten as the effort centres around the ex-Service person** – in this case, her husband. This family member mentioned that projects need to realise the impact the issues faced by the ex-Service person have on the family unit as well.

> *I feel that there's not enough recognition of the impact on the family – that there is no support network for the family […] families get forgotten about*[368]

In particular, this family member noted that there should be support for both the family and the ex-Service person, especially once the support has started to affect changes in the ex-Service person. In this specific instance, she noted that there is a missing link in the support, around the need to reconnect the ex-Service person with their family once the support has been offered. In this instance, her husband was treated for alcohol misuse, and she noted that the family dynamics changed and that there was no support available to her to come to terms with this change.[369]

The need for a holistic support provision to ex-Service personnel to include families is an area that has been noted more widely, and in particular by projects with continuation funding in the second phase of their grant,[370] as well as in the wider evidence base.[371] One project noted that families are a very important factor in the cycle of offending and reoffending – and that support should be extended to them as well. Additionally, knowing that the family is provided with support can remove some of the pressure from the ex-Service person – and can help them focus more on their recovery.[372] However, similarly to what was mentioned in the sub-section above, access to families is a barrier, with projects and caseworkers mentioning frequent difficulties in contacting the family directly, needing to rely on ex-Service personnel or simply lacking the legal remit to contact families.[373]

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[365] RAND Europe interview with family member 3, 14 May 2020.

[366] RAND Europe interview with family member 3, 14 May 2020.

[367] RAND Europe interview with family member 3, 14 May 2020.

[368] RAND Europe interview with family member 3, 14 May 2020.

[369] RAND Europe interview with family member 3, 14 May 2020.

[370] Project B; Project C; Project D; Project F; RAND Europe interview with anonymous, 12 May 2020.

[371] Lord Farmer (2017).

[372] Project A.

[373] Project B; Project C; RAND Europe interview with Dawn Civill-Williams, 21 May 2020.

4.1.6. How likely are projects that are awarded a continuation and sustainability grant to be sustainable?

Box 4.6 EQ6 overview and assessment

A summary of the main aspects pertaining to this EQ is provided below:

- Projects reported that they aim to achieve primarily two types of sustainability: **(i) sustainability of the projects as organisations;** and **(ii) sustainability of the projects' impact.** The two types of sustainability are interrelated, as achieving continued impact is often dependent on the projects' continued existence, especially in the case of those that aim to provide on-the-ground support.
- Projects reported that they aim to achieve project sustainability through **embedding ex-Service personnel support activities as a core service of their parent organisation; synchronising activities on a national level** so as to fill the aforementioned gap of continuous and consistent support; **ensuring continued awareness among stakeholders about the support offered; developing a wider strategy to guide support provision**; and **using diverse funding sources.**
- Projects aim to achieve sustainable impact by **developing e-learning tools** that can be used even once the project finishes and by **generating self-sustaining awareness of the needs and issues specific to ex-Service personnel in the CJS.**
- These actions **have the potential to ensure sustainability in the short-term** but **could be hampered by external risks and barriers.**
- The RAND evaluation team's assessment is that projects that **focus on enacting system-wide changes** within the CJS are the **most promising in terms of impact sustainability**, as they are less dependent on funding in the long-term. By contrast, projects that **provide immediate, on-the-ground support** (be it financial, material, job-related or social in nature) will **continue to be dependent on the renewal of funding.**

The seven projects that were awarded continuation funding aimed to achieve primarily two types of sustainability: **(i) sustainability of the projects as organisations**, meaning their continued existence; and **(ii) sustainability of the projects' impact**, meaning the implementation of system-wide changes that would eliminate the problem and, thus, the need for further spending.

Firstly, in terms of project sustainability, two **projects aim to embed the activities they conduct to support ex-Service personnel as a core service of their parent organisation**.[374] This will ensure continuity irrespective of whether the Trust funding is renewed or not.[375] Furthermore, one of the projects is aiming to **synchronise its activities on a national level**, so that data collection, reporting and services are improved and made consistent across all regional/local branches.[376] The project has expressed the view that, if they can continue to provide support and improve services in this way over the following two years, they will be

[374] Project B; Project C.

[375] Project B.

[376] Project C.

able to provide continuous and consistent support across the whole of the UK, which is a gap that has already been identified in Section 4.1.2 above.[377]

Secondly, **four projects are aiming to achieve sustainability by ensuring continued awareness about the needs of ex-Service personnel in the CJS and the support that is available to them**. To this end, projects continue to engage with relevant stakeholders to ensure awareness following the probation reforms[378] and continued and increasing referrals in general.[379] Furthermore, one project is in the process of **developing an organisational veterans' strategy**, which will be in line with the UK Government's own ten-year veterans strategy.[380] As part of this strategy, a 'veteran lead' position will be created and funded, whose responsibilities will include, among others, being the contact point between the project and all relevant stakeholders. This will help to support ViCSOs in prisons and coordinate the project's support across the relevant points of intervention in the CJS pathway.[381]

Thirdly, three of the projects will seek **diverse funding sources**,[382] including from CJS entities that they collaborate with.[383] One project has a model of delivery that includes a Co-Financing Organisation (CFO) programme, through which the project can contract specialised support.[384]

In terms of sustainability of impact, **one project is developing an e-learning training package**. The project had been using initial face-to-face trainings that followed a 'train the trainer' delivery model, whereby the people who attended the training were expected to return to their respective organisations and train their colleagues. These turned out to be relatively ineffective, in the sense that they were highly dependent on competing organisational priorities. The project expects the e-learning package to be easier to access and use, not require large organisational resources or commitments and to continue to be accessible even once the project itself is discontinued.[385] Furthermore, some projects aim to set up **veteran-specific structures within the CJS so as to embed self-sustaining awareness of the needs and issues** specific to ex-Service personnel. For example, one project is trying to set up a Veterans' Association in the police and a Veterans' Champion Network spanning different entities in the CJS. The latter activity would also help the project develop robust referral pathways by consolidating points of contact for issues pertaining to ex-Service personnel in each of these entities,[386] thus also impacting project sustainability.

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[377] Project C.

[378] Project E.

[379] Project A; Project F.

[380] Project B.

[381] Project B.

[382] Project B; Project D.

[383] Project F.

[384] Project B.

[385] Project G.

[386] Project G.

Overall, it appears that these actions will ensure both project and impact sustainability in the short-term, although, as addressed in Section 4.1.7, several risks and barriers – most of which are external to the projects – could hamper these efforts. By nature of the activities that the projects are carrying out and the outcomes they aim to achieve, **projects that focus on enacting system-wide changes within the CJS are the most promising in terms of sustainability of impact**. This is because activities such as creating e-learning packages that can be used indefinitely[387] and developing veteran-specific structures that can embed self-sustaining awareness within the CJS[388] are less dependent on project funding and continuity in the long-term. By contrast, **projects that provide immediate, on-the-ground support** (be it financial, material, job-related, medical or social in nature) are not designed to achieve impact sustainability as defined above. These projects **will always be dependent on external funding**, because their impact replies on ongoing one-to-one support to address needs that will continue to arise until system-wide changes are implemented to resolve them. When questioned about the project's progress in effecting system-wide changes, one SSAFA caseworker described his work as being conducted 'in a bubble', trying to respond to the different needs of ex-Service personnel, but also constantly having to raise awareness about the type of support that the project offers.[389] As a result, the best way to achieve sustainability, continuity and stability for this type of project – and to guarantee provision of consistent services across the UK[390] – is to diversify funding sources.[391]

4.1.7. What are the risks and barriers to the future sustainability of the projects?

Box 4.7 EQ7 overview and assessment

A summary of the main aspects pertaining to this EQ is provided below:

- The most often-mentioned potential challenge to sustainability is that of **obtaining funding and dealing with running costs.**
- **Most of the factors posing challenges to both project and impact sustainability are the same factors posing challenges to the projects' abilities to conduct their activities**. This is because if the projects are hindered from providing the support that they have been set up to provide, they will ultimately not be able to achieve the desired outcomes or demonstrate expected impact and corresponding value for money.
- Interviewed professionals and projects have claimed that **funding needs to be awarded on a longer term basis** in order to ensure that the projects can create a positive impact, especially when it comes to addressing recurring on-the-ground needs.
- Issues around funding also mean that some projects rely on volunteers, and **a potential reduction in the numbers of volunteers** can also be a future barrier to sustainability.

[387] Project G.

[388] Project G.

[389] RAND Europe interview with Bob Zeller, 27 May 2020.

[390] Project C.

[391] Project B; Project D.

The most often-mentioned potential challenge to project sustainability is that of **obtaining funding and dealing with running costs**.[392] One project described funding as 'a constant battle',[393] reflecting the idea that the projects have to compete with other policy priorities and other organisations. One project also pointed out that on the one hand funding is limited, and on the other hand, some organisations recipient of funding – despite having relatively generous budgets – are not providing the corresponding expected impact.[394] Furthermore, insufficient funding can lead to projects not being able to cover running costs, with one project that was not awarded continuation funding claiming that its grant did not cover the expenses incurred by its activities.[395] In general, dependency on only one source of funding is also viewed as risky,[396] which some projects are trying to offset by diversifying funding sources[397] (as explained in Section 4.1.6).

Relatedly, some projects suggested that **funding needs to be provided on a longer term basis** in order to ensure that the projects have a positive impact, with one professional claiming that creating positive impact takes time, and that the funding often stops at the point that projects are starting to create such impact.[398] This suggests that funding can also affect the projects' ability to achieve impact sustainability. For example, one professional claimed that partners whom they signpost beneficiaries to or collaborate with in delivering activities only have short-term funding. When this funding is not renewed, the project is unable to provide the same level of support by itself.[399] The view that more sustainability of funding will be necessary to address recurring on-the-ground needs was echoed by one professional.[400] Issues around funding also mean that some projects rely on volunteers to help conduct their activities in a resource-efficient manner. Accordingly, one projected highlighted **a potential reduction in the numbers of volunteers as a future barrier to sustainability**.[401]

Aside from funding, several other factors – most of which are external to the projects – impacted projects that did not receive continuation funding, and which also have the potential to affect the sustainability of the seven projects that did. Of note, most of these factors are the same ones posing challenges to the projects' abilities to conduct activities, which were described in detail in Section 4.1.2. This is because **if the projects are hindered from providing the support that they have been set up to provide, they will ultimately not be able to achieve the desired outcomes and to demonstrate expected impact**; in turn, if projects are unable to demonstrate impact – which, as detailed in Section 4.1.2, is already difficult due to issues surrounding

[392] Project A; Project B; Project C; Project F.

[393] Project F.

[394] Project A.

[395] Project L.

[396] Project D.

[397] Project B; Project D.

[398] Project A; Project C; RAND Europe interview with Steve Lowe, 19 February 2020.

[399] Project C.

[400] RAND Europe interview with Andy Jones, 12 May 2020.

[401] Project C.

obtaining feedback and confounding variables – they will also be unable to demonstrate corresponding value for money.[402]

Therefore, failing to address the barriers and gaps that the projects face in delivering support will ultimately lead to projects and their impact becoming unsustainable, which has implications in terms of the continued provision of support and underused resources.

[402] Project H; RAND Europe interview with Andy Jones, 12 May 2020.

4.1.8. How have the projects used data to inform and show the impact of their work?

Box 4.8 EQ8 overview and assessment

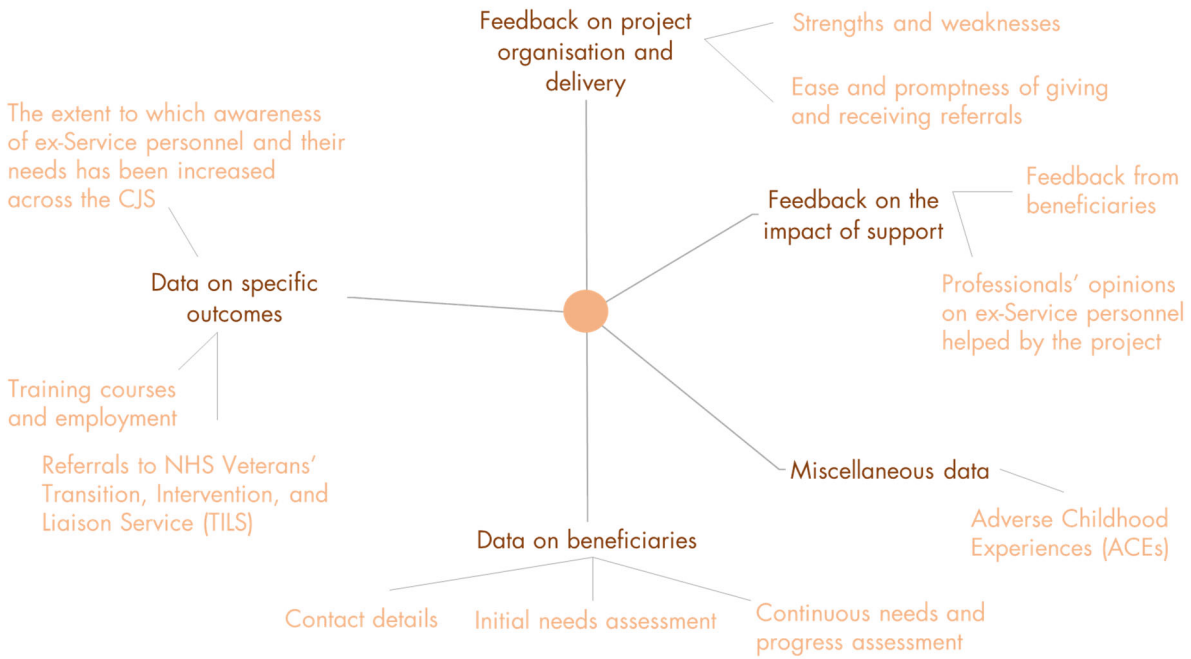
A summary of the main aspects pertaining to this EQ is provided below:

- Overall, the evaluation finds that there is no consistency in the type of data that is collected, the ways in which it is collected, or the ways in which it is used to inform project delivery and demonstrate project impact.
- Projects collect **a variety of data that is meant to inform project delivery and measure project impact**. Most often, projects collect the data **through formal and informal feedback** from beneficiaries and partners, with some projects also using **specific data collection and evaluation tools.**
- Projects use the data internally to **assess initial needs; measure behavioural change and outcomes**; and **demonstrate progress and project impact** to beneficiaries, partners, and sponsors. Projects also use the data to **increase internal awareness and understanding around the needs of ex-Service personnel and the activities that best address those needs**, which allows them to adapt project delivery accordingly.
- Projects use the data externally to **increase awareness of the available support; enact system-wide change by highlighting progress and gaps**; and **improve the delivery of landscape-wide support by disseminating lessons learned.**
- The RAND evaluation team suggests that **more coordination, direction and guidance surrounding the collection and use of data would be needed to ensure project delivery is based on and closely aligned with the needs of the cohort**. In particular, encouraging the collection and sharing of data on the needs of ex-Service personnel in the CJS, and the activities that the projects have assessed as appropriate in addressing these needs, **could lead to a more comprehensive understanding of this cohort and the activities that have the most positive impact.**

Projects collect a variety of data through numerous pathways

As can be noted in Figure 4.7 and Figure 4.8, the projects collect a variety of data through numerous pathways.

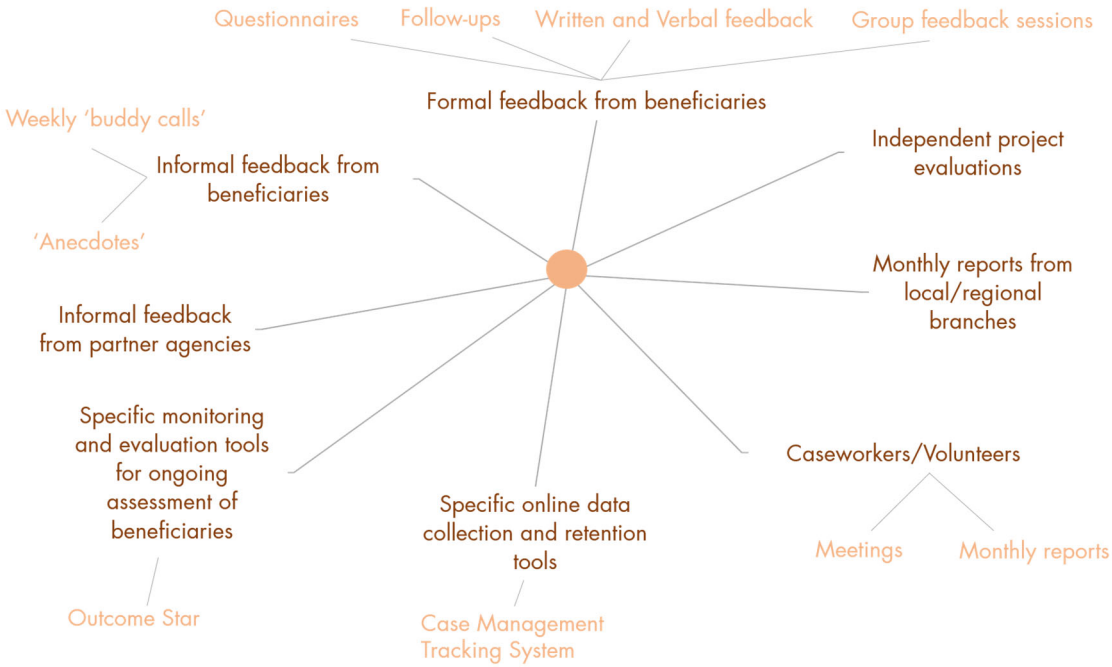
Figure 4.7 Overview of types of data collected by the projects



Source: RAND Europe analysis. Based on questionnaire and interview data from the first and second rounds of data collection. Based on data from 12 projects.

As can be noted in Figure 4.7, the projects collect a variety of data that is meant to inform project delivery and measure project impact. Projects that focus primarily on addressing on-the-ground needs of ex-Service personnel in the CJS collect data on initial and continuous needs assessments. This gives them an indication of the extent to which these needs are being addressed by the provided support. By contrast, projects focusing on enacting system-wide changes collect data such as the extent to which awareness of the needs of ex-Service personnel has been increased across professionals in the CJS.

Figure 4.8 Overview of pathways the projects use to collect data



Source: RAND Europe analysis. Based on questionnaire and interview data from the first and second rounds of data collection. Based on data from 12 projects.

The projects collect the data through a variety of pathways. Most often, **projects collect the data through formal and informal feedback from beneficiaries and partners**. Sections 4.1.3, 0 and 4.1.5 of this report describe the challenges inherent in feedback collection, which can have significant consequences when projects use this data to inform delivery of support and demonstrate impact. However, **some projects also use specific data collection tools** (e.g. Case Management Tracking System)[403] and qualitative reporting patterns (e.g. reports from caseworkers and volunteers),[404] as well as monitoring and evaluation tools for the continued assessment of beneficiaries (e.g. Outcome Star).[405]

Several instances of **good practice methods of data collection by projects** were noted, and are described in Box 4.9, Box 4.10 and Box 4.11 below.

[403] Project B.

[404] Project C.

[405] Project A; Project F; Project N.

Box 4.9 Good Practice 1: the RBLI LifeWorks in Custody's ReachBack process

As described in Section 3.2.2, RBLI LifeWorks aimed at laying the foundations for ex-Service personnel's future employment upon leaving prison. It did this by delivering an employability coaching course for those within 12 months of release, and a Living In Prison course for those with longer sentences. The ReachBack mechanism provided relevant post-course support up to 52 weeks from completion. A specific person was in charge of periodically contacting beneficiaries at 8, 12–18, 26 and 52 weeks, to measure progress and offer continued support. The mechanism therefore allowed the project to carry out continuous needs-assessments and to adapt the delivery of support accordingly. Although the process is resource-heavy, it was described as highly important to the project's success rate.[406]

Box 4.10 Good Practice 2: Outcome Star

Mentioned by several projects, Outcome Star is a tool designed to measure and support behavioural change, while also demonstrating project impact.[407] Based on the Journey of Change, a theory of change that identifies and describes the stages that people go through when enacting sustainable life changes, Outcome Star maps out and clearly defines the attitudes and behaviours that are expected at each stage of the process, thus allowing progress to be clearly measured.[408] The project staff and the beneficiary collaboratively agree on outcomes and use the Journey of Change stages to create an action plan, measure progress and identify continued challenges and obstacles at periodic intervals. The data from Outcome Star can also be aggregated and compared across groups of beneficiaries.[409] As a result, Outcome Star is a useful tool to demonstrate project impact.

Box 4.11 Good practice 3: NESP's Case Management Tracking System (CATS)

NESP's Case Management Tracking System (CATS) is a tool that allows comprehensive initial data collection, including initial information around accommodation, education, employment, finances, issues with mental health or substance abuse, and relationships. This allows project staff to pinpoint beneficiaries' specific needs, as well as to input and update information on intermediary outcomes, such as training and job interviews attended. The tool continues to inform interaction with beneficiaries throughout the entire process, while also collecting feedback on beneficiaries' experiences of the project.[410] As a result, CATS can be used both to inform and adapt the delivery of support according to the needs of the beneficiaries, as well as to demonstrate the outcomes and impact of the support offered by the project.

Overall, these methods of data collection aim to collect needs data in a systematic manner, keep track of progress and also seek to obtain longer term feedback following support provision, to understand the extent

[406] Project H.

[407] Outcomes Star (2020a).

[408] Outcomes Star (2020b).

[409] Outcomes Star (2020b).

[410] Project B.

to which the support has been beneficial in the long term. Although there are similarities between projects, **the data collection processes appear to be related to specific project characteristics**, such as the ways in which the projects are set up or the activities that they deliver. For example, one project collects data from caseworkers and volunteers who provide support to the beneficiaries,[411] while others have specific data collection and retention or monitoring and evaluation tools that the caseworkers use to collect data directly with the beneficiaries.[412] Equally, there is no obvious correlation between the points on the CJS pathway that the projects target and the type of data they collect, or the ways in which they collect it.

Projects use data in various ways, with the overarching aim to inform project delivery and demonstrate project impact

The projects' use of data is centred around the aim of informing project delivery – so as to ensure it is in line with the needs of the beneficiaries – and of demonstrating project impact, so as to ensure project sustainability. However, as detailed in Figure 4.9, **the use of data varies among projects**. As part of the interaction between the project and the beneficiaries, the projects use the data to assess initial needs and individual-centric change. This demonstrates progress to beneficiaries and eventually enables them to understand the impact of the project on the beneficiaries. To this end, one project also shares its data with the Trust's Outcome Measurement Framework,[413] a tool that helps grant-holders track project impact.[414] These impact and outcome assessments are then used by some projects in campaigning and communication, and as evidence of impact when making funding applications.[415] Furthermore, projects use the data to increase internal awareness and understanding around the needs of ex-Service personnel and the activities that best address those needs,[416] which allows them to adapt project delivery accordingly.

[411] Project C.

[412] Project B; Project H.

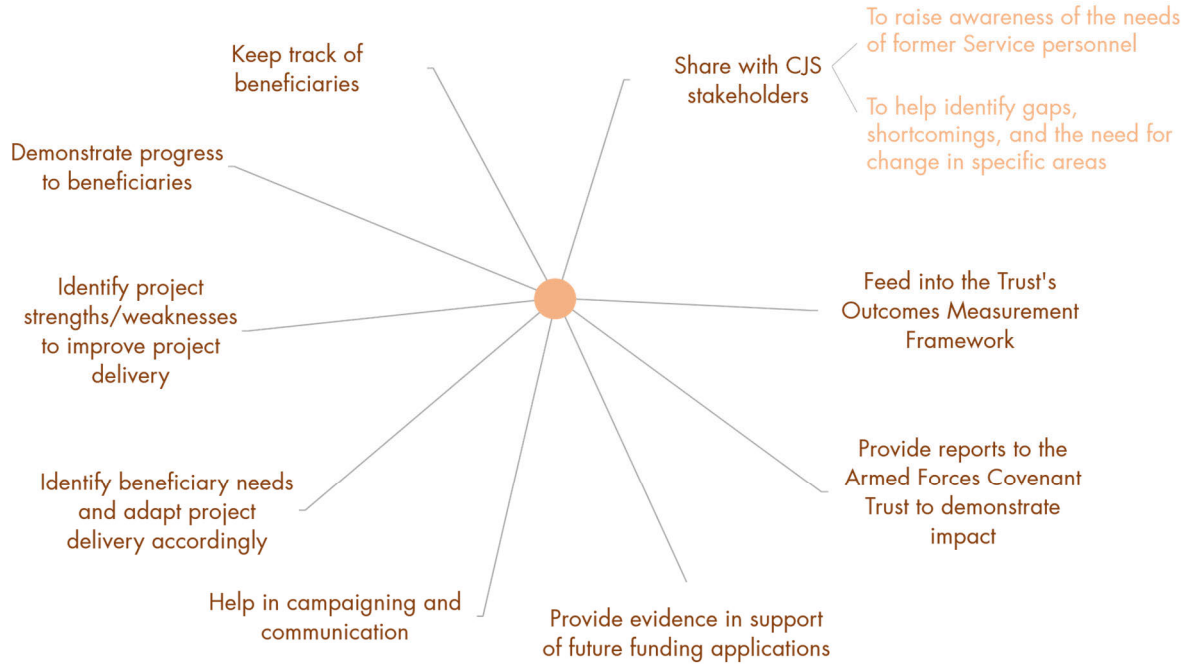
[413] Project D.

[414] Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (2020b).

[415] Project A.

[416] Project H.

Figure 4.9 Overview of how the projects use the data



Source: RAND Europe analysis. Based on questionnaire and interview data from the first and second rounds of data collection. Based on data from 12 projects.

Externally, projects share the data with relevant stakeholders in the CJS (e.g. senior staff, such as the heads of National Probation Service (NPS) and CRCs) and in the wider landscape of support (Cobseo CJS cluster), with a view to increasing awareness of the support offered and to enacting system-wide changes.[417] One project claimed it shares its data with the NPS and CRC in order to highlight progress and pinpoint remaining challenges in ex-Service personnel identification rates.[418]

Projects that are still ongoing and projects that have concluded have achieved wider impact, based on their data. For example, one project claimed they provided relevant stakeholders with data highlighting gaps in community care, leading to services being put in place to address these shortcomings, including the Mental Health High Intensity Service (HIS).[419] Another project also claimed to have disseminated data regarding its identified strengths and weaknesses to other organisations that provide assistance to ex-Service personnel in the CJS, so as to improve landscape-wide delivery of support and improve pathways of care for beneficiaries.[420]

[417] Project E.

[418] Project E.

[419] Project A.

[420] Project L.

There is no consistency in the type of data that is collected, the ways in which it is collected, or the ways in which it is used to inform project delivery and demonstrate project impact

Overall, across projects, **there is no consistency in the type of data that is collected and the ways in which it is collected**. Equally, **data is not used in a systematic manner to inform project delivery or show impact**. This is not necessarily a problem. As previously mentioned, it is to be expected that data collection and use will vary between projects due to differences in project characteristics, such as beneficiary type, outcomes sought and activities carried out. Furthermore, due to the importance of data in determining project impact and due to identified difficulties surrounding data collection with this cohort (e.g. especially feedback from beneficiaries), it is to be expected that projects will seek to capitalise on their strengths. These might be: continued access to a high number of beneficiaries that can inform continuous needs and change assessments; the ability to collect formal and targeted feedback at the end of a training session; or, the capacity to set up or access specific data collection and assessment mechanisms, such as RBLI LifeWork's ReachBack process, Outcome Star or NESP's Case Management Tracking System. However, **more coordination and direction and guidance surrounding the collection and use of data would be needed** to ensure project delivery is based on and closely aligned with the needs of the cohort. In particular, encouraging the collection and sharing of data on the needs of ex-Service personnel in the CJS and the activities that the projects have assessed as appropriate in addressing these needs could lead to a more comprehensive understanding of this cohort and the activities that have the most positive impact.

4.1.9. What is (i) the number; and (ii) the complexity of wider referral pathways with which funded projects engage to support beneficiaries?

Box 4.12 EQ9 overview and assessment

A summary of the main aspects pertaining to this EQ is provided below:

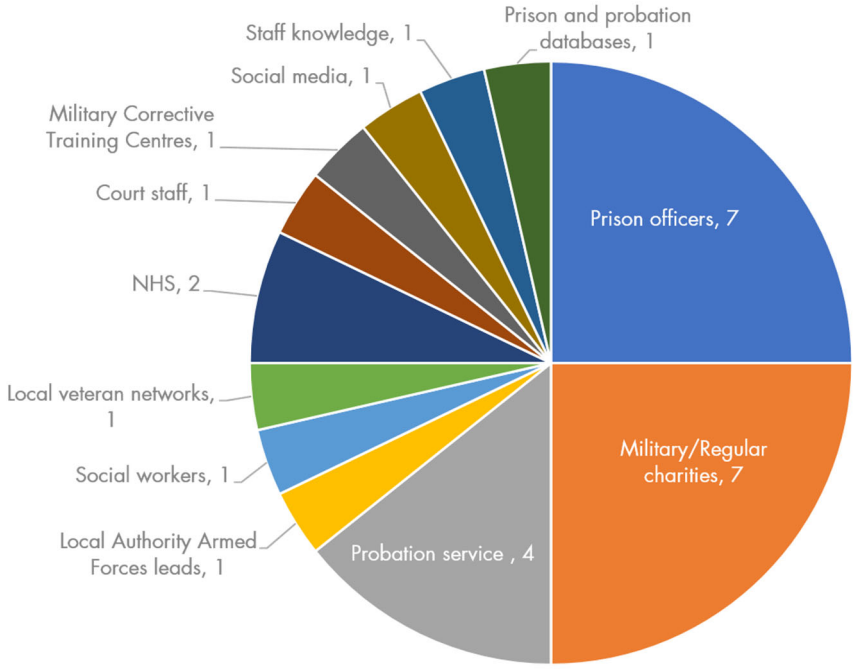
- The **varied landscape of support** – containing a range of different actors who act as referral sources, signpost services and partner in the delivery of activities – is mainly **determined by the complexity of the needs** of ex-Service personnel involved in the CJS.
- Projects' referral sources are varied, with **most projects receiving referrals from charities (7) and prison officers (7), followed by probation officers (4).**
- Projects continue to **raise awareness and conduct organisational outreach for the project, and form partnerships on the basis of identified needs or gaps.**
- Rich referral pathways allow projects to **complement the support** they are offering and can lead to beneficiaries being provided with **holistic support.**
- Partnerships – for example with Magistrates and Crown Courts – provide projects with a clearer view and more comprehensive understanding of the inner working processes of the CJS agencies, as well as the landscape of support in general. The projects reported that, in the long run, this could help them **(i) better pinpoint and understand the needs of ex-Service personnel in the CJS** and to **adapt project delivery accordingly**; (ii) **provide more responsive and more accurate referrals**; and (iii) **to learn from other organisations' experiences.**
- The most significant challenges when working with CJS agencies are **competing organisational priorities and inadequate resource allocation for ex-Service personnel**.
- The most significant challenges when working with organisations outside of the CJS include **ensuring quality of services and ensuring that the beneficiaries are not overwhelmed by the complex landscape of support.**

Overall, when it comes to ex-Service personnel involved in the CJS, the landscape of support contains a range of different actors who act as referral sources, signpost services and partner in the delivery of activities. This varied landscape is mainly determined by the complexity of the needs of ex-Service personnel involved in the CJS.[421]

As can be noted in Figure 4.10, **projects' referral sources are diverse**, with most projects receiving referrals from charities (7) and prison officers (7), followed by probation officers (4).

[421] Project D.

Figure 4.10 Overview of projects' referral sources



Source: RAND Europe analysis. Based on questionnaire data from the first and second rounds of data collection. Based on data from 12 projects. Numbers represent the number of projects which use each referral source.

In turn, the **projects also signpost beneficiaries to numerous charities and support services**[422] including other projects funded by the Trust.[423] Depending on the needs of the individuals,[424] the signposting sources include, among others, organisations dealing with housing, mental health, substance abuse[425] and local education providers.[426]

Most projects, especially the ones that were awarded continuation funding, continue to **conduct awareness-raising and organisational outreach about the project**,[427] with the purpose of increasing referral sources and, as a result, the numbers of referrals they receive. One project attributed an increase in referrals between the first and second rounds of data collection to its awareness-raising efforts, which it highlighted as proof of impact, insofar as they have become trusted signposting sources for other actors.[428]

Furthermore, **projects form partnerships on the basis of identified needs or gaps**. As mentioned in Section 4.1.2, one project has mentioned working to strengthen connections with Magistrates and Crown Courts,

[422] Project A; Project C.
[423] Project A.
[424] Project D; Project E.
[425] Project H; Project J.
[426] Project L.
[427] Project C; Project D; Project F.
[428] Project C.

having identified a gap in the support provided to the pre-offending stage of the CJS pathway.[429] Another project has highlighted attempting to engage with the City of London Police, having noticed large numbers of homeless ex-Service personnel in London.[430]

Benefits of working with other services

As suggested above, maintaining rich referral and signposting pathways brings benefits both to the projects and the beneficiaries. Mostly, **projects benefit from the ability to delegate the provision of specific types of support**, which the projects might not be able to provide themselves.[431] Working with other services therefore helps the projects complement the support that they offer.[432] This, in turn, can lead to beneficiaries receiving holistic assistance,[433] whereby needs are being addressed comprehensively and in a joined-up manner.[434] Working in cooperation with other services also enables projects to maximise the use of their resources and maintain a higher caseload.[435] This suggests that, in general, a wide range of partners and referral pathways is needed, as most available services are set up to deal with multiple co-occurring needs – especially when it comes to the provision of complex support, such as mental health or substance abuse.

Furthermore, projects highlighted that working with other services provides them with **a clearer view and more comprehensive understanding of the inner working processes of the CJS agencies, as well as the landscape of support in general**.[436] In the long run, this could help the projects: (i) better pinpoint and understand the needs of ex-Service personnel in the CJS and adapt project delivery accordingly; (ii) provide more responsive and more accurate referrals; and (iii) learn from other organisations' experiences.

Challenges of working with other services

Because a large portion of partners is made up of CJS agencies, **the challenges surrounding working with these agencies in large part echo those described in more detail in Section 4.1.2**. These include: competing organisational priorities;[437] organisational change (such as Probation Reform);[438] inadequate resource allocation when it comes to ex-Service personnel;[439] gaining full organisational cooperation to eliminate dependency on key personnel;[440] and access to prisons and prison-specific issues (e.g. understaffing,

[429] Project F.
[430] Project G.
[431] Project E; Project F; Project L; Project M.
[432] Project G.
[433] Project H.
[434] Project A; Project F; Project N.
[435] Project L.
[436] Project C.
[437] Project C.
[438] Project C; Project E.
[439] Project E.
[440] Project C; Project G.

violence, self-harm).[441] All these challenges impact continued referrals to the projects, and thus project delivery.

Projects also highlighted **challenges that are specific to partners outside of the CJS**. Some organisations cannot deliver the services they advertise,[442] including because they might not have the staffing resources needed to meet large numbers of referrals.[443] Another challenge is ensuring that the beneficiaries are provided with a simplified landscape of support instead of being overwhelmed with choice.[444]

In general, it appears that the **projects are highly dependent on consistent and continuous awareness-raising to maintain and increase referral numbers**, especially in light of common organisational changes and staff turnover. This can consume organisational resources and might not be sustainable in the long-term. In this sense, systemic changes (especially among CJS agencies) that include allocating distinct staff resources to ex-Service personnel and ensuring projects' access to beneficiaries would ensure increased consistency in referral sources for projects.

4.2. Programme-level evaluation questions

4.2.1. What lessons and areas of good practice from the Programme with relevance for wider public policy can be identified from the answers to EQ1-9?

Box 4.13 EQ10 overview and assessment

A summary of the main aspects pertaining to this EQ is provided below:

- A number of lessons and areas of good practice were identified by the projects when undertaking their activities, and by interviewees. These include **the benefits of collaborative working with other agencies**, productive engagement with **ViCSOs,** fostering an **increasing awareness of ex-Service personnel and the Covenant**, **encouraging ex-Service personnel to work with those in the CJS** and **educating CJS professionals on veteran-specific issues to improve project delivery.**

Collaborative working with other agencies

Working in partnership or collaboratively with other agencies – including other charities, referral sources and CJS agencies – is an area that projects believe provides a number of benefits, as long as the collaboration works well.[445] As mentioned in EQ9 (Section 4.1.9), the projects work with a wide variety of partners. This enables projects to obtain a clearer insight into the work and processes of other CJS agencies.[446] It provides

[441] Project H.

[442] Project L.

[443] Project F.

[444] Project J.

[445] Project A; Project E.

[446] Project C.

them with the opportunity to share the information and know where they can turn to address specific needs faced by beneficiaries;[447] ensures that all individuals are provided support;[448] and provides the expertise that might be lacking (e.g. knowledge of veteran-specific issues or the CJS).[449]

Additionally, ensuring that there is communication and collaboration between the various partners helps to ensure more joined-up thinking between the various actors working with ex-Service personnel in the CJS, and avoids duplication of effort. This particular point was mentioned by one project, which noted that two agencies were working on producing a similar output; this was discovered by chance at a wider meeting and enabled them to collaborate and join efforts on this output.[450]

Benefits of engaging with ViCSOs

ViCSOs, as described at length in EQ2 (Section 4.1.2), are prison officers who have accepted additional, voluntary duties pertaining to ex-Service personnel within their prison estate. ViCSOs are described by projects as a positive influence as they often have a personal interest in taking up this voluntary role. They will often be dedicated to helping ex-Service personnel and offering support to projects with this aim; and where ViCSOs exist and are well-supported, they have been very useful.[451]

Increased awareness of ex-Service personnel and the Covenant

Work done by the projects to raise awareness has achieved wider impact. For example, one project noted that an unexpected outcome is that the professionals they have provided training to have become more aware of ex-Service personnel not only in their professional capacity, but also in their personal capacity.[452] Interviewees also mentioned that there has been increased awareness of ex-Service personnel in the CJS and the Covenant over the past few years.[453]

Encourage ex-Service personnel to work with this cohort in the CJS

Projects and beneficiaries have both mentioned that when CJS professionals who are also ex-Service personnel work with ex-Service personnel in the CJS, increased levels of engagement can result.[454] **Ex-Service personnel in the CJS are more likely to relate to these individuals and engage with the support that is available**, as there is an understanding about the military and the experiences the individuals would have faced within the Armed Forces and while transitioning. Projects have sought to include the experience from ex-Service personnel when delivering their activities.

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[447] Project E; Project F; Project J; Project L.

[448] Project B.

[449] Project F; Project G.

[450] Project I.

[451] Project B; Project C; RAND Europe interview with anonymous, 20 March 2020; with Dawn Civill-Williams, 21 May 2020; with anonymous, 22 May 2020.

[452] Project G.

[453] RAND Europe interviews with anonymous, 12 May 2020; with David Seeley, 3 June 2020.

[454] RAND Europe interviews with beneficiary 10, 16 April 2020; with beneficiary 8, 19 May 2020; Project C.

Education of CJS professionals on veteran-specific issues

Educating professionals about ex-Service personnel in the CJS can help address the specific needs and issues faced by this cohort, as well as improve their identification. Both projects and professionals have noted the importance of educating professionals, particularly as it might help enable project support to this cohort.[455] On the ground, one professional who received support from a project aimed at professionals noted how worthwhile the training was, given that none of the existing staff had any background with the Armed Forces.[456]

4.2.2. What lessons and areas of good practice from the Programme with applicability for other relevant services and projects can be identified from the answers to EQ1–9?

Box 4.14 EQ11 overview and assessment

A summary of the main aspects pertaining to this EQ is provided below:

- A number of lessons and areas of good practice were identified by the projects and interviewees. These include the fact that **the Trust allows projects a degree of flexibility** to best adapt their activities, the **provision of tailored support by projects**, the **positive awareness-raising**, and the move towards the **provision of increasingly holistic support that includes the family as well as the ex-Service personnel**.

Allowing projects a degree of flexibility

During the course of the evaluation, it has been noted that the Trust's provision of a degree of flexibility to the projects, in order to be reactive to evolving circumstances and need, has been beneficial. Open lines of communication between the Trust and the projects were noted, where projects were able to raise issues or concerns (as noted in the documentation reviewed – an overview of the type of documentation reviewed is provided in Annex A.2). There are a number of positives in enabling a project to retain a degree of flexibility, not least the fact that the support provision can remain as relevant as possible to the beneficiaries, but also enables projects to adapt to a wider evolving situation. Although an extreme example, understanding that the projects cannot deliver the same type of service under COVID-19, and remaining flexible around the future ways of working that the projects will enable.[457]

Tailored support

Beneficiaries and professionals noted that the type of support provided was particularly helpful, in that the service was non-judgemental, friendly, could offer support for more than one need, and is not time

[455] Project H; RAND Europe interviews with Gary Smith, 20 December 2020; with Steve Lowe, 19 February 2020.

[456] RAND Europe interview with anonymous, 20 March 2020.

[457] The Trust's flexibility and understanding regarding the COVID-19 situation was noted by a number of projects.

constrained.[458] Additionally, the provision of support that included ex-Service personnel and/or individuals who had also come into contact with the CJS was also noted as being a particularly positive aspect. This enabled beneficiaries to come into contact with people with whom they had a sense of connection or understanding, and enabled them to talk to people with shared experiences.[459] Furthermore, it was noted by a professional that they felt it was necessary to coordinate direct support provision by beneficiaries rather than simply signposting in order to ensure that the ex-Service person accessed the support.[460] However, it was noted that this type of support, while helpful, is labour intensive for projects.[461]

Positive awareness-raising

Raising the profile of ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS in a positive way enables a more positive view of this cohort, challenging the 'mad, bad and sad' stereotypes of ex-Service personnel. Projects' positive awareness-raising – such as sharing 'good news stories' – have been noted as particularly helpful in this regard.[462] Activities such as holding community days for ex-Service personnel in prison and their families – giving caseworkers and the families an opportunity to meet each other in a non-judgmental environment – also helped.[463]

Holistic support to include the family

Over time, projects noted the importance of encompassing a whole-of-family approach in the provision of support to ex-Service personnel. This ensures that ex-Service personnel in the CJS do not have to worry about their family members, and takes into account the impact that the ex-Service person's experience with the CJS has on families. While there are limitations around the ability to contact and engage with families, as noted in EQ5, projects noted the benefits of engaging with families, such as by organising community days for families in prisons so that they can come and meet the organisations providing support.[464]

[458] RAND Europe interviews with beneficiary 1, 20 February 2020; with beneficiary 2, 19 February 2020; with beneficiary 3, 18 February 2020; with beneficiary 10, 16 April 2020; with Steve Lowe, 19 February 2020; with Dawn Civill-Williams, 21 May 2020.

[459] RAND Europe interviews with Gary Smith, 20 December 2020; with Steve Lowe, 19 February 2020; with Anne MacKinnon, 27 May 2020.

[460] RAND Europe interview with Steve Lowe, 19 February 2020.

[461] RAND Europe interview with David Seeley, 3 June 2020.

[462] RAND Europe interview with Steve Lowe, 19 February 2020.

[463] RAND Europe interview with anonymous, 18 May 2020.

[464] RAND Europe interviews with Steve Lowe, 19 February 2020; with Andy Jones, 12 May 2020.

5. Way ahead and advocacy areas

In this final chapter, we identify a set of recommendations with applicability for the Trust, as well as a wider set of topics and issues on which the Trust could undertake advocacy to change national policy and practice, based on the evaluation findings and the evaluation team's analysis.

5.1. Advocacy areas specific to the Ex-Service Personnel in the CJS Programme

In the following sub-sections we offer suggested advocacy areas that build upon existing areas of good practice and address barriers highlighted during the evaluation. This represents an initial menu of options, with varying levels of ease of implementation, and is intended to provide an indication of the necessary next steps needed to improve the wider CJS with regard to ex-Service personnel. The majority of the options aimed at system changes also pertain to issues that have already been identified by other studies, writers and advocacy groups,[465] demonstrating the continued relevance of these points. Our evaluation has also highlighted the extent to which these larger systemic issues have directly impacted on the delivery of services of the projects funded by the Trust. As such, addressing these areas might enable project delivery. These areas cannot be addressed by the projects or the Trust alone and will require working with government and other agencies in order to effect the change needed. We have grouped the options by the type of stakeholder best-suited to implement them. Stakeholder groups include government bodies such as the MoJ, police forces, non-governmental organisations and the Trust.

5.1.1. Cross-government

Improve the identification of ex-Service personnel

Findings in relation to EQ2 highlight that identification of ex-Service personnel remains a challenge. While veterans' ID cards are being rolled out to all ex-Service personnel, and not just Service leavers, identification of individuals still relies on self-identification, as opposed to accessing the data centrally. Additionally, the question 'Have [you] been a member of the armed services?' is only asked upon entry to prison, and is not

[465] See for example Active Plus (n.d.); Lord Ashcroft (2017b); Patmore (2018); Albertson et al. (2017).

mandated at other parts of the CJS. This means there is a lack of clarity as to exactly how many ex-Service people come into contact with the CJS every year. It also means that it is harder for projects to offer support to ex-Service personnel before they enter prison, unless they have good links established with police forces that enable referrals ahead of the prison system.

To address this, a number of possibilities could be implemented:

- **Incorporate an identifier in the ex-Service person's National Insurance Number** that indicates whether or not they were previously a member of the Armed Forces.[466]
- **Systematically ask whether a person has served across the entirety of the CJS**. Currently, it is mandatory for the question to be asked upon entrance to prison, and this is being considered within L&D services, but the evaluation team suggests that this question be posed at other junctures within the CJS, such as by the police and at courts. This could be achieved by making this question mandatory across the CJS; increasing awareness about ex-Service personnel in the CJS; and training for CJS professionals to include needs of ex-Service personnel. To ensure that the training takes place, a level of oversight or accountability might be required from within the governing bodies of the respective agencies (e.g. within MoJ).
- **Explain to ex-Service personnel why the question is being asked**, stating that it is to ensure they receive tailored support, and reassuring them as to the reasons why the question is asked.[467] As above, this could be integrated in mandatory training for CJS professionals.
- **Repeatedly ask the question**, rather than treat it as a tick-box exercise. We suggest asking the question regularly, as it could provide ex-Service personnel who have not yet self-identified with an opportunity to make themselves known. This would require a cultural shift, which would be linked to increased training and awareness-raising among CJS professionals.

The identification of ex-Service personnel across all stages of the CJS has been an ongoing challenge and will likely need to be implemented in small steps. Resolving it will require working cross-government, as well as a shift in practice, in order to ensure that change is implemented. This includes working with the MOD, MOJ and related agencies,[468] and police forces nationally.

Enhance data collection on ex-Service personnel

Linked to the identification issues of ex-Service personnel within the CJS, findings from EQ1 highlight that there is also: (i) a lack of comprehensive data on this cohort regarding their needs; and (ii) a lack of data-sharing on this cohort. Improving linkages between stakeholders regarding data on this cohort could help ensure that projects and services are targeting needs, and might improve collaborative working – leading to efficiency gains – between the projects. To achieve this, we propose improved **pooling together of the data held by the large number of organisations working in this space, across both government and the charity**

[466] Project H.

[467] RAND Europe interview with Steve Lowe, 19 February 2020.

[468] This includes police forces, courts, probation and custodial services.

sector. By comparing the data held by the government regarding ex-Service personnel in the CJS, and information on the support provided by projects, and where the support tends to be requested, a clearer mapping of the landscape will appear. Putting this in place would require a clear ownership, which could be achieved by introducing a 'Data Champion' (or similar) and establishing a 'Data-Sharing Network.' The Data Champion could also help provide more guidance on the type of data to be collected, based on what data is found to be more or less important. Nonetheless, it should be noted that this recommended approach will need to take privacy, data protection and data governance issues into account, even if all identifiable information is removed in the aggregated dataset. Additionally, putting in place a Data Champion and Data-Sharing Network will require staff time and will have cost implications. To be successful, this will require cross-government participation, but might need external resources to ensure it is set up.

Increase the availability of complex services and accessibility for ex-Service personnel

One of the main gaps identified by the projects – and highlighted EQs1, 2 and 7 – has been the provision of complex services to individuals dealing with mental health issues (ranging from mild anxiety to PTSD) and/or alcohol and substance abuse. As highlighted in Chapter 2, mental health is one of the core problems affecting ex-Service personnel and was one of the main areas where the ex-Service personnel we interviewed emphasised they needed assistance. Drawing from the barriers identified by the projects, the evaluation team recommends: (i) **increasing and synchronising the availability and quality of complex services** across providers and geographical areas; (ii) **eliminating some of the factors rendering ex-Service personnel as ineligible**, such as co-occurring issues, and ensuring timely support for individuals who are vulnerable and/or in crisis; and (iii) **increasing the ease with which projects can refer ex-Service personnel for complex support**, including by ensuring the dissemination of clear contact details of relevant individuals and organisations. This could be achieved by raising awareness within the NHS and creating pathways of care formulated for ex-Service personnel in the CJS.

Design interventions targeted towards the earlier stages of the CJS pathway

As noted in EQ2, fewer projects funded under the Trust's Ex-Service Personnel in the CJS Programme targeted individuals in the earlier stages of the CJS pathway. However, **interventions at the earlier stages of the CJS pathway could help provide support to individuals ahead of them offending or reoffending**. We propose several ways to achieve this. Firstly, a vulnerability mapping undertaken by the MOD of individuals transitioning out of the military into civilian life could help identify individuals who might have specific vulnerabilities. This would not necessarily designate the individuals as likely to offend; rather, it will help identify those who might need more support during their transition, as well as the type of support they need, and act as a protective factor against offending. This recommendation could also be achieved by improving the knowledge of members of the Armed Forces about the charities and bodies available to them and where support can be sought for different types of issues. Another avenue could be via Local Authorities who, as signatories to the Covenant, could play a role in making ex-Service personnel in their area aware of the support available, such as via their website or through targeted outreach.

5.1.2. Ministry of Justice and associated agencies

Expand the ViCSO role

The ViCSO role has been described as very helpful, as noted in EQ2, when it is well established and recognised, but it faces a number of challenges that prevent it from being as effective as it could be. Several changes are suggested regarding the ViCSO role, namely fully investing in the role by making it **a permanent role, and embedding duties relating to ex-Service personnel as a core part of the role** as opposed to an add-on. This would ensure that there is a consistent point of contact for ex-Service personnel in the CJS, and for projects working with ex-Service personnel and professionals.[469] The inclusion of one permanent contact point within each prison estate would also help improve lines of communication between the CJS and the projects, such that if a person is moved between prisons or released, there is one single point of contact who is aware of or has the information.[470] More widely, the ViCSO role currently only exists in prisons, and there is no equivalent in other parts of the CJS. We propose that **ensuring that there is a ViCSO equivalent in police forces, courts and tribunals** – such as a Veterans Champion – could help improve provision of appropriate support.

Encourage CJS agencies to be Covenant signatories

Related to the recommendation above, **encouraging CJS agencies to become signatories to the Covenant could help instil more veteran-friendly standards**. This could include ensuring that each police force and prison (both public and private) are signatories. This could help raise awareness about ex-Service personnel and ensure that civilians are aware of the specific needs of this cohort and the importance of ensuring that veteran-specific support is offered. Once a signatory to the Covenant, this could include incorporating veteran standards as part of prison inspections.[471]

Establish a primary contact point for all organisations working with ex-Service personnel in the CJS

Issues have been noted in EQ2 with regards to knowledge management and the management of relationships between stakeholders working within the CJS, those working with ex-Service personnel, and those working across both. We suggest **establishing a single point of contact who is responsible for overseeing information management and relationships**, that could for example sit in the MoJ or the Defence Relationship Management team. This contact point could help:

- Manage relationships between the various stakeholders who work with ex-Service personnel in the CJS, such as CJS professionals, the MoJ and related agencies, the Home Office of National Police Chief's Council, and non-governmental organisations. Having these relationships in place could

[469] Project A; Project C; RAND Europe interviews with anonymous, 20 March 2020; with Andy Jones, 12 May 2020; with anonymous, 18 May 2020.

[470] Project C.

[471] RAND Europe interview with Steve Lowe, 19 February 2020.

help ensure that good practice is collated and lessons are learnt, with systematic approaches being undertaken nationally.

- Identify what the needs are and where.
- Provide leadership and direction in identifying and resolving gaps.
- Maintain a strategic perspective of the existing support landscape.
- Set up referral pathways and facilitate communication, information-sharing and collaboration.

Define a support pathway for ex-Service personnel in the CJS

Ensuring that a pathway is defined for ex-Service personnel in the CJS can help streamline the support that is provided. This could include establishing a 'consistent national pathway' for ex-Service personnel in the CJS by ensuring more joined-up thinking and collaboration between the different parties.[472] Likewise, these is a need for a consistent provision of support that does not vary prison-to-prison.[473] This includes, for example, setting up a veteran-specific pathway of care that encompasses both statutory agencies and external service providers,[474] to generate efficiencies and improve support provision.

Learning from areas of good practice – such as the system change sought by the IOM Cymru: Veterans Pathfinder project – can help ensure that CJS agencies and external agencies collaborate effectively. This should ensure that the support structure is in place for individuals from the point at which they enter the CJS, and remains until after they leave the CJS. This would require CJS professionals to have knowledge of the needs of ex-Service personnel, and the services available to provide this support. This would be facilitated by the recommended actions outlined above. Specifically, a pathway is needed that can ensure timely identification of ex-Service personnel in the CJS, clearly define their needs and ensure that there is appropriate support (e.g. by medical professionals or external organisations) across their time in the CJS, and upon release from the CJS. We suggest that this could be overseen by ViCSOs, in their upgraded capacities, and ViCSO equivalents in other parts of the CJS.

Establish an automated referral system

Unlike in prisons, police and probation officers do not systematically ask whether an individual is a former member of the Armed Forces, and therefore are not able to refer them to a support organisation. Automating this referrals process within police and probation IT systems, as has been done by one project,[475] has enabled much **closer collaboration between the project and the police, and has provided an efficient process through which projects can obtain referrals at other stages of the CJS**. As long as there are support organisations in all geographic areas, we suggest that this approach could be expanded across the country and the CJS pathway to include police, probation and courts. In line with data-protection guidelines,

[472] Project C; Project I.

[473] RAND Europe interview with David Seeley, 3 June 2020.

[474] Project G.

[475] RAND Europe interview with Steve Lowe, 19 February 2020.

aggregated data with personal identifiers removed could also be shared within a centralised system (such as under oversight of the 'Data Champion' and accessed by 'Data Sharing Network' representatives') to support data-sharing efforts and reduce duplication of activities in obtaining this information. As noted above however, privacy and data protection will need to be taken into account, which could add an additional burden on the police, and resources will be necessary to develop this additional data-sharing step.

Conduct further research on ex-Service personnel in the CJS

As noted in EQ1, there is a certain **gap in knowledge around ex-Service personnel in the CJS, and in particular around the needs of this cohort**. One of the avenues we suggest to address this gap is to ensure that data is collected systematically and through a centralised point of contact, as outlined above. In addition to that, further research would be needed to increase policy makers' and practitioners' understanding as to whether and how needs differ across ex-Service personnel at different junctures of the CJS, and by different type of ex-Service leaver (e.g. looking at socio-demographic characteristics, time in military, etc.).

5.1.3. Non-governmental organisations

Improve communication and coordination

Increased communication among projects and organisations that aim to provide support to ex-Service personnel in the CJS could lead to an **increased awareness and a more nuanced understanding of the landscape, while increased coordination could lead to more efficient referral pathways**. This could more evenly distribute the provision of support, thus reducing the strain on some projects. We propose that an 'interconnected model of resilience', led by a non-governmental body – such as the Cobseo CJS Cluster – could provide a more comprehensive overview of the type of needs of ex-Service personnel in the CJS, how prevalent each of them are, and the type and amount of support that is currently being offered to address these needs.

This could also provide a basis to **identify areas of effort duplication, as well as areas where the amount of support does not match the prevalence of the need**. As a result, this type of coordination and cooperation would not only help the overall landscape of support to become more sustainable, but it could also ensure maximisation of overall resources and return on investment. Furthermore, this would have a positive impact on the beneficiaries, who will be provided with a simplified support landscape and more responsive and holistic support, which could also include support to families in instances where this is relevant.

5.2. Recommendations with applicability to all Programmes funded by the Trust

5.2.1. The Trust

Embed evaluation approaches within Programmes

We recommend that prior to the launch of a Programme, **the Trust develop a theory of change and logic model for the Programme**, identifying the dependencies and assumptions underpinning the ultimate aims of the Programme. The funding of projects can therefore be undertaken in a targeted manner, in order to ensure that the various projects funded all respond to the aims of the Programme. This will also make the

tracking of project outcomes and impacts against the wider Programme outputs and outcomes more straightforward.

Improve data collection

Data regarding ex-Service personnel in the CJS, and quantitative and qualitative data demonstrating the impact of projects, is an ongoing area of work given the challenges in obtaining comparable data, as noted in EQ8. The Trust recently launched a tool, the Outcomes Measurement Framework (OMF), that seeks to address this gap. While the evaluation team have not used or assessed the OMF, we believe that **the OMF, or a tool akin to it, could be a useful initiative to ensure the capture of data in a systematic way.** This will enable projects and the Trust to better understand how and where impact is achieved.

Increase collaborative working

As evidenced in EQs 2 and 9, there is a wider range of organisations and agencies working to provide support to ex-Service personnel in the CJS. Some areas of near duplication of effort were noted by certain projects – including between projects funded by the Trust – as well as the benefits of collaborative working. Overall, it appears that increasing knowledge with regards to what work is being done, where and by whom would be helpful, and could be applied to other Programmes. We would therefore recommend:

- **Making greater use of the Directory of Veterans' CJS Support Services**, by raising awareness on this resource and seeing whether the Trust or another central player (e.g. Cobseo) could host this map on an easily accessible website.
- **Regularly communicating and enhancing collaboration opportunities with projects that have obtained funding from the Trust about the other grant holders**. This could take the form of a regular newsletter sent to all projects, which could include information, updates and impact from all projects, and which could be taken from the regular grant progress reports that are submitted by the projects. Alternatively, a regular (e.g. yearly or biannual) event could be convened by the Trust to reunite all grant holders under the Programme and enable a sharing of impact and lessons learnt. This could bring to light areas of synergy between projects and further the impact sought by the Programme.

Raise the profile of the Programme

We suggest that, in order to enable wider policy changes that are needed in order to ensure that the Programme's aims and objectives are met, the Trust work to update or amend policy with the relevant government representatives – thus targeting policy change regarding ex-Service personnel in the CJS directly. We recommend **creating or facilitating a wider community of interest** to ensure that the impact from the projects and wider Programme can continue beyond the lifecycle of the grants. This community of interest would expand beyond the projects themselves, to include key players in the sector of the Programme. With regards to the Ex-Service Personnel in the CJS Programme, that could include, for example, prison governors, HMPS, HMPPS, NPS, MOJ and MOD representatives, as well as Armed Forces Champions and Local Authority representatives. This community of interest would raise the profile of the work done via the projects, help create change in the system and make it easier for projects to deliver their services and overcome some of the wider systemic challenges that they face.

Identify regional areas that are underserved

The majority of the projects had or have a specific regional focus. In future, it might be helpful for the Trust to identify geographical areas where ex-Service personnel have more limited access to services, and **consider expanding existing projects in these areas**. This would require working with projects to understand whether an expanse in geographical area is something that is feasible and whether this is something the project would consider. The Trust could then work with the project and/or facilitate the project in expanding the scope of their activities. This would need to be done alongside a rigorous evaluation of the project activities, outcomes and outputs. If implemented successfully, such an endeavour could help increase the sustainability of successful projects, with the Trust playing an active role in this space.

Provide more flexible funding options to enhance sustainability

Several points were noted with regard to funding provided to projects. The length of funding timelines has been noted as important for projects, with a preference expressed for longer funding timelines in order to properly establish a process. Organisations heading the projects have mentioned that building rapport with CJS agencies and other partners and establishing processes takes time and can be challenging, particularly in the CJS context as noted in EQ10 (Section 4.2.1).[476] Projects noted that funding over a short period of time – such as two years – makes it difficult to create longer term impact, as often in this time the project has only managed to fully establish itself, before its funding comes to a halt.[477] Projects therefore suggested **extending the funding period in order to increase the benefits of the funding**. Suggestions for funding timelines ranged from a period of three years to five years, as opposed to only two.

In addition to a longer funding period, the Trust could also look to implement improved monitoring and evaluation of the projects – linking to the point above on data collection – to enable a more in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of longer term investments. The Trust could look into the possibility of **offering small, one-off grants to projects that identify an area of need that can or needs to be addressed quickly**. The provision of this type of 'add-on' grant would help provide additional capacity and flexibility to projects that might come across a new or previously unidentified area of need while undertaking their programme of activities. The provision of these grants would need to be scoped out in order to ensure that the activity sought by the project falls within the scope of the Programme and fits into the Programme's logic model.

[476] Project C; RAND Europe interview with Steve Lowe, 19 February 2020.

[477] Project C; Project L; Project N; RAND Europe interview with Andy Jones, 12 May 2020.

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Annex A. Research methods

This annex provides a detailed overview of the research methods employed during the course of the evaluation.

A.1. Structured literature review

A structured literature review enables researchers to explore a topic or area of research while keeping a constrained scope (e.g. through a specific research question or hypothesis), without undertaking a comprehensive, fully fledged systematic literature review.[478] Specific search terms and inclusion/exclusion criteria are set in advance (and can be found in Sections A.1.1 and A.1.2 respectively) to bound the search, although this type of literature review retains a certain flexibility by allowing researchers to snowball articles[479] as part of their search. Additionally, a structured literature review provides transparent overview of the search conducted and is easily replicable by other researchers.

A.1.1. Search strategy

When conducting this literature review, the research team used sources found on both Google and Google Scholar. The research team decided to undertake a search on Google, rather than academic databases (e.g. Scopus, Web of Science, or PubMed), given that the research team was already aware from an initial search of the literature that grey literature – which would not be captured through academic database searches – formed an important part of the available data. While searching for literature through Google and Google Scholar provided the research team with access to grey literature, an important caveat to note is the fact that

[478] Temple University (2020).

[479] Snowball sampling can be defined as a technique for finding research subjects whereby existing subjects recruit or refer to future subjects from within their network. When applied to a literature review, one source leads to another, such as through identification of sources of interest – determined on the basis of additional work from authors or organisations who are already represented in the sample, as well as relevance to the topic – in the list of references.

Google uses a series of algorithms to rank results.[480] This can entail, to some extent, a pre-selection process already undertaken by the search engine ahead of the research team. The team also used snowballing sampling to identify additional sources, and to a certain extent overcome any biases that would have occurred through using Google.

The scope of the search focus spanned across the criminal justice pathway, as detailed in Section 2.1, to include ex-Service personnel in custody, pre-sentencing, at the point of sentence and post-release from custody. The literature review does not include the experiences of ex-Service personnel in Scotland or Northern Ireland, as many seminal studies in this field (e.g. the 2008 NAPO report) are geographically limited to England and Wales due to legal barriers in data sharing.[481] Additionally, it should be noted that the findings for England and Wales are not necessarily generalisable to the UK as a whole, as Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own distinct judicial system and jurisdiction. While there are some services that aim to support ex-Service personnel who are at risk of becoming involved or are already involved in the CJS in Scotland,[482] these were not examined within the scope of this literature review for the reasons above. Box A.5.1 presents the search terms used to locate the relevant literature.

Box A.5.1 Search terms

- Former Service personnel OR ex-Service personnel OR former military personnel OR veteran* OR military veteran*
- Crim* OR criminal* OR criminal justice* OR probation OR prison OR probation OR offen* OR reoffen*
- Transition OR challenge*

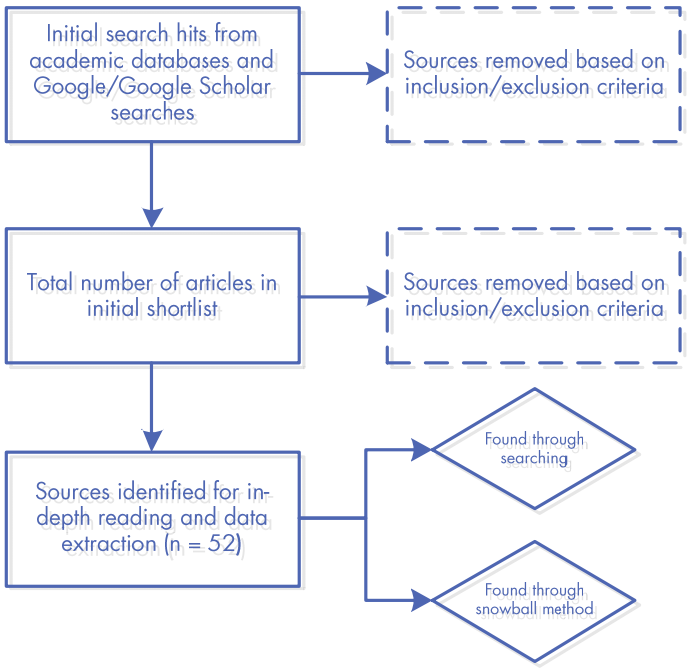
Figure A.1 provides a visual overview of the results of the search strategy. A total of 52 sources were included in the literature review, of which 20 were academic literature and 32 were grey literature. Of these 52 sources, several are notably reviews themselves, including the Howard League Inquiry, the Ministry of Justice's 'Transforming Rehabilitation', and FiMT's Transition Mapping Study. These reports reviewed 95, 178 and 55 sources respectively.

[480] Detailed information about Google's algorithms can be found at Google (2020).

[481] NAPO (2008); Bray et al. (2013); Lyne & Packham (2014).

[482] Sacro (2017).

Figure A.1 Structured literature review search process and results



A.1.2. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The sources surveyed focused on the experiences of ex-Service personnel in the UK context only. Sources were included from the past ten years (i.e. 2008–2019). Sources that were excluded include documents with no clear authorship, letters, editorials, comments, book reviews and Master's theses.

Literature review data was extracted according to the following categories:

- Main issues faced by ex-Service personnel around transition;
- Challenges faced by ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system;
- Needs of the ex-Service personnel within the criminal justice system.

The findings were written up as a narrative synthesis, with the categories remaining flexible in order to adapt to the data found in the literature.

Given that this literature review was not a structured literature review due to the relatively small amount of data available on ex-Service personnel in the CJS in the UK, a formal quality assessment of the shortlisted sources was not undertaken by the research team.

A.2. Project document review

The following documents were reviewed in detail for each of the 14 projects.

- London Veterans' Prison In-Reach Service (Camden and Islington NHS Trust):
    - Funding application and assessment;
    - Continuation funding application and assessment;

    - Q11 progress report to the Trust.
- Project NOVA (Walking with the Wounded):
    - Original Expression of Interest;
    - Funding application and assessment;
    - Continuation funding application and assessment;
    - Key email exchanges with the Trust;
    - Q6 progress report to the Trust.
- Network for Ex-Service Personnel (NESP) (National Offender Management Service (NOMS) Co-financing Organisation (CFO)):
    - Funding application and assessment;
    - Continuation funding application and assessment;
    - Q5 progress report to the Trust;
    - Interim evaluation;
    - Q7 progress report to the Trust.
- Criminal Justice Support for Veterans (SSAFA):
    - Funding application and assessment;
    - Continuation funding application and assessment;
    - Key email exchanges with the Trust;
    - Q7 progress report to the Trust;
    - Examples of posters and contact cards;
    - Independent review of the VCJS pilot project.
- LifeWorks in Custody (RBLI):
    - Funding application and assessment;
    - Key email exchanges with the Trust;
    - Q3 progress report to the Trust;
    - Independent evaluation report.
- Cobseo Directory of Veterans' CJS Support Services (RBLI):
    - Funding application and assessment;
    - Key email exchanges with the Trust;
    - Q7 progress report to the Trust.

- Military-Veterans Achieving & Realising Continued Health (MARCH) (Lifeline, then Change Grow Live):
    - Funding application and assessment;
    - Change Grow Live's proposal regarding its takeover of service delivery from Lifeline;
    - Key emails between Change Grow Live and the Trust;
    - Progress delivery update from February 2018.
- National Veterans Community Recovery (Mersey Care NHS Trust):
    - Original Expression of Interest;
    - Funding application and assessment;
    - Q3 progress report to the Trust (including client feedback).
- Serving Those Who Have Served (Cheshire and Greater Manchester Rehabilitation Company):
    - Funding application and assessment;
    - Q9 progress report to the Trust;
    - Independent evaluation report.
- Positive Futures (Venture Trust):
    - Original Expression of Interest;
    - Funding application and assessment;
    - Continuation funding application and assessment;
    - Q10 progress report to the Trust.
- Active Plus WorkForce (Active Plus):
    - Funding application and assessment;
    - Q3 progress report to the Trust;
    - Independent evaluation.
- Veterans' Family Support Service (Barnardo's):
    - Funding application and assessment;
    - Key email exchanges with the Trust;
    - Q6 progress report to the Trust;
    - Independent evaluation.
- Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Cymru: Veterans Pathfinder (National Probation Service (NPS) in Wales):
    - Funding application and assessment;

  - Continuation funding application and assessment;
  - Project activity plan;
  - Key email exchanges with the Trust;
  - Q7 progress report to the Trust;
  - Phase 1 draft report;
  - ViCSO profiled hours brief.
- Remember Veterans (West Mercia Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner):
  - Funding application and assessment;
  - Continuation funding application and assessment;
  - Document explaining the aim of the partnership;
  - Q7 progress report to the Trust.

A.3. Data triangulation

The evaluation team sought to collect data pertaining to projects from three different sources: (i) documentation from the projects and the Trust about the projects and the Ex-Service Personnel in the CJS Programme; (ii) questionnaires and interviews with the projects; and (iii) interviews with ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS and received support from one or more of the 14 projects funded by the Trust, carers and family members of the latter, and professionals (e.g. police, probation officers and medical staff) working with ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS.

With regards to the primary data collected, each question posed in the questionnaires and respective interviews related to an EQ. At the analysis stage, the data was aggregated from these different sources and structured according to the respective EQ. This enabled a horizontal analysis across all the data with respect to each EQ. The data and preliminary analysis for each respective EQ was then presented and discussed at an internal workshop with the evaluation team, which helped formulate responses to the EQs. A second internal workshop took place to discuss the overarching conclusions and recommendations.

Annex B. Project-level logic models

Logic models were created for each of the seven projects that obtained continuation funding. Unless indicated otherwise, the logic models include information pertaining to both rounds of funding. Changes or updates relative to the continuation funding are indicated in green text. This might include a change or adaptation of inputs and activities, as well as a change in the outputs and outcomes sought. The logic models were developed based on the documentation provided on each project (see the detailed list in Annex A.2) and the first round of questionnaire and interviews with the projects. The logic models were then shared with the projects for their review and input, before further refinement. Any changes or updates to the projects – as indicated in the second round of questionnaire and interviews with the projects – were subsequently reflected in the logic models.

The logic models are presented in the following order:

- Project Nova – Supporting Veterans in the Criminal Justice System (Walking With the Wounded);
- NESP (National Offender Management Service Co-Financing Organisation);
- VCJS (SSAFA);
- Positive Futures (Venture Trust);
- IOM Cymru: Veterans Pathfinder (NPS in Wales);
- Remember Veterans (West Mercia Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner);
- London Veterans' PIR Service (Camden and Islington NHS Trust). Unlike the other projects above, London Veterans' Prison In-Reach (PIR) Service had two distinct areas of focus in the two separate rounds of funding. It was therefore decided to include a logic model for both phases of funding.

Figure B.1 Project Nova logic model

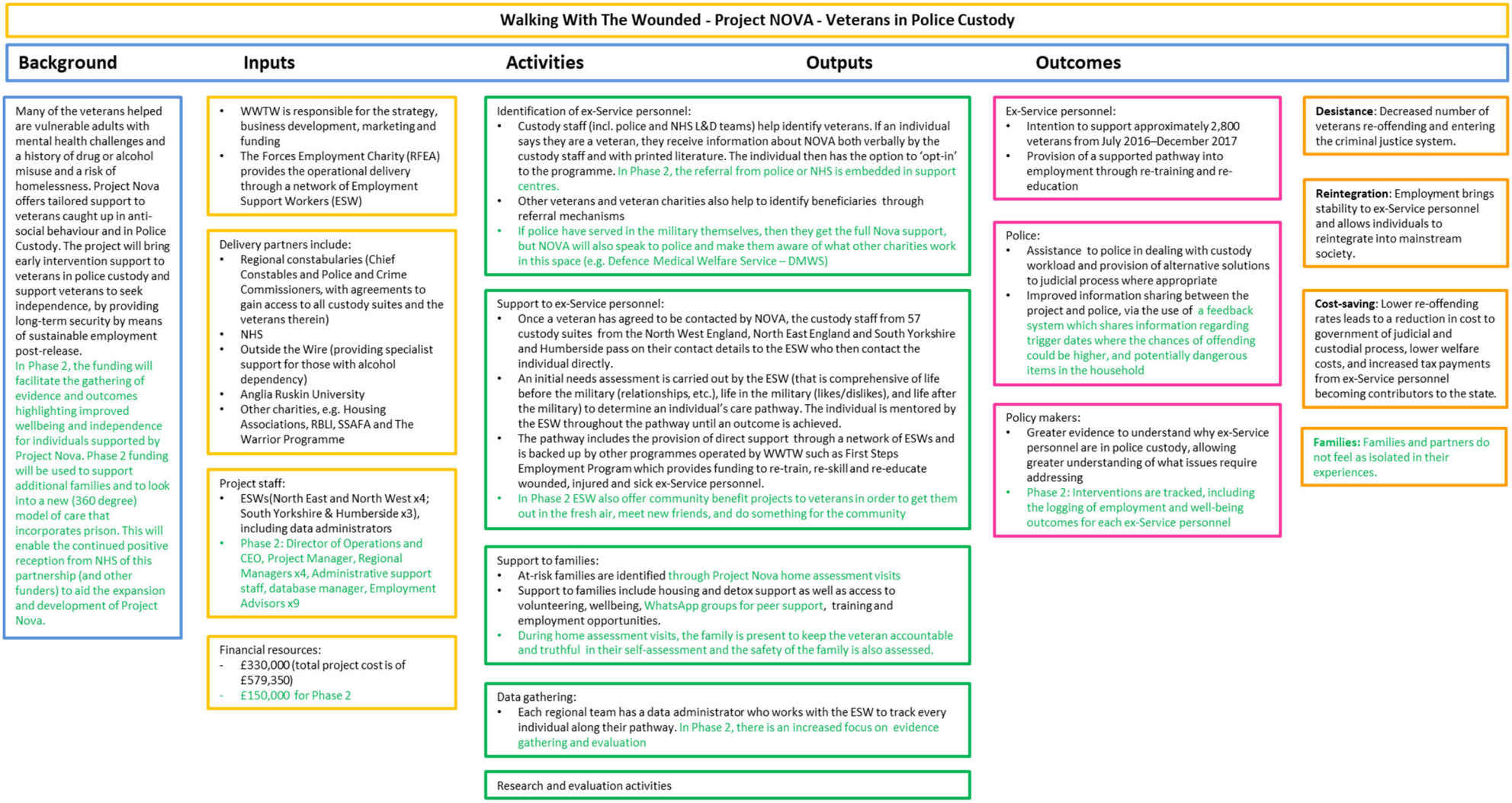


Figure B.2 NESP logic model

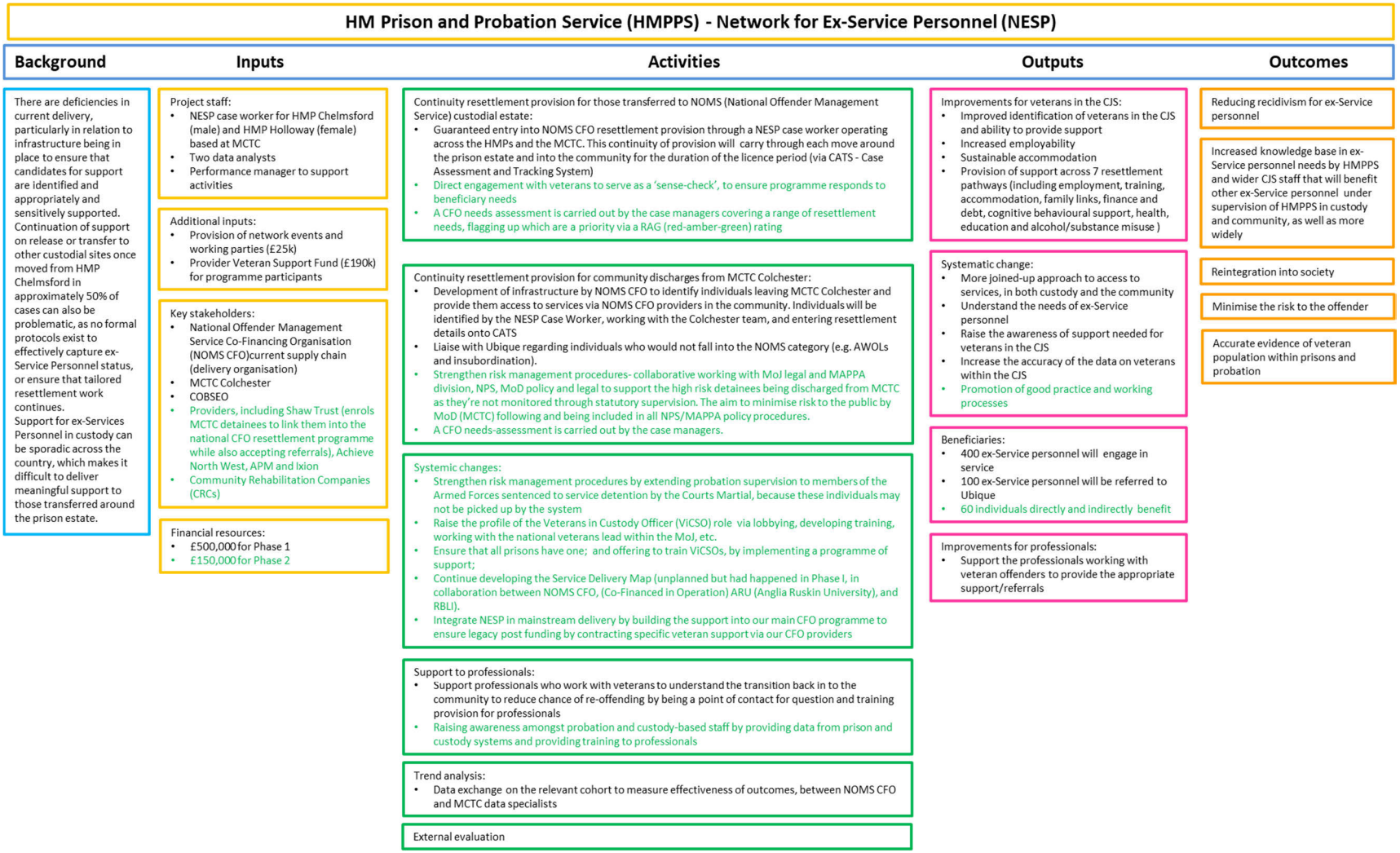


Figure B.3 VCJS logic model

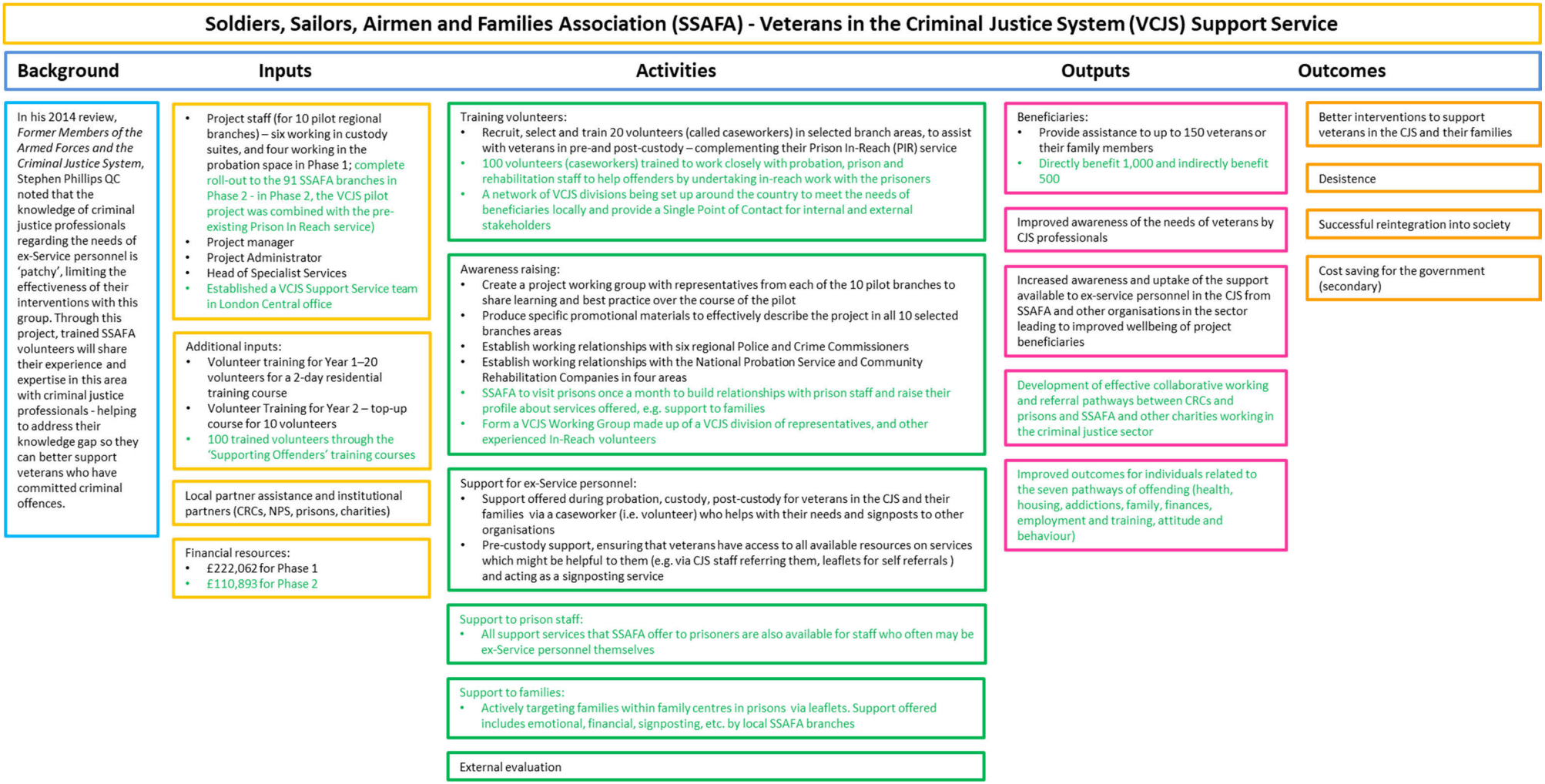


Figure B.4 Positive Futures logic model

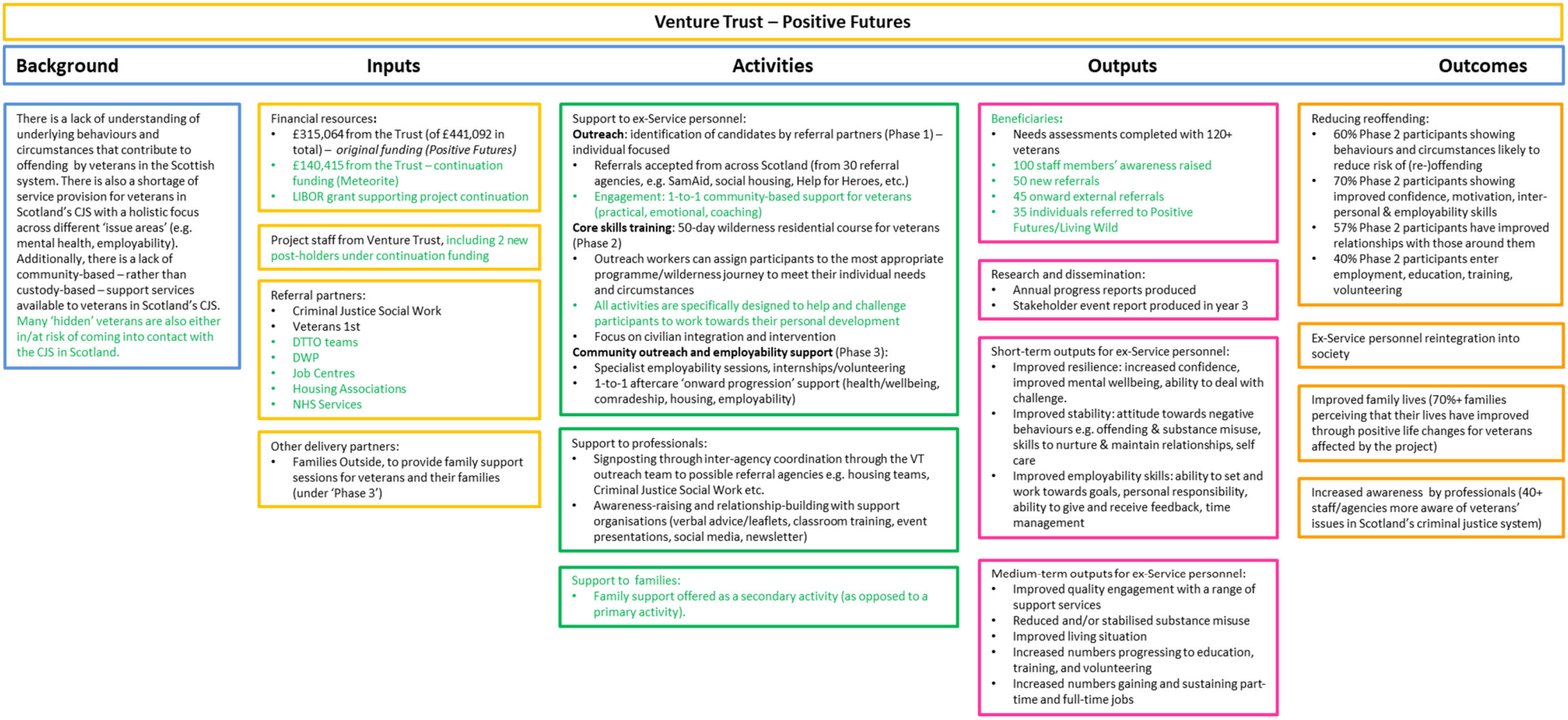


Figure B.5 IOM Cymru: Veterans Pathfinder logic model

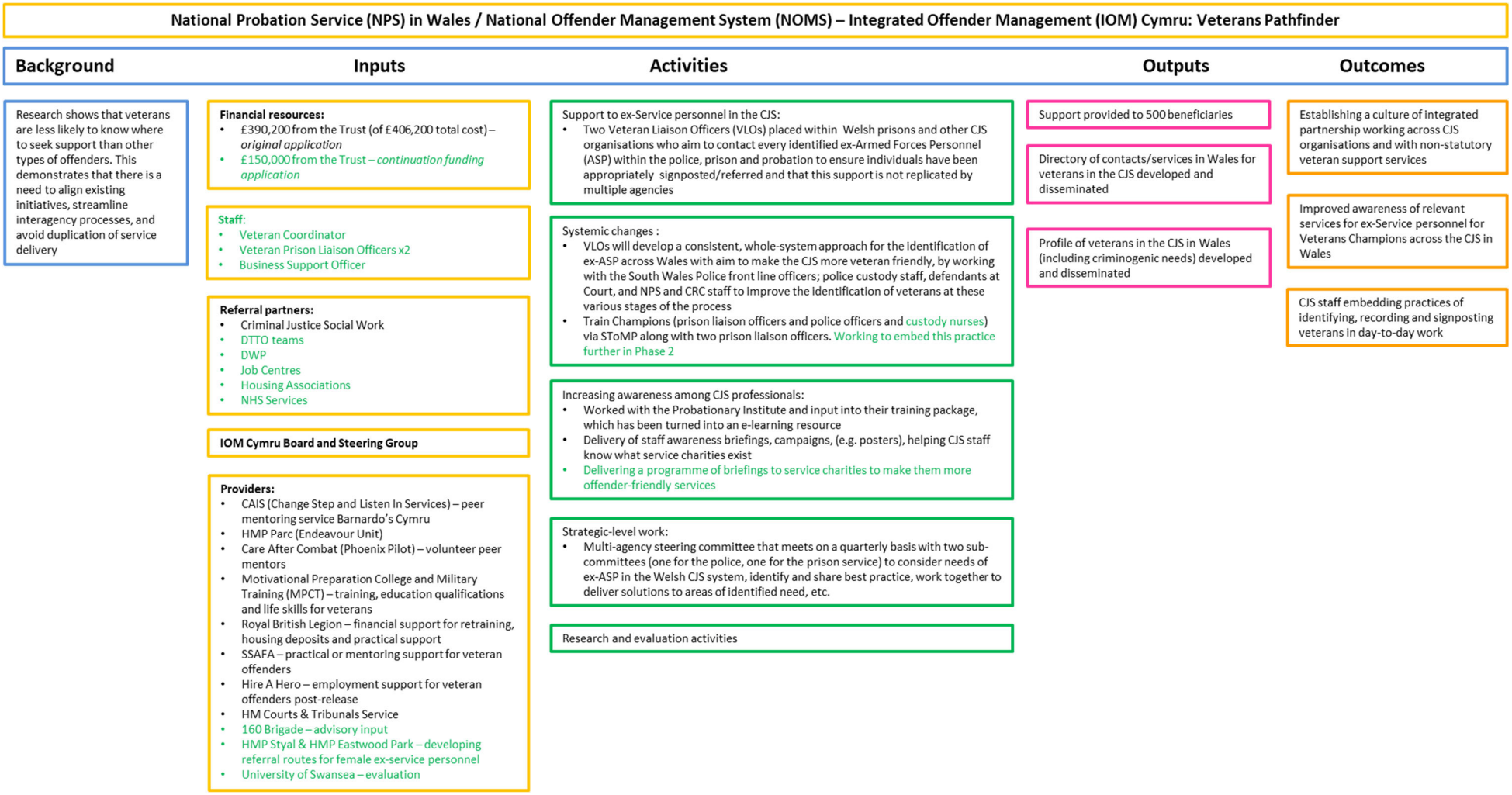


Figure B.6 Remember Veterans' logic model

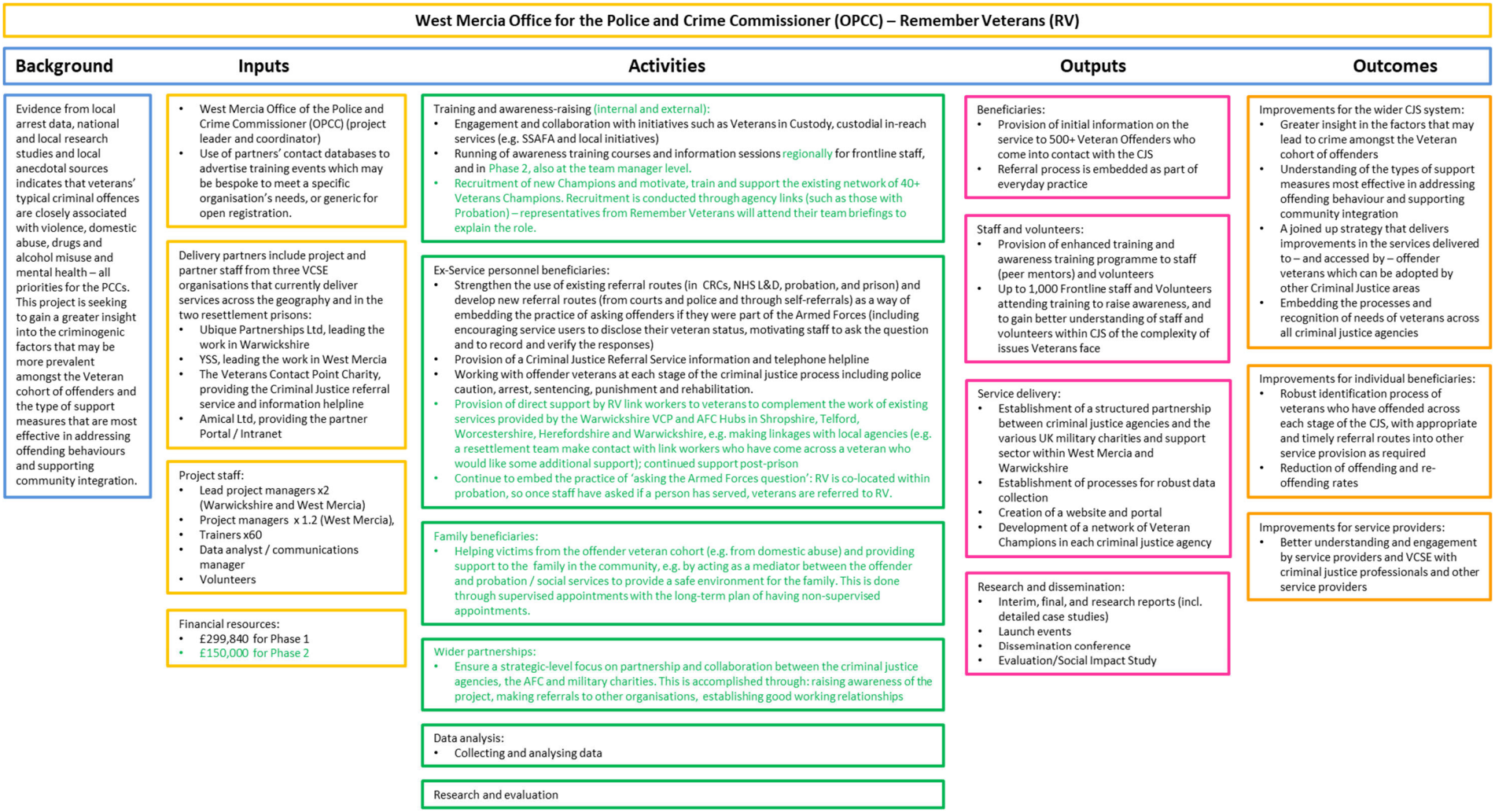


Figure B.7 London Veterans' PIR Service logic model – first phase of funding

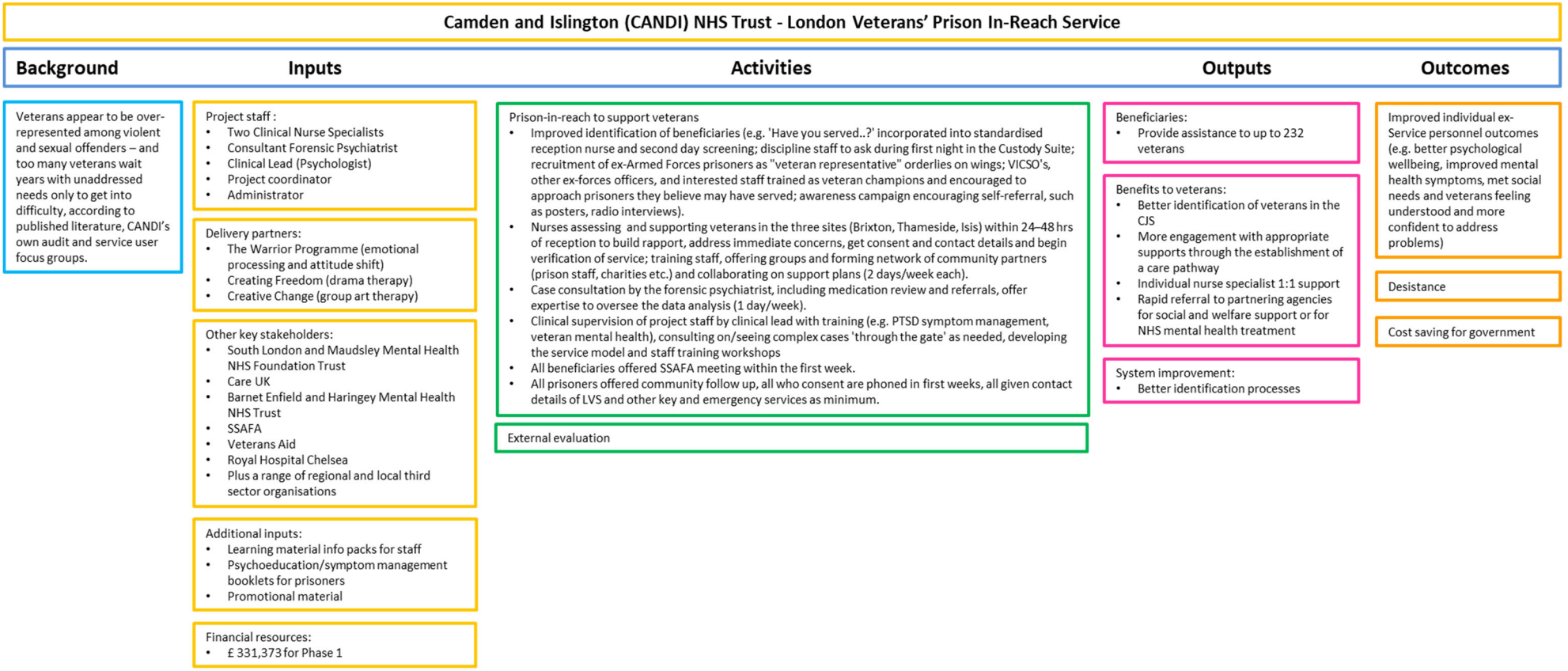
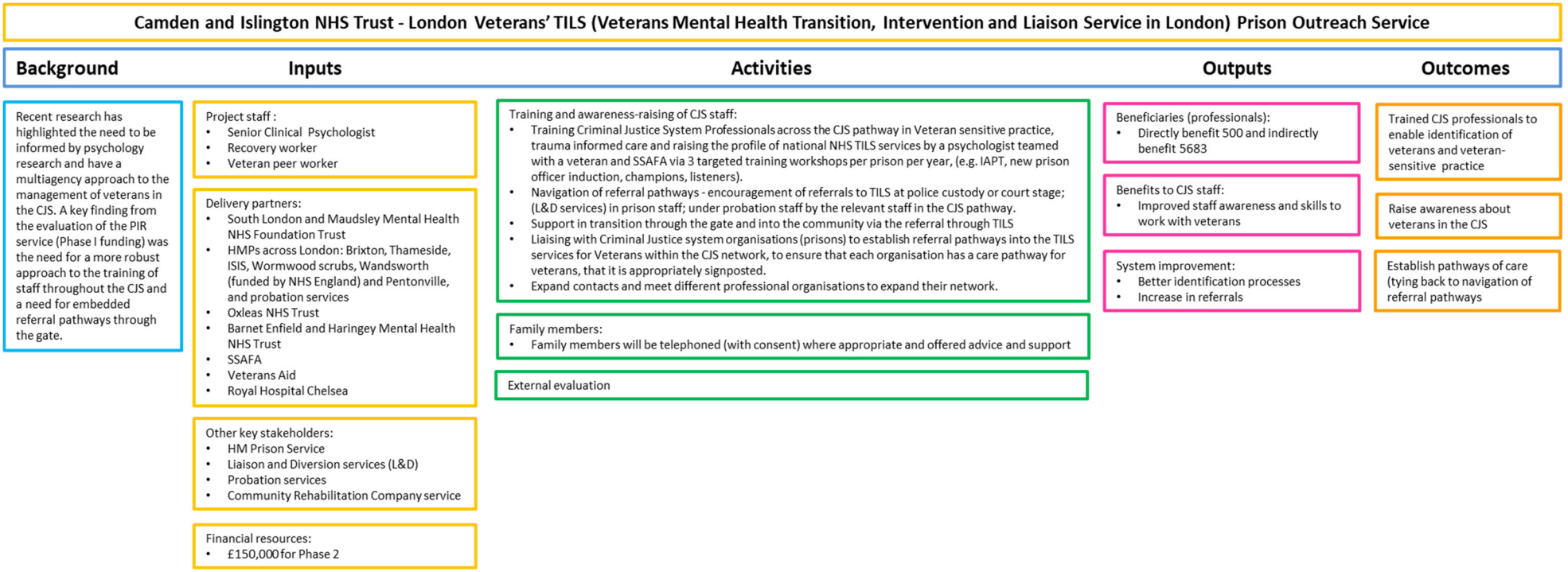


Figure B.8 London Veterans' PIR Service logic model – second phase of funding



Annex C. Project questionnaires

Annex C provides an overview of the questionnaires circulated to projects in both rounds of data collection (August/September 2019 and April/May 2020).

Box C.1 Round 1 questionnaire to projects with continuation funding

Introductory questions

1. **Project name and organisation.**
   Click here to enter text.
2. **Who are your project's primary beneficiaries? Please select all that apply.**
   - ☐ **Former Service personnel**
   - ☐ **Family members and/or carers**
   - ☐ **Professionals (e.g. police and/or probation officers, medical staff, etc.)**
   - ☐ **None of the above**
   - ☐ **Other, please specify:** Click here to enter text.
3. **Who are your project's secondary beneficiaries? Please select all that apply.**
   - ☐ **Former Service personnel**
   - ☐ **Family members and/or carers**
   - ☐ **Professionals (e.g. police and/or probation officers, medical staff, etc.)**
   - ☐ **None of the above**
   - ☐ **Other, please specify:** Click here to enter text.

Activities

4. **Please briefly summarise the key activities that support project delivery (up to 250 words).**
   Click here to enter text.
5. **Which points of the CJS pathway does your project target? Please select all that apply.**
   - ☐ **Pre-offending**
   - ☐ **At the point of arrest**
   - ☐ **In court**
   - ☐ **At the point of sentencing**
   - ☐ **During probation**
   - ☐ **Within prison**
   - ☐ **Post-custody / post-sentence**
   - ☐ **None of the above, please explain:** Click here to enter text.
   - ☐ **Other, please specify:** Click here to enter text.
6. **Does your project specifically target any of the following vulnerabilities? Please select all that apply.**
   - ☐ **Alcohol misuse**
   - ☐ **Debt**
   - ☐ **Gambling**
   - ☐ **Homelessness**
   - ☐ **Substance abuse (drugs)**
   - ☐ **Unemployment**
   - ☐ **Mental health issues**
   - ☐ **Physical health issues**
   - ☐ **None of the above, please explain:** Click here to enter text.
   - ☐ **Other, please specify:** Click here to enter text.
7. **Do you collect beneficiary feedback?**
   Choose an item.
   If yes, to what extent does the feedback show that:
   a. **Former Service personnel perceive to have received support to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?**

Choose an item.

b. **Other professionals (e.g. NHS staff, police and probation officers) perceive that former Service personnel have received support to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?**
Choose an item.

c. **Carers and family members perceive that former Service personnel have received support to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?**
Choose an item.

d. **Please elaborate further on your answers to 7a, b, and c:** Click here to enter text.

8. **Which primary partner type do you work with to deliver your project?**
Choose an item.
Please elaborate or add additional partners here: Click here to enter text.

9. **The following questions relate to the identification and signposting of beneficiaries (if applicable to your project):**
   a. **What partner agencies, if any, do you use as a referral source?**
   Click here to enter text.
   b. **What are the other ways in which you identify beneficiaries?**
   Click here to enter text.
   c. **What agencies do you signpost beneficiaries to?**
   Click here to enter text.

10. **When working with other services (e.g. charities, healthcare, police, for referrals and signposting):**
   a. **What are the benefits to your project?**
   Click here to enter text.
   b. **What are the challenges to your project?**
   Click here to enter text.

11. **We would like to understand whether there is an overlap between your project and the wider services available in your area. To what extent do other agencies and services provide a similar type of support?**
Choose an item.
Please elaborate: Click here to enter text.

Outcomes

12. **Which outcomes is your project seeking to achieve? When selecting the outcomes, please specify whether they are a primary or a secondary outcome.**

☐ **Desistance -** Choose an item.

☐ **Ex-Service personnel reintegration into society -** Choose an item.

☐ **Cost-saving for the government -** Choose an item.

☐ **Other(s), please specify (including whether these are primary or secondary outcomes):** Click here to enter text.

13. **The following questions relate to evidence collected during the course of your project:**
   a. **Do you collect evidence of the change brought about by your project, and if so, what data do you collect?**
   Click here to enter text.
   b. **Do you use the data you collect, and if so, how?**
   Click here to enter text.

14. **The following questions relate to the project outcomes indicated in the question above:**
   a. **In your view, to what extent has your project met these outcomes so far?**
   Choose an item.
   Please specify and/or elaborate how you know this (e.g. professional experience and judgement, analysis of management data, etc.): Click here to enter text.
   b. **Which outcome has been the least challenging to achieve so far?**

Click here to enter text.

c. **Which outcome has been the most challenging to achieve so far?**

Click here to enter text.

15. **Has your project resulted in any outcomes for beneficiaries that you did not expect? Please elaborate.**

Click here to enter text.

16. **Can you provide examples of impact your project has achieved so far?**

Click here to enter text.

17. **What have you learnt from delivering your project? In other words, what would you do again or change?**

Click here to enter text.

Sustainability and wider impact

18. **What are your plans for ensuring the sustainability[483] of your project?**

Click here to enter text.

a. **What might impede you from achieving these objectives both internally (e.g. in relation to the project or Programme), and externally (e.g. in relation to the wider policy environment, or partners)?**

Click here to enter text.

Box C.2 Round 1 questionnaire to projects without continuation funding

[483] Sustainability is defined as the ability of a project to ensure the same level of delivery of services and support upon conclusion of the grant funding.

Introductory questions

1. **Project name and organisation.**
   Click here to enter text.
2. **Who were your project's primary beneficiaries? Please select all that apply.**
   - ☐ **Former Service personnel**
   - ☐ **Family members and/or carers**
   - ☐ **Professionals (e.g. police and/or probation officers, medical staff, etc.)**
   - ☐ **None of the above**
   - ☐ **Other, please specify:** Click here to enter text.
3. **Who were your project's secondary beneficiaries? Please select all that apply.**
   - ☐ **Former Service personnel**
   - ☐ **Family members and/or carers**
   - ☐ **Professionals (e.g. police and/or probation officers, medical staff, etc.)**
   - ☐ **None of the above**
   - ☐ **Other, please specify:** Click here to enter text.

Activities

4. **Please briefly summarise the key activities that supported project delivery (up to 250 words).**
   Click here to enter text.
5. **Which points of the CJS pathway did your project target? Please select all that apply.**
   - ☐ **Pre-offending**
   - ☐ **At the point of arrest**
   - ☐ **In court**
   - ☐ **At the point of sentencing**
   - ☐ **During probation**
   - ☐ **Within prison**
   - ☐ **Post-custody / post-sentence**
   - ☐ **Other, please specify:** Click here to enter text.
6. **Did your project specifically target any of the following vulnerabilities? Please select all that apply.**
   - ☐ **Alcohol misuse**
   - ☐ **Debt**
   - ☐ **Gambling**
   - ☐ **Homelessness**
   - ☐ **Substance abuse (drugs)**
   - ☐ **Unemployment**
   - ☐ **Mental health issues**
   - ☐ **Physical health issues**
   - ☐ **None of the above, please explain:** Click here to enter text.
   - ☐ **Other, please specify:** Click here to enter text.
7. **Did you collect beneficiary feedback?**
   Choose an item.

   If yes, to what extent did the feedback show that:
   a. **Former Service personnel perceived to have received support to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?**
      Choose an item.

b. **Other professionals (e.g. NHS staff, police and probation officers) perceived that former Service personnel have received support to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?**
Choose an item.

c. **Carers and family members perceived that former Service personnel have received support to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?**
Choose an item.

d. Please elaborate further on your answers to 7a, b, and c: Click here to enter text.

8. **Which primary partner type did you work with to deliver your project?**
Choose an item.
Please elaborate or add additional partners here: Click here to enter text.
9. **The following questions relate to the identification and signposting of beneficiaries (if applicable to your project):**
   a. **What partner agencies, if any, did you use as a referral source?**
   Click here to enter text.
   b. **What were the other ways in which you identified beneficiaries?**
   Click here to enter text.
   c. **What agencies did you signpost beneficiaries to?**
   Click here to enter text.
10. **When working with other services (e.g. charities, healthcare, police, for referrals and signposting):**
   a. **What were the benefits to your project?**
   Click here to enter text.
   b. **What were the challenges to your project?**
   Click here to enter text.
11. **We would like to understand whether there was an overlap between your project and the wider services available in your area. To what extent did other agencies and services provide a similar type of support?**
Choose an item.
Please elaborate: Click here to enter text.

Outcomes

12. **Which outcomes was your project seeking to achieve? When selecting the outcomes, please specify whether they were a primary or a secondary outcome.**

☐ **Desistance -** Choose an item.
☐ **Ex-Service personnel reintegration into society -** Choose an item.
☐ **Cost-saving for the government -** Choose an item.
☐ **Other(s), please specify (including whether these were primary or secondary outcomes):** Click here to enter text.

13. **The following questions relate to evidence collected during the course of your project:**
   a. **Did you collect evidence of the change brought about by your project, and if so, what data did you collect?**
   Click here to enter text.
   b. **Did you use the data you collected, and if so, how?**
   Click here to enter text.
14. **The following questions relate to the project outcomes indicated in the question above:**
   a. **In your view, to what extent did your project meet these outcomes?**
   Choose an item.
   Please specify and/or elaborate how you know this (e.g. professional experience and judgement, analysis of management data, etc.): Click here to enter text.
   b. **Which outcome was the least challenging to achieve?**
   Click here to enter text.
   c. **Which outcome was the most challenging to achieve?**

Click here to enter text.

15. Did your project result in any outcomes for beneficiaries that you did not expect? Please elaborate.

Click here to enter text.

16. Can you provide examples of impact your project has achieved?

Click here to enter text.

17. What did you learn from delivering your project? In other words, what would you do again or change?

Click here to enter text.

Sustainability and wider impact

18. Can you explain why you did not apply for the Programme's continuation and sustainability grant?

Click here to enter text.

19. If applicable, what were your plans for ensuring the sustainability[484] of your project?

Click here to enter text.

a. Did anything impede you from achieving these objectives both internally (e.g. in relation to the project or Programme), and externally (e.g. in relation to the wider policy environment, or partners)?

Click here to enter text.

20. If applicable, please describe what dissemination activities you have undertaken on the project outcomes, and the impact this has generated (e.g. raising wider awareness through publication on national news, resulted in changes in practice, etc.).

Click here to enter text.

Box C.3 Round 2 questionnaire to projects with continuation funding

[484] Sustainability is defined as the ability of a project to ensure the same level of delivery of services and support upon conclusion of the grant funding.

Introductory questions

1. **Please confirm your project name and organisation below.**
   Click or tap here to enter text.
2. **If there have been any changes to the primary and secondary beneficiaries (i.e. former Service personnel, professionals, and family members of former Service personnel) of your project since your submission of the previous questionnaire (September/October 2019), please indicate what has changed below, or specify if nothing has changed.**
   Click or tap here to enter text.

Activities

3. **Please indicate if there have been any changes in the key activities that support project delivery since you completed the previous questionnaire (September/October 2019)? If so, briefly explain what changes and why they were made.**
   Click or tap here to enter text.
4. **Please indicate if there have been any changes in the points of the CJS pathway that your project targets (e.g. pre-offending, in court, during probation, within prison, post-custody/sentence, etc.) since you completed the previous questionnaire (September/October 2019)? If so, briefly explain what changes and why they were made.**
   Click or tap here to enter text.
5. **Please indicate if there have been any changes in the vulnerabilities that your project targets (e.g. new vulnerabilities targeted, some vulnerabilities no longer addressed, such as alcohol misuse, substance abuse, gambling, homelessness, mental health issues, etc.) since you completed the previous questionnaire (September/October 2019)? If so, briefly explain what changes and why they were made.**
   Click or tap here to enter text.
6. **Do you collect beneficiary feedback?**
   Choose an item.
   Has the way in which you collect feedback changed since you completed the previous questionnaire (September/October 2019)? If so, briefly explain what changes and why they were made.
   Click or tap here to enter text.
7. **If you do collect beneficiary feedback, to what extent does the feedback indicate that:**
   a. **Former Service personnel perceive (self-report) that the support they have received from your project has helped to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?**
      Choose an item.
   b. **Other professionals (e.g. NHS staff, police and probation officers) perceive that former Service personnel have received support to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?**
      Choose an item.
   c. **Carers and family members perceive that former Service personnel have received support to reduce offending behaviour and make positive life choices?**
      Choose an item.
   d. **Please elaborate further on your answers to 7a, b, and c, and provide examples:** Click or tap here to enter text.
8. **Have the partners you work with to deliver your project changed since you completed the previous questionnaire (September/October 2019)? If so, briefly explain what changes and why they were made.**
   Click or tap here to enter text.
9. **The following questions relate to the identification and signposting of beneficiaries (if applicable to your project):**
   a. **Have there been any changes in the partner agencies, if any, that you use as a referral source, and why were these changes made?**
      Click or tap here to enter text.

b. **Have there been any changes in the agencies that you signpost beneficiaries to, and why were these changes made?**
Click or tap here to enter text.

c. **Are there partner agencies or services that you would like to engage with, but have not yet? If so, why have you not engaged with them yet?**
Click or tap here to enter text.

10. **When working with other services (e.g. charities, healthcare, police, for referrals and signposting):**
    a. **Are there any further benefits to your project that you would like to highlight?**
    Click or tap here to enter text.
    b. **Are there any further challenges to your project that you would like to highlight?**
    Click or tap here to enter text.
11. **Since we last spoke, have you noticed or become aware of any overlap between your project and the wider services available in your area? In other words, to what extent do other agencies and services provide a similar type of support to that offered by your project?**
    Choose an item.
    Please elaborate: Click or tap here to enter text.

Outcomes

12. **Is your project still seeking to achieve the same outcomes as when you last complete your responses to this questionnaire (September/October 2019)?**
    Choose an item.
    If there have been changes, please indicate what outcome(s) has changed and why. When selecting the outcomes, please specify whether they are a primary (i.e. the main) or a secondary outcome for your project.

☐ **Desistance -** Choose an item.

☐ **Ex-Service personnel reintegration into society -** Choose an item.

☐ **Cost-saving for the government -** Choose an item.

☐ **Other(s), please specify (including whether these are primary or secondary outcomes):** Click here to enter text.

13. **The following questions relate to the project outcomes indicated in the question above:**
    a. **In your view, to what extent has your project achieved these outcomes so far?**
    Choose an item.
    Please specify and/or elaborate how you know this (e.g. professional experience and judgement, analysis of management data, etc.): Click or tap here to enter text.
    b. **Which outcome has been the least challenging to achieve so far?**
    Click or tap here to enter text.
    c. **Which outcome has been the most challenging to achieve so far?**
    Click or tap here to enter text.
14. **Has your project resulted in any outcomes for beneficiaries that you did not expect? Please elaborate.**

Click or tap here to enter text.

15. **The following questions relate to evidence collected during the course of your project.**
    a. **Have there been any changes in the evidence you collect about the outcomes and impacts of your project, and if so, what have the changes been and why were these made?**
    Click or tap here to enter text.
    b. **Have there been any changes in the way you use the data you collect, and if so, what have the changes been and why were these made?**
    Click or tap here to enter text.
16. **The following questions are about the impact of your project:**
    a. **Please provide examples of the impact your project has achieved so far, since you last completed your responses to this questionnaire (September/October 2019)?**

Click or tap here to enter text.

b. **What impact are you seeking to achieve over the next 2-5 years?**
Click or tap here to enter text.

17. **Are there any gaps in the services you provide, or any needs of your beneficiaries (i.e. former Service personnel, professionals, and/or family members of former Service personnel) that you do not currently address? If so, please indicate what these gaps are.**
Click or tap here to enter text.

18. **What have you learnt from delivering your project, since you completed the previous questionnaire (September/October 2019)? In other words, what would you do again or change?**
Click or tap here to enter text.

Sustainability and wider impact

19. **Have your plans for ensuring the sustainability[485] of your project changed since you completed the previous questionnaire (September/October 2019)? If so, briefly explain how these plans have changed.**
Click or tap here to enter text.

a. **What might impede you from achieving these plans for sustainability - both internally (e.g. in relation to the project or Programme), and externally (e.g. in relation to the wider policy environment, or partners)?**
Click or tap here to enter text.

[485] Sustainability is defined as the ability of a project to ensure the same level of delivery of services and support upon conclusion of the grant funding.

Annex D. List of interviewees

The study team is grateful to the various individuals who took part in interviews and helped shared their insights on the support provided to them. Where consent has been given, names and/or affiliations are listed in the table below. Contributions have been anonymised in the table and throughout the briefing document for all ex-Service personnel and family members/carers of ex-Service personnel who participated in our interviews.

Table D.1 Ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS

Identifier	Interview date	Project which provided support
1	20 February 2020	Project Nova
2	19 February 2020	Project Nova
3	18 February 2020	Project Nova
4	3 April 2020	Project Nova
5	14 May 2020	Project Nova, SSAFA VCJS
6	28 May 2020	Project Nova
7	15 May 2020	Project Nova
8	19 May 2020	Project Nova
9	22 May 2020	Project Nova
10	16 April 2020	SSAFA VCJS
11	29 June 2020	SSAFA VCJS

Table D.2 Family members/carers of ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS

Identifier	Interview date	Project which provided support
1	6 March 2020	Project Nova
2	20 April 2020	Project Nova
3	14 May 2020	Project Nova

Table D.3 Professionals or volunteers working with ex-Service personnel who have come into contact with the CJS

Name	Affiliation	Interview date	Project
Gary Smith	HMPPS caseworker	20 December 2019	NESP (NOMS CFO)
Steve Lowe	Project Nova staff	19 February 2020	Project Nova
Anonymous	Anonymous	20 March 2020	TiLS (CANDI)
Andy Jones	Project staff	12 May 2020	IOM Cymru: Veterans' Pathfinder
Anonymous	Anonymous	12 May 2020	IOM Cymru: Veterans' Pathfinder
Anonymous	Anonymous	18 May 2020	IOM Cymru: Veterans' Pathfinder
David Seeley	Consultant psychiatrist	3 June 2020	IOM Cymru: Veterans' Pathfinder
Dawn Civill-Williams	SSAFA caseworker	21 May 2020	VCJS (SSAFA)
Anne MacKinnon	SSAFA caseworker	27 May 2020	VCJS (SSAFA)
Bob Zeller	SSAFA caseworker	27 May 2020	VCJS (SSAFA)
Anonymous	SSAFA caseworker	22 May 2020	VCJS (SSAFA)

Annex E. Interview protocols

Annex E contains the interview protocols used during the interviews with ex-Service personnel, family members/carers, and professionals.

Box E.1 Ex-Service personnel interview protocol

Part A: Support received from the project(s)

1. Which project(s) did you receive support from?
2. How did you hear about this project, and how were you put in contact with the project?
3. What kind of support did you receive (for example mentoring, mental health support, training, etc.)?
4. Can you please specify:
    a. When you received this support?
    b. For how long you received this support?
    c. Whether the support provided was continuous?
5. Do you think that you could get the same support from another service provider?
    a. If yes, which other providers were available, and why did you end up receiving support from this specific project?

Part B: Impacts of the project(s)

6. What did you like or dislike about the support you received from this project?
7. Do you think that working with this project has helped you, or not? Please specify why/why not.
8. Do you think that working with this project has helped your wider networks (e.g. friends, family, etc.), or not? Please specify why/why not.
9. Can you identify any gaps in the service offered?
10. If you had to make two changes to the support you received or the project itself, what would they be?

Box E.2 Family members/carers interview protocol

Part A: Support received from the project(s)

1. Do you know which project(s) the beneficiary received (or receives) support from?
2. Do you know what kind of support the beneficiary received (or receives) (for example mentoring, mental health support, training, etc.)?
3. Did you, or do you, receive support from a project? If yes, can you please describe the support you received?

Part B: Impacts of the project(s)

4. Do you think that working with this project has helped the beneficiary, or not? Please specify why/why not.
    a. For example, do you perceive that support from this project has helped the beneficiary reduce offending behaviour, and make positive life choices?
    b. Did the projects seek to obtain feedback from you on their activities with the beneficiary?
5. If the project offered you support, was this support helpful to you? If yes, can you explain in what way?
6. Can you identify any gaps in the service offered (either to you or to the beneficiary)?
7. If you had to make two changes to the support you or the beneficiary received, or the project itself, what would they be?

Box E.3 Professionals interview protocol

Part A: Support received from the project(s)

1. **Do you know which project(s) former Service personnel in the CJS received (or receive) support from?**
2. **Do you know what kind of support the former Service personnel received (or receives) (for example mentoring, mental health support, training, etc.)?**
3. **Did you, or do you, receive support from a project? If yes, can you please describe the support you received?**

Part B: Impacts of the project(s)

4. **Do you think that working with this project has helped former Service personnel, or not? Please specify why/why not.**
    a. **For example, do you perceive that support from this project has helped former Service personnel reduce offending behaviour and/or make positive life choices?**
    b. **Did (or do) the projects seek to obtain feedback from you on their activities with the former Service personnel?**
5. **Can you identify any gaps in the service offered to former Service personnel?**
6. **If you had to make two changes to the support former Service personnel received or the project itself, what would they be?**
7. **Has the support provided by the projects (to either you or to former Service personnel) helped affect wider system changes (for example raised awareness around issues and needs of former Service personnel in the CJS)?**