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# ARES & ATHENA<sup>9</sup>

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Adding values and value

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**<sup>9</sup> THE BRITISH ARMY'S  
CONTRIBUTION TO UK  
SOCIETY AND PROSPERITY**





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*Calm before the storm: Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment join forces with the Environment Agency to rehearse building flood defence barriers. © Crown Copyright*





## The British Army's contribution to UK society and prosperity

The CHACR's inaugural workshop in July 2015 addressed how the Army should best contribute to the UK's strategic influence and prosperity. This challenge was viewed largely through the lens of defence engagement overseas and, consequently, the first edition of *Ares & Athena* focused on the linkages between the Army's capacity-building activities and the Government's 'prosperity agenda'. This caused the senior officer responsible for engagement within the UK, GOC Regional Command, to reflect that this focus omitted the Army's contribution to prosperity at home and to UK society in general, benefits that he had found are not always well understood by national policy-makers.

As a result the GOC requested that the CHACR run a workshop at Camberley on 24 May 2017 that would focus attention on the hidden value that the Army affords to the nation outside its better understood outputs of contingent military capability, defence engagement overseas and supporting national resilience. He identified the strands of youth engagement; skills and training; social mobility and support to those transitioning from service into the civilian workplace. Sadly, an unexpected General Election prevented politicians and many senior officials attending, but nevertheless the workshop assembled a rich array of leaders from business,

the public sector and wider society, together with Army representatives responsible for engagement within the UK.

Speakers provided their perspectives on the aforementioned strands and were followed by a series of syndicate discussions with a view to generating some ideas as to how these aspects of the Army's contribution to the nation might be enhanced, and to ensure they are better understood.

This edition of *Ares & Athena* contains a summary of the proceedings of this workshop, including articles by three of our speakers, and post-workshop reflections from some of our attendees. As is customary in *Ares & Athena*, most of these contributions are unattributed to ensure that they are not mistaken for official policy, are published on a 'Chatham House' basis and offered as a collection of 'individual views'. Should authors wish to publish their contributions subsequently under their own names, they are, of course, free to do so.

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# INTRODUCTION: A THINK PIECE BY MAJ GEN RICHARD STANFORD, GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING, REGIONAL COMMAND

Most people are very familiar with the Army's role of preventing conflict, fighting the UK's enemies, UK resilience and dealing with disaster. What many people are less familiar with is the by-product of what the Army does to contribute to the wider economy, develop people and actively encourage social mobility. There is much more to the Army than that which is portrayed in various parts of the media. It is a paradox that the Army is very popular<sup>1</sup>, but much of this is based on sympathy not empathy and on a lack of wider understanding of the Army's contribution to society.

The Army contributes directly into the UK economy, both through soldiers' salaries being spent in the UK as well as through the numerous support contracts in place. A snapshot of just one garrison town, and by no means the largest, shows that within a small area the annual salary contribution is more than £101 million, 12,500 people are a part of the direct military community with 1,000 jobs for local people and additional facilities from which the local community are able to benefit.

In addition to the direct 'cash injection' into the economy, the Army contributes significantly in more subtle ways. Social mobility is not a term often used within the military, but it is something our meritocratic promotion system does really well. People from all walks of life can, and do, rise to the highest ranks in the Army, both commissioned and non-commissioned – and often both. The Army gives people opportunities when

doors elsewhere may have been closed or where people have not done well in other organisations.

We have created an environment in which talented young men and women are able to thrive and achieve great things. An excellent, but not isolated, example is 2nd Lt Kidane Cousland who commissioned as an officer in 2016. Illiterate and diagnosed with dyslexia, by the age of 11 he had moved home and school several times across London, via Ghana and Jamaica and, unable to pass English GCSE as a 15-year-old, he joined the Army as a junior soldier aged 16. Aged 24, he was awarded the Sword of Honour for the officer cadet considered to have performed to the highest level in all aspects of the course at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. His is but one example of many. On average we commission around 30 soldiers each year from the ranks; this is a scheme where talent is spotted, nurtured and developed in young soldiers and when they are ready, they are mentored through the selection for officer training at Sandhurst. On average, around 20 per cent of our officers commissioned each year are late-entry officers who joined as a soldier and, with natural talent and organisational opportunities, progressed through the ranks.

If one considers the top two concerns for politicians at the moment, aside from Brexit, they are probably health and education. The Army is a net contributor to both areas.

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<sup>1</sup>81 per cent favourability rating this year in the ICM poll.

## Health

It stands to reason that soldiers are fitter than most of the population, have fewer health and mental health problems than their civilian counterparts and as a result cost the NHS less than their counterparts outside the Army<sup>2</sup>. We also no longer have a totally separate health system; instead, Army doctors will spend a lot of their time working within the NHS. There are more than 2,600 medical positions for Army Reservists, a good number of which are manned in partnership with the NHS resulting in the transfer of skills from operational deployments to hospital operating theatres.

## Education

The MoD is the largest provider of apprenticeships in the UK with around 16,000 apprenticeships on some 43 programmes ranging from engineering and IT to construction and driving. The time and money spent on soldiers' personal development is unprecedented when compared to civilian organisations; a by-product of having to grow talent from within the ranks. The opportunities are significant: there are more than 220 different roles, more than any other sector; 24 per cent of the Army is employed in 19 different STEM roles including cyber, air crew, aviation engineering support, specialist

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<sup>2</sup>It is a myth that soldiers are more likely to suffer mental health issues than their civilian counterparts.



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medical cadres and lawyers; more than 3,000 people are employed in aircraft engineering; there are more than 400 anaesthetists, radiologists, psychiatrists and accredited GMPs and GDMOs. The Army also provides opportunities for intellectual development through funding 45 undergraduate and 700 postgraduate places, two Fellowships, five PhDs and 400 university short courses per year which are all accredited towards higher education qualifications. The Army’s training establishments are assured by Ofsted, and all Ofsted inspections conducted over the last few years have graded our schools ‘Outstanding’ or ‘Good’.

### Youth and Cadets

There is also considerable focus on youth development: the Army runs a national youth movement – Cadet Forces, one organisation within schools and one within the community.

This youth movement is also a key part of the social mobility contribution the Army makes. New research by the University of Northampton suggests that people who have been cadets are more likely to succeed in their chosen career path than those who have not. In this issue of *Ares & Athena* (see page 8), Professor Simon Denny presents some of the initial findings from his research, which concludes “the social impact the Cadet Forces deliver is vastly greater than the annual cost of the Cadet Forces to the Defence budget”.

A significant by-product of the Army’s role in defending the nation is its contribution to society and social mobility. Soldiers have the opportunity in our meritocratic system to thrive and achieve great things. It is not something the Army talks about very much and we should be proud of it; we should champion this more often, both to sell the good we do and to inform people of the wider benefit to society.

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# WHAT IS THE HIDDEN VALUE OF THE BRITISH ARMY TO UK SOCIETY AND PROSPERITY?

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*Words: Dame Julia Cleverdon*

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As co-founder of Step Up To Serve – whose patron is the Prince of Wales – it is an honour to be invited to contribute to this edition of *Ares & Athena*. There are three reasons woven into my life which answer the exam question set: what is the hidden value of the British Army to UK society?

The first relates to my early working life in industry during the 70s and 80s, working in industrial relations in British Leyland, trying to get management to realise that they would get the Trade Unions they deserved if the front line were not trained to lead and take charge. Into those troubled decades came the Director of The Industrial Society, John Garnett, who had been in the Navy during the war and found at Sandhurst – the simplest and best model of leadership development for training front-line leaders at scale – John Adair’s three circles illustrating what leaders need to do: achieve the task, build the team, develop individuals.

I can hear John now: “He who communicates is he who leads – and if the shop steward knows more than the supervisor then he or she will lead the team. The front line is the bottom line and the bottom line depends on the front line. Consult before you decide. Men will serve those who serve them. If you care about the things they care about – they will care about the things you care about.”

Eternal truths and action-centred leadership trained thousands of front-line leaders in industry and commerce to take up their leadership task – and all of it drew on the leadership experience of the Army and how to assess it, test for it, train it, build it and renew it.

So, my first action point is the importance of promoting what the Army knows much more widely to businesses and leadership organisations. We need to become more porous and less diffident. We need to train others in how we train in leadership and make it much more widely available. We need to use more powerfully those ambassadors who leave us – and go on to the NHS, the corporates and the public and charitable sectors to foster and explain the value of the leadership experience they have had. Our productivity in industrial sectors is falling faster and faster in the UK – and I believe much of it can be put down to lack of leadership training at the front line.

My second reason is my 30 years of experience working for the Prince of Wales, who – as this audience will know – is a passionate believer in the importance of the leadership contribution of the Services. Interestingly, what changed my view of the hidden value of the Army was not recognising what the Army was doing in Afghanistan in building resilience and fighting the Taliban, or preventing conflict and holding

the ring in Sierra Leone. What changed my life and view of the hidden value of the Army happened in 2010 in the northern mill town of Burnley. The Prince of Wales had asked that his 20 Prince’s Charities should work collaboratively together in a series of challenged communities – Burnley, Burslem, Redcar, Middlesbrough and Tottenham.

Having stood down in 2007 as chief executive of business in the community, he had asked me to start to develop the partnership with the public, private sector and voluntary sector in Burnley – a poor Lancashire mill town, home to just 79,000 people. HRH had always been very devoted to the town, primarily because of the incredible stretch of dilapidated beautiful 18th-century mills called the Weavers Triangle. Riots in 2003 between poor white working class and poor young Pakistanis schooled in ghettos had brought the town to national attention. He led his charities to visit Burnley in 2007 and invited community representatives to Clarence House to discuss the possible partnership. It was agreed the Prince’s Trust would begin with the challenges for disaffected young people with very high levels of antisocial behaviour

and Business in the Community would develop a business team for Burnley, which became the Burnley Bondholders. Creatively, the Prince’s Foundation for Traditional Arts began mixing young white and Muslims together to create the banners for faith rooms in some of the new schools. Worryingly, no school was achieving more than 35 per cent A-to-C GCSE grades and 20 teach firsters were recruited to help raise achievement.

The Prince of Wales sent me to see Sir Nick Parker to see what the Army could do in our support. As he was then in charge of youth policy for the Army, I asked for a seconded warrant officer to join the small team in Burnley and he generously agreed. Within weeks we had developed with the Army the TED programme involving teams of 16-year-olds building and racing go-karts each week – sponsored by a great business called BCW. Then the innovative police inspector had agreed to give us the names of the 100 boys most in trouble with the police. The Army sent us five young Service leaders matched with five Police Community Support officers and the support of the Prince’s Trust – and they departed on a ten-day uphill, down-dale course in teams of ten with an accountable leader.

The Prince of Wales came to hear the results – written up in the independent Cass report. Burglary had fallen like a stone while they were on the course but, even more importantly, 85 per cent did not re-offend again and achieved – in the jargon – positive outcomes. Six joined the Army – and the Prince insisted on going to visit two of them at Catterick – and 35 set up TWISTER (Teenagers Working in Society To Earn Respect). A petition for a boxing club in Burnley, which attracted 2,000 signatures, was returned to them from an official in the council saying that “boxing was legalised child

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abuse and could not be tolerated in the town". You never win them all! Interestingly, ten years on, Burnley was in 2016 named as the most enterprising town in England – and has the fastest growth of private sector jobs, but few people know that the hidden added value came from the involvement of the Army.

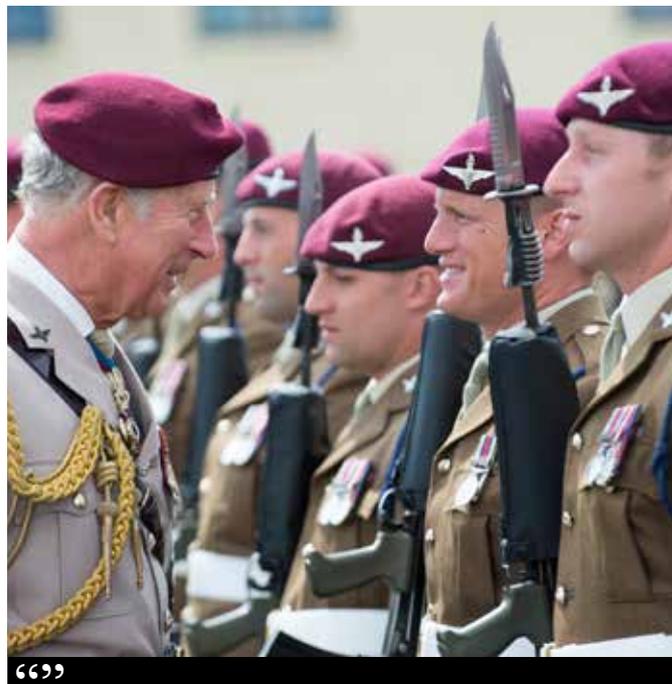
My second action point is that the Army has immense reserves of knowledge and expertise in the leadership of young people – particularly those who have got themselves on the wrong side of the tracks. It was the hidden value of the Service leaders who believed in those young people more than they believed in themselves, who focused their future and, having coached them to confidence, got them to want to believe that they could be of service to others. Now the Armed Forces have spin-off programmes which do great work – Skillsforce is a great favourite of mine, and team leaders go to the Prince's Trust. One of these days we will get the partnership we should have with National Citizen Service, but I fear it is not to scale nor reach. I am worried that we are going backwards in bringing the Service leadership skills into the most deprived communities to focus on those most in need – or am I wrong and I just haven't come across them?

We are inching slowly towards rolling out the Cadet Forces in schools – aiming only for 500 schools over nearly seven years. I hope that we will take a community footprint in the Government's Opportunity Areas (which include Stoke, Blackpool, Bradford and Oldham) and see what impact Service leadership is having, how many high-quality apprenticeships we have in place, how many companies signed up to the Covenant, how many reservists are in Carillion or BT who could be running more flexible cadet force activity and what part the Services are playing in shaping the skills and life chances of young people.

The third reason is my commitment to the Prince of Wales's Step Up To Serve campaign, which aims to achieve 60 per cent of all young people between the ages of ten and 20 involved in practical action in the service of others by 2020. I want to encourage the Army to be more overt about identifying and valuing those young people who are of service to others, measuring their impact on communities and straining every nerve to spread the message of the importance of young people's leadership in serving others in communities.

Events such as the Youth United Awards at Buckingham Palace give great opportunities to celebrate youth social action across the country and progress is being made towards that ambitious goal – but we need more focused effort! The campaign's annual survey in 2015 shows that 45 per cent of middle-class girls are involved in their community compared to only 29 per cent of working-class boys. By 2016, however, through concentrating effort on 666 of the most vital secondary schools in the poorest communities, the score on those doors has now reached 39 per cent of boys involved.

Critical to the achievement of the Step Up To Serve goal are stretching and ambitious targets for the growth of Air Cadets, Cadet Forces and Sea Scouts. The Police Cadets have already achieved their campaign goal in two years and now number 10,000 cadets. In London, an impressive 54 per cent of police cadets are from black and minority ethnic backgrounds.



### The Prince of Wales is a passionate believer in the importance of the leadership contribution of the Services

I hope we can get more cut through by the Army in this rather complicated structure of community CCF and school Cadet Forces. Teams, discipline and a journey of structured activity are all front and centre of what the Army has to offer young people. Increasingly, impact evidence is taking the contribution of uniformed organisations to character and attainment more seriously and the Army must not hide its light under a bushel. It needs to play a leading role in garnering and promoting the evidence. The Education Endowment Foundation, led by Kevan Collins, is testing the thesis that structured uniformed programmes can raise educational achievement and build greater social and emotional skills. Impact evidence is developing through the work of Professor Simon Denny of the University of Northampton showing that people who are cadets are more likely to achieve life's goals.

My final action point is the need for the Army to promote much more strongly the double benefit of what it does with those it influences and employs. We need to see not just the benefit to the individual of being involved, but the benefit to the wider community of the example, the training and the experience of serving others. Few other organisations take in 15,000 people each year and send out circa 15,000 each year to contribute to society in such a range of amazing ways, all underpinned by such strong values.

Last year I had the privilege of judging the World War 1 Memorial Awards and met three young marines who had yomped 650 miles over 23 days from Grimsby to the Somme to plant 19,240 Remembrance crosses to honour the British soldiers who were killed on the first day of battle. Their determination and selfless leadership were examples of the very best that young people could be and made me even more determined to promote more powerfully, through Step Up To Serve, the values and contribution of the Services to us all.

# CADETS AS A FORCE FOR SOCIAL MOBILITY

*Words: Professor Simon Denny*

The British Army, as a meritocratic system where position and power are gained largely according to merit, can claim to be one of the most effective enablers of social mobility in the UK. The system is not perfect, but the ability of the lowest recruit to rise to the highest rank is well documented. Less well known, perhaps, is the effect the Army Cadet Force (ACF) has on social mobility. A research team from the University of Northampton has been commissioned by the MOD and CVQO to investigate and report on the social benefits resulting from the annual expenditure on Cadet Forces. The initial findings (based on more than 130 interviews and 828 completed questionnaires) provide clear evidence that the ACF is enabling both cadets and adult volunteers to achieve their potential, based on their merit and abilities.

An excellent example of how cadet detachments support disadvantaged young people (defined as those receiving Free School Meals<sup>3</sup> (FSM), improving their social mobility, is provided by Greater Manchester ACF (GMACF). Within the GMACF nearly 30 per cent of cadets are eligible for FSM<sup>4</sup>, which Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs) state is indicative of wider social problems. Within one school case study in the Greater Manchester area, data demonstrates that participation in cadets by pupils that were receiving FSM, and had often been excluded from school, led to a four per cent rise in attendance, equivalent to nearly eight days per academic year per pupil (19 days average absence reduced to 11 days). This pilot was run with a sample of 35 cadets<sup>5</sup>, which therefore means that it can be estimated that a total of nearly 280 days of absence were avoided due to involvement with the cadets.

Reducing the absence rates of pupils offers significant financial savings to society, as well as increasing the ability of youngsters to realise their potential. The cost of truancy to

<sup>3</sup>Being eligible for Free School Meals is widely accepted as a measure of disadvantage.

<sup>4</sup>GMACF cadets are more than twice as likely to be FSM than the national average for children at secondary school, which is 13.2 per cent.

<sup>5</sup>The results of this survey are statistically significant.

society is calculated at £12.06 billion in total costs, with an estimated 13.3 million days of truancy per year. This equates to an average cost of nearly £903 per truancy day to society as a whole (including lifetime lost earnings and the costs of persistent disadvantage), whilst individual persistent truants are estimated to cost schools £970 per year in the direct costs of dealing with truancy. Furthermore, GMACF identified that following engagement with cadets, pupils average behavioural point scores halved from 45.9 to 24.9<sup>6</sup>. This not only has implications for the quality of the learning environment of all pupils, but also for reductions in exclusions.

Indeed, 29 per cent of exclusions are for persistent disruptive behaviour (DfE, June 2012) and FSM pupils are four times more likely to be excluded from school than non-FSM pupils. Given that the average school disciplinary exclusion costs society nearly £64,000 (whole-life costs) this is a significant problem in education and one that engagement in cadets seems to reduce. The GMACF case study provides new evidence that disadvantaged and disruptive children that join the ACF start to attend school more often, and behave better when they are there. These outcomes increase their chances of gaining qualifications and becoming employed. Put simply, the GMACF is changing the lives of many children for the better.

Interestingly, the impact of the ACF on social mobility is not confined to young people. GMACF has systematically used CVQO courses to develop the careers of some of its adult instructors, often those that greatly benefited from their time as a cadet. A teacher interviewed in Greater Manchester provided a particularly good example of social mobility in action. The individual had a disadvantaged childhood and was at risk of exclusion when he was at school. Cadets ‘turned him round’ and convinced him he could succeed. He became a CFAV, then a newly-qualified teacher through doing CVQO courses. He is now a fully-trained teacher earning more than £32,000 p.a. He is also a CFAV with the rank of captain. Both the individual and his GMACF senior officers claim his career would not have been possible without cadets and CVQO. Moreover, the individual is now running an exclusion unit in a secondary school in a very deprived area, taking excluded children from many schools. His deputy head teacher describes him as “the teacher of last resort in the area” and claims that: “Young graduate teachers could not do what he does as they are not experienced at working with vulnerable children. CFAVs, on the other hand, are very experienced at working with children who have behavioural issues and get excluded. As teachers they know how to work with vulnerable children. The targeted curriculum the exclusion unit runs, and the way the individual runs it, provides the only hope of success for the children in the area that have been labelled as failures.” GMACF has examples of five CFAVs that have used CVQO qualifications in order to become teachers.

The GMACF case study provides robust evidence that the ACF can be a tremendous force for social mobility. This contribution of the British Army to the UK’s society and prosperity should not be under-estimated.

<sup>6</sup>Higher behavioural scores = worse behaviour in school.

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*Cadets has given me a lot more discipline in school. I used to mess about at the start and then since coming here I've learned you can't mess about, that's not the way to do stuff now. And they're like, 'oh you've changed a lot since Year 7, you've progressed so much'. And I tell them I'm in the Cadets and they say 'that's really good'... And I try asking other people to join as well because if I've improved they can do the same – **Cadet X***

# THE ARMY'S CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY TO NATIONAL YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Does the Army have a national corporate social responsibility (CSR) to play a part in the Government's wider youth engagement strategy? In my view, unequivocally yes.

Outside those engaged in it, is the wider Army aware of this responsibility? I suspect not. Need they know? Maybe not. Before the Army worries about where my thinking is heading, I am not about to advocate this becoming a new formal task for the Army; instead, I want to stir some philosophical thinking in the minds of senior officers and officials pondering the place of the Army in UK society, because I do advocate that the Army should do more by doing what it can when it can on an informal un-programmed basis.

I ask the question because I observed an internal tension about funding cadets when I was Colonel Cadets in Army HQ from 2008 to 2013. On the one hand there were those who I would describe as enlightened and broad-minded who, in addition to considering that cadets were a legitimate Defence task, also saw that the Army should contribute to wider cross-government youth engagement programmes when Army time, personnel and resources allowed it, without it becoming a formal programme. On the other hand there were those who understood that point, but nevertheless argued that Parliament provided funds for Defence and therefore that it was illogical, not least in tough financial times, to fund the Army's Cadet Forces. Thankfully common sense prevailed and cadets are now a formal Defence task<sup>7</sup>. Not only are cadets listed, but so too is education outreach. So what? This is a responsibility which Defence and the Army are required to deliver as it is now a statutory task and the flexibility to wriggle out of it is reduced.

GOC RC's think-piece includes the sentence "what many people are less familiar with is the by-product of what the Army does in the contribution to the wider economy, developing people and actively encouraging social mobility" and then articulates how the Army's Cadet Forces play a key part in national youth development. I believe there is a wider contribution than that and it is one that I suggest, philosophically, senior officers and officials in the Army should understand and embrace.

Why should the Army, whose core business is to defend the nation, become involved in wider national youth engagement? First let us consider the state of British youth. Many of our young people are being brought up in extremely challenging conditions and circumstances and, if you are a pessimist you might conclude that British youth is in a downwards spiral. All sorts of measurements could be quoted: the increasing prevalence of single-parent families, typically without a male role model; ill-discipline in classrooms and violence towards teachers, resulting in poor educational engagement; obesity; under-aged pregnancies; drink and drug problems; gang and knife crime; radicalisation and so on. By doing more for wider youth engagement the Army and UK society will benefit



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If you are a pessimist you might conclude that British youth is in a downwards spiral. All sorts of measurements could be quoted: ill-discipline in classrooms; obesity; under-aged pregnancies; drink and drug problems; gang and knife crime; radicalisation and so on

as, by supporting cross-government initiatives, it will lead to improvements in educational attainment, a better workforce, a healthier nation and a reduced burden on the justice system. By playing a full role the Army's reputation will benefit, which will help in times when the Army's profile is low, and direct engagement should prove to be a recruiting attractor.

I am far from suggesting that the Army should put its arm into the national youth engagement mangle to sort this out; it must remain focused on its core role. Indeed, it is the job of other government departments to tackle these problems, and supporting them are many youth engagement groups, clubs and charities that play an important role, nationally and regionally. Defence and the Army should, however, support them by looking to play a wider part than just that listed in the Departmental Plan (cadets and education outreach). This should be on an informal un-programmed basis, when time, resources and personnel allow it. It is easy for me to state this, but I recognise that it will be less easy to spot the time and place, plus it is not simple to launch the Army into the youth engagement arena because it has its own regulations for working with young people. Nevertheless we must be open minded to the 'art of the possible'. I specify 'youth engagement regulations' because the places and activities must be carefully thought through. In the right time and place it is, however, worth it because it will have a powerful beneficial effect on the young people it touches; Army personnel have highly-regarded skills in developing values and standards in young people, and it should also be enormously satisfying for the Service personnel involved in it. As importantly, it will help maintain a link between the Army and UK society at a time when the Regular Army's footprint is limited to a smaller number of concentrated garrisons.

<sup>7</sup>Look at the MoD's Single departmental plan: 2015 to 2020, listed under Part 3: Promote our Prosperity. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mod-single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020/single-departmental-plan-2015-to-2020#contents>)

# THE CONTRIBUTION OF ARMY WHOLE LIFE DEVELOPMENT TO THE UK PROSPERITY AGENDA

Training for certainty and educating for uncertainty runs through the core of the Army's approach to developing its people. This is delivered through something called 'Whole Life Development', which means the totality of all personal and professional development opportunities in a linked framework of 'attract, recruit, train, develop, retain, transition'.

There are several tangible elements of this. As an organisation the Army delivers a lot of internal training – it has to as it recruits in at the bottom of a hierarchical structure and has to grow its future leaders and senior managers from the bottom up. However, internal Army training and qualifications are not widely recognised outside, so it can be difficult to establish the value of that training or benchmark against external standards without what is called 'accreditation' or mapping of Army training against external qualifications. Through the Army Skills Offer, the Service has not just mapped all its training – whether that is technical trade training, leadership and management training or coaching – but has made sure that at each level a qualification is available alongside this training. In many cases these qualifications are funded centrally by the organisation, so that each time a soldier goes on an Army training course he or she can gain civilian qualifications at the same time. Sometimes, those qualifications match exactly to military training, but sometimes there is additional work required which soldiers complete in their own time to attain the civilian certificate. The idea behind providing some centralised funding for this is to encourage soldiers to start thinking early about the need to develop a portfolio of qualifications that will set them up long term, ultimately contributing to their success in transitioning from the Army back into the civilian world. Getting in the learning habit is the precursor to establishing a momentum and culture of continuing professional development driven by the individual with a desire to maintain and improve his or her knowledge, something that is somewhat lacking in Army culture currently. In addition to some centralised funding through the Army Skills Offer, individuals may also be eligible for both Standard Learning Credits (£175 per year to fund small-scale learning opportunities) and Enhanced Learning Credits (up to £2,000 for three claims to support higher-level learning).

Apprenticeships allow the Army to give an enhanced offer as part of this skills framework approach. The Army provides an extensive range of apprenticeships across all employment groups – from engineering to horse care to telecommunications; from cookery to policing to public services. Apprenticeships are currently offered at Level 2 and Level 3 with some specialist Level 4 programmes (such as for Intelligence Corps soldiers) in place as well. Plans to offer apprenticeship progression routes to higher levels are underway.

The MoD, and therefore Army, is also a member of the five-per-cent club. Fully backed by government, the Confederation of British Industry and employer groups, the club is made of employers who have pledged to ensure that more than five per cent of their respective workforces are on apprenticeship or graduate training programmes. The Army far exceeds this baseline with up to 15,500 soldiers on programme at any one time, making it one of the largest apprentice employers in the country; in fact, the Army is just about to hit its 100,000 apprentice start since the scheme started in 2004 – a significant contribution to the UK skills economy!

At the moment, the bulk of Army apprenticeships start in the initial trade training schools for soldiers, run as a part-contracted system with a number of training partners that deliver some of the wider elements of the apprenticeship such as functional skills and assessments. The soldiers, having started the apprenticeships on their trade training courses, then complete them within their first appointment in the Army where they can demonstrate on-the-job experience and competence. The functional skills qualifications they gain as part of their apprenticeships also qualify the soldiers for subsequent promotion.



“The Army provides an extensive range of apprenticeships across all employment groups – from engineering to horse care to telecommunications; from cookery to policing to public services

The Army offers 43 separate apprenticeship programmes and has consistently high achievement rates of around 80 per cent, well above the national average. Some may say this is down to the fact that soldiers are a captive audience, but it may just be the effective way that apprenticeships have been so successfully embedded into core training. Either way, the success rate is something for the Army to be proud of given the educational start point of many of its recruits. Around 95 per cent of Army recruits join an apprenticeship programme. A very small number of trades do not have an apprenticeship, either because no apprenticeship currently exists in the UK or because the elements required simply cannot be achieved through Army training and role experience. For these individuals, the Army will seek to provide other accreditation opportunities;

obviously with the new employer standards coming on-line, the Army will look to trailblazer groups to establish a suitable apprenticeship route for all.

The Army uses its apprenticeship programme in a different way to most companies. For a start, it cannot offer a standalone apprenticeship position – first and foremost the Army recruits soldiers and then enrolls them on an apprenticeship. It would be disingenuous to pretend that there are trade apprenticeships that do not involve soldiering. This is an important differential. It means that the Army is able to deliver a really widespread apprenticeships programme. As the programme is embedded and fully integrated into trade

training, it is a truly inclusive offer. The new opportunities for higher and degree apprenticeships may provide the possibility of differentiated models later in an individual's career, with some soldiers going on to Level 5, 6 or above depending on aptitude, but these programmes are still to be developed now that some of the restrictive barriers that prevented them have been removed under apprenticeship reform.

So what are the critical success factors that allow the Army to be so successful in its delivery of apprenticeships?

● **Whole organisation approach.** By taking a whole organisation approach to apprenticeships, they have become embedded in the organisational culture and intrinsically linked to the development expectations of both soldiers and the officers who command them.

● **Governance.** At the top level there is senior leadership commitment to success. A devolved governance structure sees central direction and contracting provided by Individual Development Branch; each corps colonel is delegated with the responsibility to own their trade scheme and this allows interfaces to occur at the most appropriate level, with a contract designated officer (DO) nominated for each cap badge or trade area. Individual Development Branch deals with the Department of Education and the Education & Skills Funding Agency and runs the training provider contracts. These contracts are then managed at the lowest level, with contracted business support services providing an enabling function through MIS and a support network of quality mentors; and each DO held to account for completion rates and quality standards by a regular battle rhythm of management boards. This allows the Army to monitor performance at the most appropriate contract interface point whilst maintaining a high level of oversight across all programmes.

● **A strong culture of training and development.** The Army recruits at the lowest rank, grows its own and promotes from within. By necessity it has developed a strong culture of training and development. This ensures that soldiers have the skills for their immediate job, are prepared to take advantage of career and training opportunities and progress up the promotion ladder. At the same time, commanders and trainers actively promote high expectations of success, act as positive role models and provide on-going support and encouragement for their troops. This generates a motivating environment where exploiting potential and making the best of yourself are part of the organisational DNA.

● **Embedded functional skills.** The ability to deliver functional skills across the board through contracted provision within the apprenticeship underpins trainability in initial trade training, gives soldiers confidence and allows them to achieve early the standards required for later promotion.

2017 has been a year of considerable change in the way in which apprenticeships are delivered. The introduction of the apprenticeship levy in April has significantly changed the way the Army Apprenticeship Programme is funded, with 0.5 per cent of the Army's payroll being taken into the levy pot and the challenge now is to recover that, and more. There has also been the move from complex frameworks to developing short, concise, employer-led standards. For the Army, the



*Career climb: The author suggests one of the British Army's strengths is its strong culture of training and development – an attribute honed by a long history of promoting soldiers from the bottom of the promotion ladder to the top. © Crown Copyright*

first imperative is to ensure that all trade groups have an apprenticeship standard to move to as the frameworks are switched off by Government.

An exciting development offered by the apprenticeship reforms is the potential expansion of the programme to include higher and degree apprenticeships. The first of these, which will offer not just a degree but also professional recognition as a chartered manager, will be delivered from January 2018 and development work is already in progress to link this to the Command Leadership and Management training already delivered to senior NCOs and warrant officers. This initial programme will test the co-investment option presented within the levy and deliver up-skilling for the existing workforce. For the officer cohort, the option of a degree apprenticeship could be really attractive, particularly in this time of high university fees and increasing student debt. If funding can be secured through a co-investment route linked to an apprenticeship it may mean an easy move from the current higher education pathway degree offer linked to officer initial training and give the Army a significant competitive advantage in the school-leaver recruitment market. More work needs to be done here, but the obvious work-based learning element is something the Army really values and the attractiveness of this pathway is that it ties closely to the concept of through-life development that lies at the heart of maximising the Army's talent.

# ARE WE AS GOOD AS WE THINK WE ARE? RECOGNISING OUR OWN TALENTS

It was extremely heart-warming to hear senior officers and business leaders reflect so positively on the impact that the Army and its people have on society and indeed the Army has on its own people. A resounding message from RC's workshop on the Army's contribution to UK society and prosperity was that we should do more to help businesses to understand the skills that our Service leavers bring into the workplace following their resettlement. In addition, we heard the hierarchy lauding the intellectual advances that a few noteworthy stars had made during their careers – joining with no qualifications but leaving having ascended the ranks or achieved high-level academic qualifications.

However, two things should concern us as an organisation after this event. Firstly, that many of our people do not intrinsically understand the capabilities that they have developed during their service to their country well enough. Many are unable to articulate these skills clearly and convincingly to a prospective employer to counter the widely-held prejudice that appears to prevail in many facets of media coverage of Service leavers that former members of the military are 'mad, sad or bad'. Secondly, that we champion our stars of social and academic mobility readily to external audiences at events such as this or externally-run awards that champion learning such as the Apprenticeship Awards or the Adult Learners' Week Awards, yet shy away from similar pomp and circumstance internally.

Addressing the lack of self-awareness, or indeed self-belief, requires us to focus more carefully on how we manage our people's development. The Army's high-level rhetoric of maximising our people's talent rarely translates down to lower levels and it is contended that this is not followed through routinely at an individual level where leaders guide and mentor their people. It is a sad indictment that many people avoid education at all costs despite most of it being free at point of delivery or heavily subsidised. At scale, the CLM Part 3 backlog or the fact that annual learning credit uptake remains constant at between 8-10 per cent of Army personnel every year is evidence of this, while stories abound to showcase the lack of priority given to education such as a CO withdrawing a soldier from a mandatory education course required for him to filter for promotion in order for him to compete in a brigade sniper competition.

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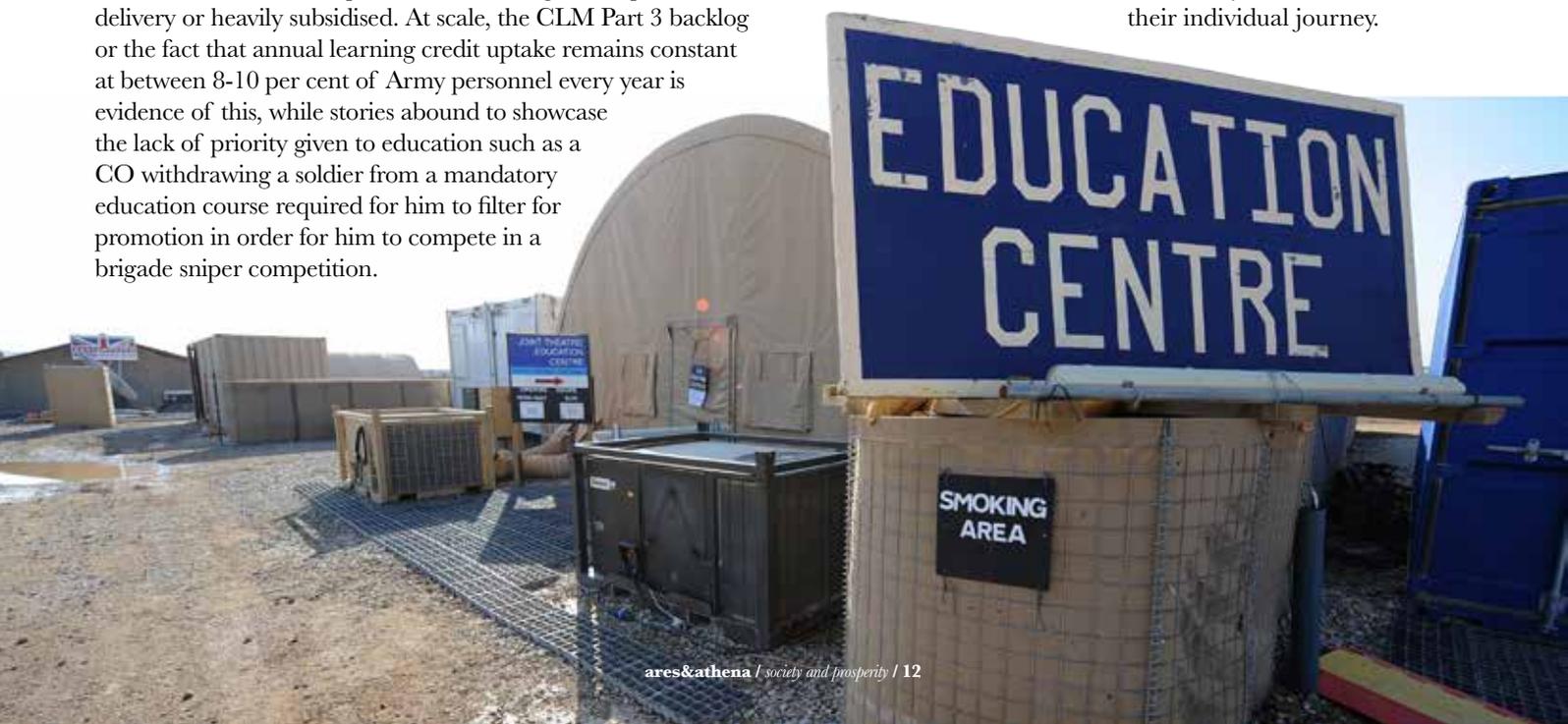
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Our best leaders will focus on their people's personal and professional development as a routine part of their leadership role; it will be enshrined in their command philosophy, annual direction and in their orders to their subordinates. They will make it a key part of the annual appraisal process. Grounded in honest self-analysis of an individual's knowledge, skills and experience development and enabled by a thorough and realistic personal and professional development plan, they will ensure that everyone discusses their development planning and progress at the beginning, mid-year and end-of-year points at the very least.

If we make focusing on individual development part of all our leaders' core activities, the evolution to it being natural to celebrate such achievement will hopefully come naturally. Commander Home Command's Education Champion of the Year award is a good start but initial reticence to participate in the awards process illustrates the level of importance placed on such schemes.

Whilst some believe that investing in people too much is a risk as it will encourage them to seek alternative employment, the Army thrives on taking measured risk. We have the leaders with the skills to develop and retain people – they just need to be pointed in the right direction. The more we deliver against the individual development aspect of 'the offer', the greater the chance of enhancing retention and perhaps increasing recruitment due to the strength of the offer and our willingness to deliver on its promises.

To paraphrase Sir Richard Branson: "Train people so they can leave, treat them well enough so they don't want to, by helping them understand the skills they have developed and the investment that has been made in them." So, let's really maximise everyone's talents and reap the rewards – but let's make sure that they all understand their individual journey.



# ARMY SKILLS AND TRAINING: ADDING VALUE TO BUSINESS

The workshop raised the importance of highlighting the ‘soft skills’ that the Armed Forces gain through service. It is easy to look at veterans and Service leavers that have gained accredited qualifications, as engineers, logisticians or project managers; however, there is not enough emphasis on the invaluable soft skills that any military service, be it three, 13 or 23 years, develops. The values and behaviours that being a soldier develops cannot be disregarded, and are ingrained in the majority of veterans for the rest of their lives – professional and personal. Quantifying these, and demonstrating them to potential employers, clients and customers, is a challenge. It is one thing that the Army itself can support through helping its personnel to be able to articulate their unique skill sets developed throughout their training and career.

An area upon which we are building tangible evidence is the behaviours, attributes, skills and knowledge of high-impact entrepreneurs and the common link that these attributes in particular have with those accredited to the Armed Forces.

## Social mobility

One of the topics that struck a particular chord for me was the discussion around social mobility in the Forces. The fact that an individual from a deprived background can, for example, join an Infantry regiment as private and over their service rise through the ranks based on merit to senior non-commissioned or commissioned roles is an invaluable trait of the British Army.

Through their service, an individual’s social standing based on their upbringing is stripped away, they experience a different level of responsibility and respect and are held in high regard within the community. However, how do we support people transitioning out of the military to adjust to holding this different social standing in the civilian world they left so long ago, especially if they return to the local community from which they originated?

How can we support them to hold their own among civilians with a lack of understanding of the achievements and service that have led to this elevated position? Furthermore, how can we ensure that individuals in this position continue to drive forward and be aspirational in their careers and lives outside of the military construct once they have left? My main point here is that, like me, many Service people experience a difficult upbringing. However I was fortunate enough to break through glass ceilings to achieve more than perhaps others in my situation might have done. So how do we support this new sense of achievement from transitioning Service people into the civilian world and create better social mobility?

The stats mentioned at the event were new to me and there may already be considerations. I think this is such a great thing that the Army can facilitate and thus create more traction to join the Armed Forces.



There is perhaps a detachment between the Armed Forces and the civilian world, and it is obvious that this creates a bubble which in turn results in a lack of understanding, insights and emotional engagement beyond patriotism

## Communications

As a civilian, there is perhaps a detachment between the Armed Forces and the civilian world, and it is obvious that this creates a bubble which in turn results in a lack of understanding, insights and emotional engagement beyond patriotism. This is, of course, required in some elements of the Armed Forces due to confidentiality, security and secrecy however this is to the detriment of community inclusion and I believe hinders soldiers of any rank when they re-enter the civilian world. It is not just the skills they have acquired that are misunderstood, but also the world in which they have resided for often a large proportion of their adult life.

Reflecting upon the discussion, and coming from a sales and marketing standpoint, I feel that this missing link is an effective communications strategy. To increase public understanding of the Armed Forces beyond fighting in conflicts and stereotypical characteristics of a ‘soldier’, this strategy must address the military both in and out of service, thereby breaking down barriers between the military and commercial world at its roots, i.e. accepted characteristics of the military as a lifestyle and as a skill set. This is vital as it also includes the families of those serving and an understanding of living behind the wire but essentially working outside of it.

# THE VALUE OF SERVICE LEAVERS: IS THE ARMY'S VALUE TO BUSINESS A ONE-WAY STREET OR A WIN-WIN PARTNERSHIP?

*Words: Fiona Turner – Head of Consumer Affairs  
/Vice-chair of the RBS Armed Forces Network*

The conversation between business and the Army tends to revolve around veterans; how can we support them into new employment and transfer the skills they bring into a business setting? But the reality is we should be talking about so much more. A strong partnership between business and the Army creates so many opportunities, not just for veterans, but for wider societal good. In essence, it creates a win-win partnership for both.

A business that supports the Army understands the benefits of value-based leadership and the synergies we share, as well as the opportunities this brings. At RBS, our brands – Holt's Military Banking, NatWest and Royal Bank of Scotland – have a unique and enduring relationship with the Armed Forces, which pre-dates the Battle of Waterloo. This relationship has for centuries, quite rightly, been focused on serving the military community well. But over time our relationship has evolved. While banking continues to be the cornerstone of what we do, there are now many more touch points and greater opportunities to create shared value.

RBS signed the Armed Forces Covenant on the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. We made commitments which centred around three pillars: our colleagues; our customers; and communities. When we signed the Covenant in 2016, our chief HR officer said: "As a bank we have a clear system of leadership and we place significant value on the role that veterans can play in shaping our organisation. Their work ethic, skill set and capability to work under pressure are highly prized in an organisation that is going through significant change."

We are incredibly proud of our Gold Award for our commitment to the Armed Forces, and of the veterans and Reservists we employ within our business. They are talented, skilled individuals who contribute positively to our business and fly the Forces flag, creating a real sense of family within RBS. By investing in and supporting

these individuals, we are able to deliver on our customer and community commitments. But we don't just support and recognise these individuals within the business – we have worked hard to change our business too; to embed those values that our Reservists and veterans know from the military into our business and the way we operate.

## Leadership

RBS has been transformed since 2008, changing from the 'poster child' of banking greed and financial instability to a UK-focused, customer-obsessed bank which is looking to the future. It has not been an easy road but we have made significant progress by changing the culture and putting the customer at the centre of everything we do. We have also ceased operations in 26 countries and reduced our balance sheet by 75 per cent – making us smaller, safer and stronger. None of this could have been achieved without a common purpose, a common set of values, strong leadership and talented colleagues. Changing the culture of any organisation, particularly one as large as RBS, was never going to be easy but having a common framework was a critical first step. The RBS values are the bedrock of the bank and it is clear that there is positive alignment with the values of the British Army.

Behaviour also plays a key role in shaping our culture, and our leadership model sets very clear expectations of what is required. Again there is commonality between the leadership skills we need and those that the Army has been embedding for more than 100 years. The underlying behaviours of our Focus on Customer and Build Trust Standards align well with the Army's Leadership Principles of 'lead by example' and 'apply reward and discipline' as they are focused on building trust and credibility through walking the walk not just talking the talk. Similarly, the behaviours associated with 'act with integrity' and 'make sound decisions' align with leading by example and encourage thinking. These behaviours are especially important as we need individuals that are not afraid to challenge 'group think' and, when required, are prepared to call out the 'bad news' to senior leaders. This cultural alignment benefits the bank in two ways: firstly, it enables us to attract talented individuals that have had these values drilled into them from the first day of their military careers; secondly, successful veterans often act as role models for the standard we expect in a bank that aspires to being the



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number one for customer service, trust and advocacy.

### How does it translate?

Our shared values are clear. But in order to really understand the win-win opportunities for RBS and Veterans, we have leveraged our own RBS Armed Forces Network to understand more about the skill-sets, roles and seniority that we benefit from in our partnership with the military. We asked our network what skills they thought veterans offered RBS. The words most frequently used in responses do not contain any surprises. The top five were:

- **People-focused: caring about member of the team and helping them to achieve their potential;**

- *Service Excellence:* as one of team put it “striving to ‘be the best’ whilst consistently helping others that are lagging behind”;

- **Leadership: within RBS we have great leaders at the top of our organisation and our leadership programme is up-skilling our middle managers – but our job is not yet done;**

- *Team work:* overcoming the complex challenges we have faced would be impossible without teamwork;

- **Clear communication: the ability to engage with all stakeholders no matter what their grade.**

Combining these skills with the ability to remain calm in a crisis enables our veterans to thrive in a commercially-challenging environment. This is perfectly encapsulated in the following quote: “No matter what task I’m given, it will never be as hard as basic training therefore anything can be achieved.”

These findings align with the Deloitte Report<sup>8</sup> which states that 90 per cent of pro-veteran organisations find their veterans perform well across a range of areas including communication, planning, inspiring others, team working and solving problems. The environment, location, roles, competition and mission may be different to those experienced in the Armed Forces, but many of the skills needed are the same.

Of the veterans we surveyed, we found that 79 per cent were managers or senior managers (equivalent to a major or colonel ranking in the Army), but what is interesting is the individuals undertaking managerial roles have previously held a range of ranks from private through to colonel and the split was 50/50 other ranks and officers. This demonstrates the value that the bank places on the individuals’ abilities and experience and many noted that once in-role, their responsibilities increased or they achieved promotion. As an example, an ex-lance corporal secured a promotion ahead of 72 other people to become a corporate banking manager: again, this supports Deloitte’s findings that 53 per cent of employers say veterans tend to be promoted more quickly than their workforce in general.

We found 32 per cent of our respondents were employed in customer-facing roles, many of which were regulated (e.g. mortgage advisers and wealth managers). This shows an aptitude to be trained and follow standard operating procedures. We found most veterans though in less surprising



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roles, which play to the planning, communication and ‘risk assessment’ skills that we know to be particular strengths. Key clusters are found in:

- **Business and technology change management**
- Risk, audit and legal
- **Fraud and security**
- Analytics

The key message here is that the skills the military has helped to develop are transferable into a wide variety of roles.

We know one of the key challenges facing Service leavers is getting a foot through the door. In my experience, the Armed Forces and the Career Transition Partnership need to provide greater pre-interview support: CVs need to be less modest; skills and experience need to be translated in to language that a hiring manager can relate to; and veterans need to be prepared for competency-based interviews.

The focus of my research has been the RBS veterans, but it should not be forgotten that these skills are also evident in our Reserves and their military training provides another layer of experience which they utilise to the benefit of the bank and their own career development.

### Going above and beyond the ‘call of duty’

The RBS Armed Forces Network together with our Armed Forces Steering Group are instrumental in ensuring the bank delivers on the customer and community commitments of the RBS Armed Forces Covenant. By delivering over and above the day job, we have had a positive impact on customers, colleagues and society. Examples include:

- **Supporting SMEs, the life blood of the UK economy, through successful partnerships with charities such as XForces and ESpark;**
- Supporting colleagues across the bank through mentoring and sharing experiences, for example co-hosting a webinar on PTSD with Combat Stress and the RBS Disability Network;
- **Acting as ambassadors for the bank at high-profile events e.g. the MoD/FCO Reserves Reception and a Canadian Embassy charity event;**
- Delivering a pan-bank Remembrance programme involving

<sup>8</sup> Veterans Work – Recognising the potential of ex-Service personnel, Deloitte (Nov 2016).



Another area which could be explored is the social issue of low financial literacy levels. Holt's Military Bank has provided training to circa 50,000 phase one recruits since 2002, but this expertise could be leveraged to a greater extent

300 local branch services and two flagship events, attended by three members of the Bank Executive Committee and more than 1,000 staff.

The Remembrance event was very moving and colleagues talked of the pride that they had in our organisation and the leadership team for honouring our fallen in such a poignant way. Numerous messages were posted on our internal messaging boards which translates into increased engagement scores – a key metric for any large organisation. The following quote, from RBS' chief auditor, articulates the impact achieved: "In all my corporate life I have never experienced anything like that. Thank you to the network for arranging the service."

The activities we undertake via RBS Armed Forces Network mean that the profile of our Reservists and veterans remains high in the bank. But it also means that we want to hold ourselves to the highest standards in engaging, supporting and partnering with the Armed Forces.

At an individual level there is a need for Service leavers to be better equipped to secure an interview and get a foot in the door. From the Armed Forces, this requires more focus on translating their experience into 'civvy speak', both through development of an impactful CV and preparation for competency-based interviews.

RBS we also have a role to play in this and we will continue to hold career development days to identify top talent and provide support to Service leavers. The skills and training Service leavers have in abundance provide a fantastic foundation for achieving in the commercial world. It is for businesses such as the Gold Award recipients and the Armed Forces together to act as ambassadors to promote the

benefits of recruiting Service leavers to a wider audience, make the transition process seamless and then support them to let them shine.

#### **Win-win partnerships which create shared value**

The recruitment of veterans is an important priority for the Armed Forces and UK Plc, but as previously stated we should be talking about so much more. A strong partnership between business and the Army creates so many opportunities for societal good, creating a win-win for all parties. For example, the External Professional Placements Programme, which recently seconded Maj Gen Bob Bruce in to the RBS Risk Department, has led to the identification of a number of business improvements for both organisations and future secondments are now being considered.

Another area which could be explored is the social issue of low financial literacy levels. Holt's Military Bank has provided training to circa 50,000 phase one recruits since 2002, but this expertise could be leveraged to a greater extent. Army endorsement coupled with hard facts could open the door for the training to be rolled out to the Navy and the Royal Air Force. Similarly, the NatWest and Royal Bank of Scotland MoneySense Programme, which delivers on the National Curriculum requirements, could be leveraged to increase the financial capability of future generations of cadets at little or no cost.

I would therefore encourage the Army to develop a social impact report and identify a number of priority areas in which it wants to make a significant difference. Once identified, the business community can put one step forward to support the Army to achieve its aims and 'be the best'.

## A REGIONAL VIEWPOINT

As one of the Army's Regional Points of Command, we are heavily involved in engagement across the community, employers and youth. In my regional area we have a major station with three major units as well as a number of other single major unit locations.

One of the most obvious contributions that the Army makes is the contribution to the local economy. That is witnessed by the dismay expressed by the local communities after it was announced at the end of 2016 that two of our camps are to close, with the units moving elsewhere. Many soldiers have over the years bought properties and settled their families locally and thus are very much part of the communities across the whole of the region.

Another very clear contribution is the Army's youth organisations, the Army Cadet Force and Combined Cadet Force. No one who has witnessed these organisations at first hand can doubt for a minute the incredible opportunity that is being given to the young people who are members. Whilst the Army does gain some recruits through the cadets, on balance it's probably society that benefits the most.

The cadets are developed as young adults, sought after by employers and, it's generally accepted, become better citizens as a result. Alongside this and in partnership with the police and local schools, we conduct a number of week-long residential youth development courses for young people aged 14-16, identified by the police as close to going off the rails. The difference you can make in a week to attitude, self-confidence and self-esteem is marked, and the programme is recognised as being hugely successful.

Linked to the point above is something about the Army

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providing role models. Whenever we engage, sooner or later the issue of values, standards and leadership come up. All of our junior leaders have an innate understanding of that and are great at putting it across. I think the Army is recognised as being an honourable institution which has a leadership and values-based approach – it an organisation to which others aspire and it is seen as a valuable part of the fabric of our society. Whilst we could do better on our diversity agenda, the approach that we are following is the right one and it brings us into contact with many minority groups.

Where we do less well, I suspect, is in our inability to seize opportunity because there is so much wholesale change on-going, with the attendant uncertainty, all hampered by an unwieldy bureaucratic process with little (in peace time) delegated decision making. A really good example of this is a county council which is really keen to move ahead with an agenda that particularly relates to housing for Forces families and delivering locally some Phase 3 training at local colleges. The potential benefits for both sides are pretty clear, but we are currently very much in a holding pattern and will be until the basing plan is finalised.



# THE BRITISH ARMY'S CONTRIBUTION TO UK SOCIETY AND PROSPERITY

Are the Armed Forces a reflection of the society from which they draw or, due to their ethos, values and standards, a beacon around which society circles? And if they live on a pedestal, how can that disconnected and elevated position be used to contribute to society and its prosperity? Recent polls suggest that 65 per cent of society trusts the Armed Forces, only two per cent behind the most trusted organisation, the NHS (PWC, 2016). Whether a beacon or not, they are held in higher esteem than most other organisations, and so possess the ability to make a difference to – and in – society.

Perhaps the simplest and greatest impact the Armed Forces can make on society is by bringing financial prosperity to a region. In North Yorkshire and Humberside it is estimated that the Armed Forces bring a net financial impact of almost £600m per annum (SQW Consulting, 2016). For this reason, perhaps the national Armed Forces footprint could or should be adjusted to bring prosperity to deprived areas, in particular around post-industrial midland and northern towns and cities from where the majority of the British Army is drawn.

Aside from pure economics, the Armed Forces provide employment that offers skills, education and opportunities for advancement. This is relevant in all communities and whilst some consider the Armed Forces, in particular the Army, to be menial unskilled labour, some see the Army as, “blunt and tough to the point of inaccessibility.” (Home Command, 2017). Those working in civil engagement know that for many the Armed Forces are role models in society, sought after by all forms of social bodies and organisations for support, and to stamp their unique Armed Forces mark of excellence upon a cause or purpose. In simple terms, whether wanting to be part of the Armed Forces or not, people like to be aligned with them and gain their endorsement, but to maximise this opportunity to fertilise

the recruiting ground the Armed Forces must work harder to make themselves accessible and available.

The cadet movement is perhaps one of the most visible elements of the Armed Forces community, whether community cadets or CCF. It is they who are seen on the streets of populous areas in the evening and at weekends, and it is they who transition from looking scruffy and almost a figure of fun to becoming skilled, upstanding and confident members of society, occupying prestige appointments alongside their lord lieutenant and sought after by mayors and minor politicians.

Whilst the cadet movement cannot generate wealth in the way military bases can, it provides society with young people ready for the world of work, prepared to contribute to the generation of prosperity and to play their part as socially responsible members of society.

It is offered that community cadets and Combined Cadet Forces (CCFs) in state schools have a greater net impact on society than those CCFs in the independent education sector, due to the gap to be closed on the development journey undertaken by the youths and the resources available to enable that journey.

In conclusion, to many the UK's Armed Forces are a beacon, but they need to ensure that they present an accessible and achievable pinnacle if they are to optimise their contribution to society and its prosperity. By positioning the Armed Forces in areas of deprivation they can contribute significant wealth, employment and social development benefits to society, and, while there are insufficient regular and reserve forces to be everywhere, the cadet movement provides worthy ambassadors for the military and important generators of prosperity, if not immediate wealth, within society.

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Picture: Peter Russell, Somerset ACF ©Army Cadet Force



# SYNDICATE FINDINGS: YOUTH EDUCATION AND APPRENTICESHIPS

## Apprenticeships and life skills

The consensus was that the Army currently provides sufficient support and opportunities to further soldiers' prospects throughout their careers, commencing with the Army's apprenticeship scheme for its recruits and progressing with role-specific training. However, there is a perception that some soldiers do not always appreciate and recognise their worth. Therefore, during their transition to leave, the Army could do more to mentor them with regard their individual skill set and how this would benefit future employers. Whilst serving, they acquire a huge range of skills, qualifications and experience. They need to emphasise this fact to potential employers and show how their skills and experience could transfer into civilian employment.

Whilst it is accepted that the Army's website provides details of soldiers skills, employers often find it a challenge to understand the language used on former soldiers' CVs. They struggle to map those skills to the ones that they need. Therefore, the Army needs to encourage its soldiers to refrain from using military jargon in their CVs and instead tailor their words to those used in civilian employment.

Many soldiers (apart from their interview to join the Army) will have no experience in preparing for and undertaking an interview for employment. More work needs to be done in this area by providing guidance on opportunities available to them on leaving the Army.

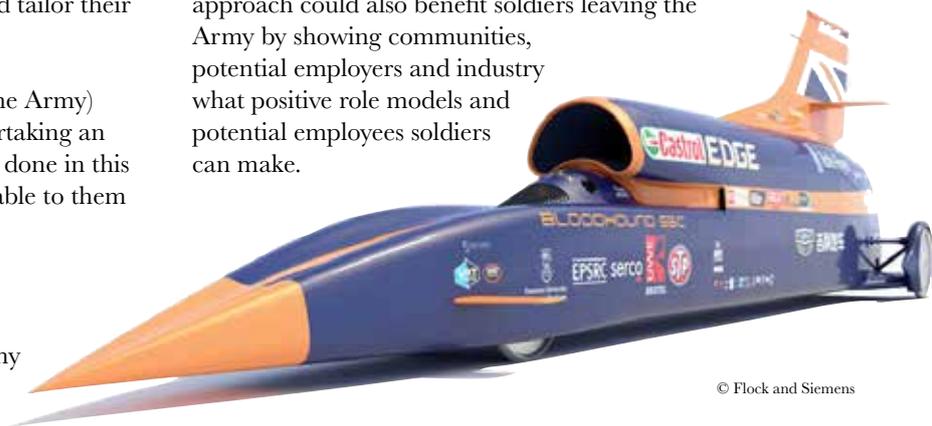
## Youth engagement

The discussions then moved onto whether the Army

should have a formal policy in building youth skills. Delegates felt that the Army's involvement in youth was appropriate and that it already fosters an excellent youth movement through its affiliated cadets, for which there is a formal youth policy.

The Army needs to understand that the reason the cadet movement is successful is because young people want to get involved. The Army needs to be more visible in its own communities by championing what it has to offer society, particularly in the provision of positive role models for young people to aspire to be. Current initiatives seem to work well, particularly projects such as the STEM initiative through the Army's Bloodhound project. The Army does not need a formal policy, but a strategic approach may be more helpful to ensure that activity continues when the budget is tight, so that there is continuity to that engagement.

Wider youth engagement may, however, have sensitivities – particularly around 'recruitment'. It is perfectly justifiable to raise the profile of the Services amongst its own community including young people, which will build bridges. This approach could also benefit soldiers leaving the Army by showing communities, potential employers and industry what positive role models and potential employees soldiers can make.



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# SYNDICATE FINDINGS: ADDING VALUE TO BUSINESS

In considering how the Army adds value to business, the group quickly sought to redefine the question<sup>9</sup> – how could the Army improve its relationship with business? How could it establish mutually-beneficial partnerships, where value-added was seen as a two-way process rather than a fixed offer? A free-ranging discussion covered the institutional perspective – how the Army brand and (non-military) outputs relate to commerce – before, migrating to the micro level, considering the benefits that businesses gain from employing veterans and reservists. The group then looked at sharing best practice – with other public bodies (such as the National Health Service) and with those in the private sector (from small business to corporate giants).

The values and standards of the Army<sup>10</sup> are reflective, if

<sup>9</sup>The group was predominantly civilian (75 per cent non-military), though many had prior service, family connections or an existing business relationship with the Armed Forces.

not wholly aligned, with those already adopted by corporate companies and public institutions. We use different words to describe effective behaviours, but the principles by which businesses aspire to operate are broadly those ingrained in the Army, through training and experience<sup>11</sup>. The financial crisis has brought the concept of ethical practice into sharp focus and it is widely recognised that the Armed Forces are a source of good behaviour, a positive influence. Individual Service Personnel (SP) must acquire new skills during transition, but the foundation is sound. Instinctively, SP “do the right thing, work together, serve others and think long-term”. Big business is well served with inspirational leaders, but there has been “a problem with middle-management”; an opportunity that

<sup>10</sup>The Army's values and standards are courage; discipline; respect for others; integrity; loyalty; selfless commitment. They can help (re)build trust in big corporations and institutions.

<sup>11</sup>One commentator summarised this as “the added value from your values”.

SP are well placed to exploit. Once they have a “foot in the door”, SP often progress quickly.

Whilst the group recognised the value of the Career Transition Workshop and the Army’s new engagement initiatives, it decried the absence of mechanisms for effective communication and language is clearly a constraint<sup>12</sup>. There is no one-size-fits-all solution here; Defence Relationship Management provides a valuable service, but it focuses on big business whilst the majority of Service leavers will be employed by small businesses. There is value in sharing experience between public and private sectors, but the Army’s message is too broad and focuses on process rather than outcomes. SP have many transferable skills, from generic soft skills through to discipline-specific subject matter expertise<sup>13</sup>, but the Armed Services lead a protected life and there are additional skills required to survive in the commercial sector. Transition may be too late for SP to begin acquiring those skills; when SP give notice to terminate, the Army tends to “put them out to pasture” rather than seeing them as an asset, ideally placed to build bridges with external agencies.

Many organisations represented in the syndicate room discussion had already signed the Armed Forces Covenant and were actively engaged in fostering closer relationships. The Army is engaging, but it is still not making the most of grants that are already available from commercial sources<sup>14</sup>. The value of a change sponsor was evident here – it was clear that one or two passionate individuals in an organisation were driving a pro-military agenda and making a hugely positive impact<sup>15</sup>. At a basic level, if the Army is to develop more of these sponsors, it must overcome its own security constraints and “let industry in”. The group praised the increasing number of industry placements – these deliver mutual benefit and are central to establishing a “win-win” relationship. However, placements should also be reciprocal; “managing change” is an area where there is considerable corporate experience and it represents an ideal opportunity to share best practice<sup>16</sup>.

Perhaps the simplest and greatest impact the Armed Forces can make on society is by bringing financial prosperity to a region. In North Yorkshire and Humberside it is estimated that the Armed Forces bring a net financial impact of almost £600 million per annum (SQW Consulting, 2016). For this reason, perhaps the national Armed Forces footprint could or should be adjusted to bring prosperity to deprived areas, in particular around post-industrial midland and northern towns and cities where the majority of the Army is drawn from.

<sup>12</sup>Perhaps this is best captured by the phrase “translating your Curriculum Vitae”; turning military experience, job specifications and jargon into something that hiring managers can understand.

<sup>13</sup>For example, the Armed Forces have experience of dealing with constantly evolving threat, a skill-set that translates effectively to other areas such as cyber security. Soft skills are the Army’s unique selling point and Service leavers are excellent at developing leadership in other organisations.

<sup>14</sup>RBS funding for the Hackney Air Cadets flight simulator was an example of where Defence had capitalised, but there were more examples of missed opportunities.

<sup>15</sup>The group discussed the possibility of the Armed Forces becoming a protected category and subsequently subject to national recruiting targets (for example, some US employers are required to have a workforce comprising 10 per cent veterans). Employers considered this complex/unlikely and it is potentially counter-productive to the narrative of “empathy rather than sympathy”.

<sup>16</sup>Change management was something for which the Army was heavily criticised.



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For many the Armed Forces are role models in society, sought after by all forms of social bodies and organisations to support them, and to stamp their unique Armed Forces mark of excellence upon a cause or purpose

Aside from pure economics, the Armed Forces provide employment that offers skills, education and opportunities for advancement. This is relevant in all communities and whilst some consider the Armed Forces, in particular the Army, to be menial unskilled labour, some see the Army as “blunt and tough to the point of inaccessibility” (Home Command, 2017). Those working in Civil Engagement know that for many the Armed Forces are role models in society, sought after by all forms of social bodies and organisations to support them, and to stamp their unique Armed Forces mark of excellence upon a cause or purpose. In simple terms, whether wanting to be part of the Armed Forces or not, people like to be aligned with them and gain their endorsement, but to maximise this opportunity to fertilise the recruiting ground the Armed Forces must work harder to make themselves accessible and available.

One attendee made the point, in open debate, that the Army should move forward in developing co-operation with all parts of the business community by agreeing tangible projects to focus effort. This theme was taken up by delegates including other business colleagues who attended. Other salient points the individual noted included:

- **A need to focus on outcome rather than process.**
- Soft skills are the Army’s USP for business – especially since many leavers were ‘civilian life unskilled’ (sic).
- **The need for intermediate facilitation between small business and the Army.**
- Some joint campaigns with small businesses to show the benefit of interaction to the wider general public.
- **Some imaginative ideas might be worth exploring for Reservists. For example, leaving cyber reservists to serve in their place of work and using their expertise remotely rather than just taking them out of their small business market place to meet their Reservist commitments. This would also improve knowledge sharing across the world cyber community.**

# SYNDICATE FINDINGS: SOCIAL MOBILITY

The British Army's ingrained meritocracy, focused on military capability and success on operations, has always achieved, through constant training and development of its personnel, a transformative effect on the lives of many soldiers from all backgrounds, in both Regular and Reserve service. This is particularly evident when the success achieved is greater than initial expectations. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, as the nature of work is transformed by technological and economic changes, the Army must work to enhance its existing success by achieving ever wider social mobility. This should not be as an end in itself, but as an inevitable and highly desirable by-product of recruiting the best possible workforce drawn from across the society the Army serves.

The benefits of social mobility to the Army and the nation are both societal and economic: maximising talent for the Army and the nation; promoting trust between the Army and society; enabling geographic mobility (which drives social mobility through a broadening of experience and culture); developing soft skills of leadership, self-discipline, communication and teamwork, applicable through life, in or out of military service. In economic terms benefits accrue by linking the Army to the private sector. It drives wealth creation by providing business with ready-trained personnel with a great range of transferable skills and effective proven working 'behaviours', tested in some of the harshest circumstances imaginable.

So what can the Army do to build on its real but often unsung success in transforming life chances; before (cadets), during (training and personal development) and after (resettlement, re-employment, second careers) military service? A better story needs to be told, integrated with the immediate need to recruit and the longer term need to engage civil society, particularly the young, shaping

and cementing our place in the nation.

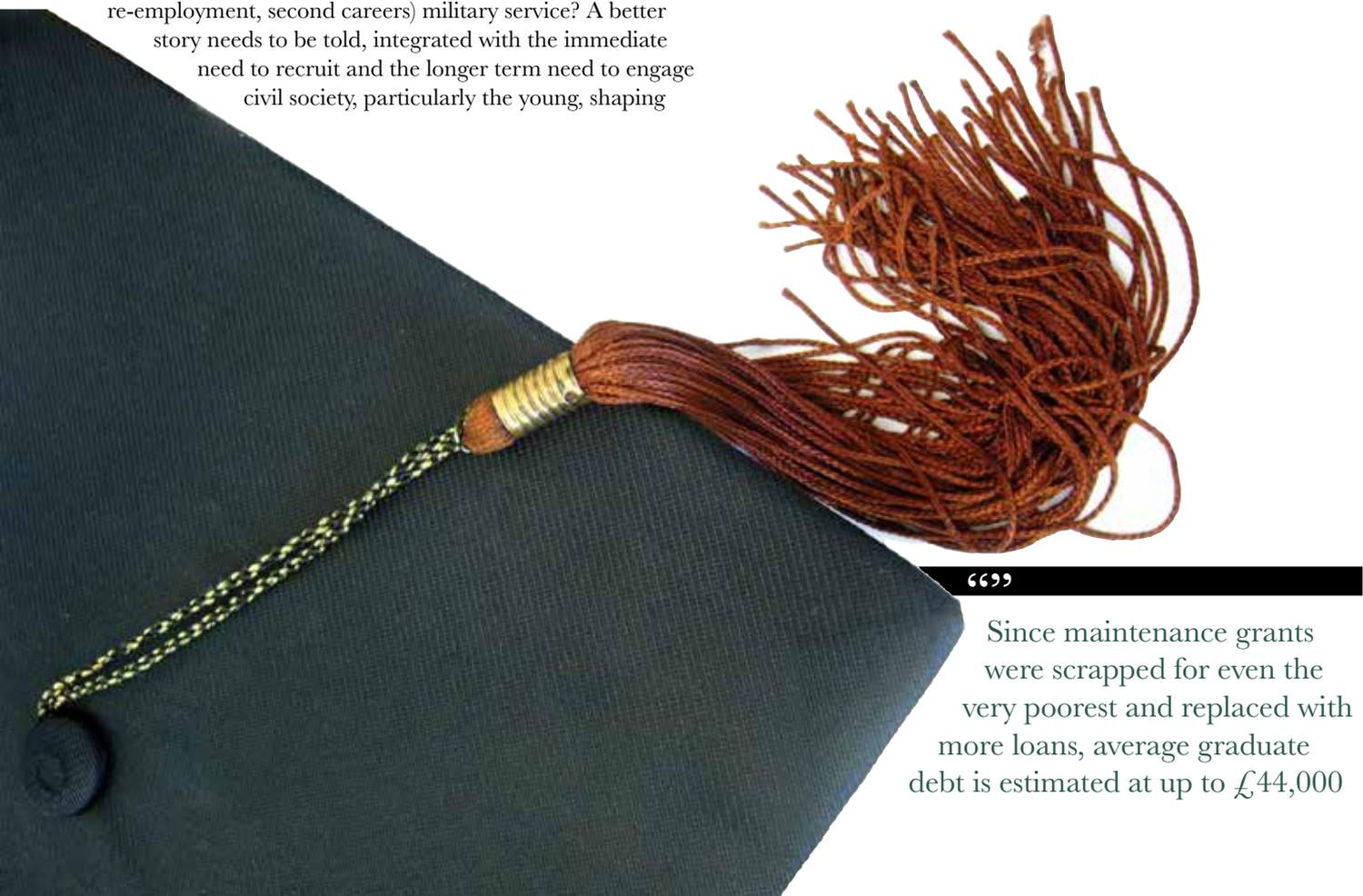
Focusing on the future of the organisation, the priority should be even smarter action on apprenticeships and further/higher education and training. Since maintenance grants to support education levels 5 and 6<sup>17</sup> were scrapped for even the very poorest and replaced with more loans, average graduate debt is estimated at up to £44,000<sup>18</sup>. This is a greater burden on UK students than in any other European nation; a regrettable case of an in-work generation pulling up the advancement ladder behind it. The Army should be unapologetic and more active in offering a way out of this conundrum for those who wish to serve. Sponsorship and scholarship programmes should be expanded from age 16-17 onwards, paid for by reduced outflow, churn and training costs, supported by an expectation of appropriate return of service.

In support, external messaging also needs to improve, based on the soundest of evidence, refuting sources of ideological opposition<sup>19</sup> while further developing our links to schools, colleges, businesses and communities. The British Army must focus more clearly on the future, on our soldiers and officers who have not yet joined, or else the seed corn of the future Army will be weaker than that available from the widest reaches of society.

<sup>17</sup>Level 5 is Undergraduate Degree .

<sup>18</sup>At a punitive rate of interest: 6.1 per cent from this September; 24 times the bank base rate and double what their elders pay for unsecured bank loans..

<sup>19</sup>Armed Forces Watch.



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# SYNDICATE FINDINGS: IMPACT OF VETERANS ON BRITISH SOCIETY

There is one truth in the Army; everyone becomes a veteran. It stands to reason then that veterans have a significant impact on British society and the prosperity of the UK. Indeed, two per cent of the British workforce are veterans, one of the largest identifiable groups.

## Are veterans exploiting their potential?

Veterans are a remarkably successful cohort; many promote quickly in their new jobs as their key soft skills – leadership, communication, analysis, selfless commitment, reliability and the ability to make a decision to name a few – are recognised by their new employers. Many are self-employed or running their own businesses.

However, there is a real feeling that soldiers transitioning back into the civilian world are not sufficiently prepared for what they are about to do. There is much anecdotal evidence that the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) is not performing as well as it could. In particular CV writing, advice on where Service personnel could target themselves and on what training they need to conduct for what career could improve. Veterans tend to be modest and do not sell themselves well. The result is that many veterans find themselves changing job very quickly after transition as they realise they have made the wrong choice, or indeed aimed too low and found that they have to climb back up the career ladder. However, it (CTP) meets its targets for veterans reaching employment within six months of leaving. There is a suggestion therefore that their targets might need re-visiting and negotiating.

## Are veterans being supported?

There is a misunderstanding, perhaps created by the charitable sector, that veterans are ‘mad, bad or sad’ and therefore a risk for employers. Further, there is a wide-held belief that although employers recognise the skills of veterans and are very happy when they do employ them, few are willing to take a risk with their lack of commercial experience. This results in many veterans unable to get through the ‘paper sift’. When they do, most shine at interview.

The NHS Step into Health initiative can be seen as best practice. Veterans are offered work placements, mentoring on the recruitment process and, critically, a guaranteed interview. This should ensure a consistent flow of military talent into the NHS which is mutually beneficial – indeed, the NHS highlighted that it currently has 9,000 vacancies and 9,000 soldiers will leave the Army in the next 12 months! Some corporations have similar schemes, notably Barclays, but there is more that Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) could do with the support of the Army.

By far the best support networks for veterans are the (increasingly formalised) veterans’ networks both within and across businesses. These provide support, mentoring and often a route to employment.



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The myriad veterans’ charities are very welcome and provide superb support. It was noted, however, that their aims are often conflicting, many are single-issue entities and all compete for the same cash. This will improve under the guidance of Sir John McColl and all veterans should receive better support as a result. It is also worth understanding that the charitable sector benefits from the view of the Army and veterans as somehow victims of their employment. This can inadvertently restrict soldiers as they make their transition; some of the misconceptions are not helpful.

## The value to society

The UK has an identified skills gap that will become highlighted as the country undergoes Brexit. A recent Deloitte report identified that most of the skills in that skills gap are already held by veterans. It also highlighted that the vast majority of employers who employ veterans would hire more. It would be disingenuous to think that veterans alone are the answer to the skills shortage, but it is clear that if more can be done to help employers of both large businesses and SMEs to employ more veterans then it may go some way to alleviating it.

There is an issue with full engagement with employers, especially SMEs, because of the capacity of the Regional Command structure of the Army; there are only so many relationships that can be maintained. There is perhaps a wider role for the charitable sector or indeed advancement of the military covenant. The central tenet must be that employers should employ veterans because of the value that they will bring to their organisation, not because of some arcane notion that the nation owes the veteran for their service.

# SYNDICATE FINDINGS: COMMUNICATING THE MESSAGE

It is perhaps telling that an organisation operationally steeped in the business of messaging should have felt it necessary to invest so much recent effort in understanding domestically what, how and with whom it communicates. Media handling, information operations and psychological operations have been about communicating messages as an inherent part of combat operations since armies were first formed. Even setting aside the historical perspective, there can be no doubt that the importance of military messaging activity on operations has been reaffirmed by recent counter-insurgency campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan, with their ‘hearts and minds’ focus within the context of modern digital communications. Integrated action and the development of ‘information-centric’ organisations such as 77 Brigade have further recognised the centrality of communicating messages. Yet analysis has led the Army to conclude that “support for the Army remains sound, but a growing lack of societal understanding is taking its toll on the Army’s connection with the Nation”<sup>20</sup>. Domestically therefore, it seems that the Army is struggling with its messaging. In this context, the Army’s current efforts to understand messaging effect at home to the degree that it does on operations is understandable, since arguably the risk of not rectifying it is not just mission failure, but an existential threat.

Even cursory consideration of what the Army’s message is will identify that it is multifaceted. Add to that the recipients of the message and the means, both active and passive, by which the message is disseminated and it is obvious that communicating the message is a complex, interconnected and multi-layered ‘system’. While its totality is beyond the scope of this article, the fundamental aspects of to whom and how the Army communicates are a sound framework for analysing the specific message strand in question here: ‘the Army’s contribution to UK society and prosperity’.

## Audience

In communications taxonomy, the target or recipient of messaging is referred to as the audience. Determining the audience, is one of the fundamentals of communications planning. In determining the audience, it is conventional to adopt a transactional approach and consider what benefit might be received in return for engaging a particular set of people. It should also be remembered that alongside the intended audience there are secondary audiences which, although not the focus of the messaging, may take an interest in, be affected by or, as opinion-formers, act as a conduit for it. Considering the message at hand, the Army’s primary audience would appear

to be the individuals and groups which are concerned with evaluating its contribution to UK society and prosperity<sup>21</sup>.

Secondary audiences might include those seeking to use an assessment, be it positive or negative, of the Army’s contribution for their own benefit; or those the Army seeks other objectives with, and feels that its contribution narrative will assist in achieving them. Accepting that construct, policy makers are the primary audience; the secondary audiences include commentators, gatekeepers, business and industry leaders, as well as organisations (governmental<sup>22</sup> and non-governmental) seeking to have resources switched from the Army to other causes. Of course, these primary and secondary audience sets are but a part of wider society, as is the Army itself. The Army has a corporate social responsibility to earn consent, to demonstrate that it deserves and is worthy of society’s support and investment. In that sense, the general public is the ultimate audience. But to be truly effective, audience analysis needs to go much deeper than broad group categorisation.



Among policy-makers it is the individuals with executive responsibilities for the allocation of resources and the formulation of legislation that have a direct impact on the Army, who matter most

Among policy-makers it is the individuals with executive responsibilities for the allocation of resources and the formulation of legislation that have a direct impact on the Army, who matter most. Clearly these are government ministers, Whitehall officials and their staff in the relevant departments<sup>23</sup>. It is also those who sit in the legislative: Members of Parliament, who hold government to account, either by debating and deciding on legislation, or through the specific scrutiny of Parliamentary committees. However, engagement with Ministers and Parliamentarians, to prevent underhand lobbying, is tightly regulated. This means that it is even more important for the Army to ensure that it optimises its legitimate engagement with them and that it enables others to engage effectively on its behalf. It is in this latter regard that the role of secondary audiences, functioning as opinion-formers, becomes important. Be they advisers, experts whose work is consulted or leaders from other sectors whose judgement is trusted, if they are voluntary and reliable advocates of the Army with access to the primary audience, they can message when and where the Army might not be

<sup>21</sup> Officials are in this sense exercising the duty captured in the observation: “Society expects the Army in peacetime to have spare capacity and the capability to export its qualities to wider society” (Home Command: The Engagement Review p. 12).

<sup>22</sup> This may include other government departments and even within Defence the other Services.

<sup>23</sup> Relevance depends on a number of factors, but from a resource perspective Her Majesty’s Treasury is the primary focus. Thereafter, the Home Office, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, the Department for Education and the Department for Industry and Trade will be interested in Defence’s contribution to UK society and prosperity to varying degrees. For its cross-government connectivity and coordinating authority, the Cabinet Office is another department of particular relevance.

<sup>20</sup> Col J.R. Kendall: Home Command: The Engagement Review – Executive Summary (6 April 2017).

able to. Add effectiveness to those qualifying criteria of role, reliability and access for any potential advocate and the pool of suitable individuals becomes highly refined and is therefore small. It is incumbent on the Army to cultivate anyone in this category with particular care and attention.

### Ways and means

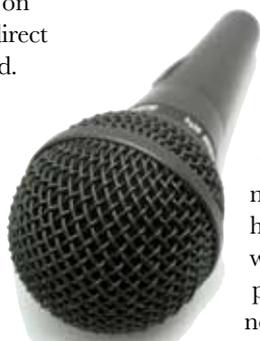
It is already clear from the nature of the primary audience set that there are rules and conventions governing how the Army communicates with them. Visits, oral briefings, written submissions, testimony before committees and responses to requests for information all comprise legitimate direct engagement with government officials and Parliamentarians and are an important convention of government business. As such, the crafting of these interactions does have a role in shaping a policy-maker's viewpoint, although the Defence operating model places the Army (and other Services) on the other side of a Departmental firebreak, ensuring direct engagement is regulated and messaging may be diluted. Messaging the Army's benefit to UK society and prosperity presents other challenges too. Aside generally from the prerogative of the policy-maker to keep their views to themselves and the uncertainty of not knowing whether they are receptive to the message, these challenges are twofold: practical events to showcase this message are difficult to conceive of; out of context, promoting the message could be perceived as contrived – at best an attempt to diversify the Army's core narrative, at worst an indication of doubt in the persuasiveness of that narrative by itself. Considering this, the Army should be judicious in asserting this message with its primary audience set. Three ways that could help it to be so are to focus on evidence; enable advocates to communicate on the Army's behalf; align messaging to an overarching, coherent brand.

**Evidence.** Increasingly the Army is taking steps to quantify the ways in which it is contributing to UK society and prosperity. As the regional command workshop highlighted, in the areas of youth education and apprenticeships, business, social mobility and the veteran community, there is evidence of that contribution. It remains relatively unrefined, disparate and not universally understood by all serving personnel. On the last point, this directly impacts on the extent to which every soldier can be a communicator. Further work to consolidate the key messages pertaining to these areas and the supporting data is to be encouraged.

**Advocates.** While empowered advocates help the Army to reach more widely than it can manage within its own resources and can communicate unrestricted by departmental obligations, there is a management 'cost' in the time and effort required to conduct regular talking-heads briefings, moderate expectations to maintain consent and track networks for continued relevance. Better still would be to create the conditions for individuals to advocate for the Army either without being invited to do so or without them doing so intentionally. 'Incidental' advocates, whose own messaging by happenstance coincides with or complements that of the

Army, are a group with the potential to reach more widely than empowered advocates. Ideally many should be from outside the Army's natural constituency and therefore moving in sectors where Army messaging does not traditionally circulate. By bringing the Army's message to new sectors, they would extend the Service's reach across society and thereby reinforce the message they are promoting. Army leadership doctrine is perhaps one of the most effective enablers in this regard, with a wide range of individuals and organisations across many sectors espousing the Army's decision-making processes and its code of conduct.

**Brand.** Advocacy of the Army cannot solely rely on actively messaging its contribution to UK society and prosperity, nor can it rely solely on the active adoption of some of the Army's tools, training and procedures. Harnessing the emotive with the empirical, the subconscious with the rational, plays an important role in getting facts to stick. Through a coherent brand, a single narrative strand like the one in question here is subconsciously and compellingly connected to all the other strands of the Army's story. In so being, the attributes of the whole story are present in and reinforcing the single narrative. Empirical evidence which demonstrates how the Army adds value to business, for example, would be enhanced by the emotive association of 'the promise' of the Army brand. After several years of neglect, the Army is in the process of reinvigorating its



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The Army continues to refine the ways in which it communicates, balancing the constraints of the audience set and the obligations of a departmental communications policy with the need to promote its own brand, but it still has a way to go

brand. It is critical that the Army's contribution to UK society and prosperity, like all its other messaging strands, is coherent with the new brand. This will require some transitional work to establish how to correlate the two and ensure that the message is framed in a way that is consistent with the content, tone and style of that brand.

As other parts of this publication have shown, the Army has a good message to tell in the contribution it makes to UK society and prosperity. Ongoing research continues to provide quantitative and qualitative evidence for several areas in which the Army until recently has relied upon isolated anecdote to demonstrate. Its primary audience for this message remains the policy-makers in government, but there are important secondary audiences, offering direct and indirect influence, to be enabled. The Army continues to refine the ways in which it communicates, balancing the constraints of the audience set and the obligations of a departmental communications policy with the need to promote its own brand, but it still has a way to go. The roll-out of the new brand has the potential to invigorate the Army's messaging generally, but in its contribution to society and prosperity in particular the effect could be profoundly cohesive and empowering.

During the workshop it was agreed that along with the use of social media, person-to-person contact was the best and most important means of communication, however, it was said that there were insufficient resources to meet the desired levels of engagement. The solution is obvious but poor recruitment and engagement with society is a consequence of a small Army.

# CONNECTING THE REGULAR ARMY WITH UK SOCIETY

My following thoughts were prompted by attending GOC Regional Command's workshop on the British Army's contribution to UK society and prosperity. That contribution is two way and I am well aware that the Army's senior officers want to stay engaged with the society from which we draw both our soldiers and national support for what we do. To be specific, I am talking about keeping the Regular Army engaged with UK society, as whilst we talk about being 'One Army', the reality is that the Reserves and Cadets are in society, but the Regular Army is detached from large swathes of the UK because of where it is located. It therefore concerns me that a key tool for connecting the two may not be well understood or valued – that tool being the Army's regional military framework, a structure that has contracted for quite understandable reasons over the past 40 years. As the Regular Army footprint across the UK shrinks into a small number of concentrated garrisons, I suggest it is essential that the Army tries to retain some form of regional framework, or looks for another solution, otherwise the Regular Army will struggle to remain connected with UK society.

Those who have served in what I still regard as 'Regional Forces' will intuitively understand the framework's value and strength, but it is difficult to articulate and empirically prove its worth to those with no experience. However, I will try to explain its importance based on personal experience. When I left Sandhurst in 1978 and joined my battalion in England, I was vaguely aware of something called a 'District'. I now know that, then, we had a network of districts commanded by major generals and in some cases lieutenant generals. The restructuring of the British Army in 1990 under 'Options for Change' then reduced the regional framework, the footprint staying the same, but the command rank reduced to brigadier and the size of the HQ staffs reduced too.

I went on to be chief of staff of a regional brigade in the 1990s and a regional division in the 2000s, and thus began to see and understand how the regional commanders and their HQs played an essential role in enabling and supporting the reserve forces, cadets and national resilience. Their most important role was, however, the most intangible, which was that they maintained the primary link between the Regular Army and British civil society. The Army has recently been through another major downsizing operation and it was clearly necessary that the Field Army was the core and had to be preserved. Therefore the regional framework was reduced again (Project Avanti in 2011).

I am now on the outside looking in, but in my new day job I work closely enough with staff in the existing regional framework to be concerned by what I see. Before I explain my concern, let me state that I am a realist. Maintaining the

Regular Army as an effective warfighting force has to be the priority but is the regional framework reducing to a point that it is no longer effectively able to link the Regular Army with society? It is too early to say for sure but intuitively, based on my experience of having served in these 'districts', I worry that what these HQs can achieve now is increasingly limited, especially as more and more is asked of them. I see good regional commanders and their staffs working flat out doing a huge amount of really valuable business linking the Army into regions, but I wonder if what is being asked of them is sustainable, particularly as some are double hatted. The reality is that many of the Regional Point of Command (RPOC) commanders, who are brigadiers, are primarily focused outwards on their operational responsibilities and secondarily focused inwards on their regional responsibilities. In other words, I contend that these RPOCs are being asked to do more with less. The value of having a senior Regular officer in each region, dedicated to looking inwards to that region and well known on the civic circuit, cannot be understated. Should we worry about this? Yes. Given that many members of British society instinctively support us but also have long memories, the retraction and diminution sends a message. The reality is that we cannot have the same level of engagement that we had previously and, for example, in two of the regional areas (the South West and North West) the most senior serving officer now is a colonel; there will be influential members of society who will recall when they were military districts commanded by major generals.

So what? It means that there is a risk of the gap widening between the Regular Army and society. I suspect that tight resources and pressure to reduce the number of senior officers means that it is unrealistic to maintain the framework as it is, unless the Regular Army is consciously content that it is connected to society by the reserves, cadets and the Reserve Forces and Cadets Associations. Otherwise, as the structures of the British Army continue to evolve, there should be root and branch review about how to achieve the desired effect of linking the Regular Army with society.

We should not lose sight of the value of having a regional footprint spread across the UK, but we may soon need to create something new. Maybe it should be the subject of a future CHACR study day because there are still enough of us out in society who understand the value of the regional framework. I write that because the closing contentious and generalised statement is that the Army's brightest and best who staff the options and make the decisions have, with rare exceptions, not served in regional forces (because it was second XI territory career-wise, self included!) and thus do not understand the nuances and value of the regional framework which I find so hard to articulate. Is it time for a modern Haldane to take a fundamental look?



“The reality is that the Reserves and Cadets are in society, but the Regular Army is detached from large swathes of the UK because of where it is located”

# A VIEW FROM RFCA LONDON

This short piece was written in response to the GOC's think-piece shown earlier in this publication. It is intended to highlight areas for future debate. Should we have Armed Services or Forces (remember the debate around the title Police Service of Northern Ireland)? The expeditionary war fighting nature/capability of the Armed Forces does not lend itself to an easy sell of the less obvious contributions/value they provide to UK society and prosperity.

An interesting discussion would have been – if we didn't have Armed Forces, no Army active in the youth and SC and PD areas, what would be the consequences? How much are the Forces in the national psyche? (Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment on *BBC News*' opening credits)? Can we put a value on it? More emphasis is needed on 'security' – recent events in Manchester and Operation Temperer show the police understanding of this and they currently own the communications space.

If hypothetically we had no Armed Forces, could one measure a negative? For example, as the national hub of power London provides 'the shop window' of the nation with high expectations of our Armed Forces, including its Reserve, to deliver success on parade (i.e. the Lord Mayor's Show and Armed Forces Day parades), in numerous engagement tasks (National Remembrance) or for short-notice homeland operations and in times of crisis such as during UK-wide operations in support of flood relief in 2014 and 2016, the Invictus Games in 2014 and the London Ambulance Service and LFB strikes<sup>24</sup>. No Government can afford to overlook this operational output in London, or any urban conurbation, at the heart of much of the nation's commercial, financial, economic and cultural activity. London's Government, the city corporation and business also expect to support, be well represented in, and be supported by the Armed Forces. How much do spectacles such as Changing the Guard and Guard Mounts outside Royal Palaces contribute to the attraction of visiting the UK, to tourism and funds paid into the exchequer? I suggest a Guards tunic and bearskin is as iconic to London as the red route master bus!

As taxpayers, can we put a monetary value on our investment in military personnel in terms of their learning, training, experience and so on, as a contribution over the term of their working life (either paid or pro bono)? Put another way, what is the return (cost/benefit) on the taxpayers' investment in its military and their cadets, beyond their time in their Service?

What is the value of the reservist and Service leaver to business? Mapping the hard skill has been done, the more obvious being the likes of HGV licence, IT, Engineering, but

<sup>24</sup>CDS RUSI 16 December 2015. "Whether it is fighting Ebola, guarding the Olympics, providing options for multiple terrorist attacks domestically or searching for downed aircraft; governments demand military options. So the force structure has to have inherent agility; the ability to meet multiple concurrency whilst being able to concentrate to generate capability at genuine scale."

why as an employer am I unsighted on the Army's work on the skills Service leavers leave with?

What value can be put on 'soft skills', essential in the modern work place – teamwork, communication, resilience, leadership, the ability to plan and work under pressure etc?

Resilience in the form of military support to OGDs includes MACA and MACC tasks. What value can be placed on the military acting as an insurance policy in times of national need (e.g. Temperer)? A new factor in the mix was the decision to have reservists directly support such operations, which in the case of the Army led to the re-categorisation of a Phase 1-trained soldier<sup>25</sup>. Maintaining a stable economy is important for UK prosperity, but to what extent does knowing the Armed Forces are there to protect and defend the nation assume an understanding of asymmetric warfare and thus enable/add to business confidence?

Despite the cadets being excluded from the Covenant, we promote them regardless (e.g. London South Bank University<sup>26</sup>). Through the ACF, the Army develops the citizens of the future, installing a sense of citizenship and duty in young people. It also provides development opportunities for adult volunteers through the opportunity to gain CVQO qualifications<sup>27</sup>. Examples of other military programmes that support young people can be found on page 29 – they are often measured as an activity, occasionally an output, but what value the outcomes?

## Volunteering

Step Up To Serve and #iwill are on the case. By volunteering for the ACF, adults help young people to achieve and thrive as well as helping increase the proportion of young people undertaking social action. In addition to group leaders and assistants, the ACF could benefit from the support from volunteers for other things, like recruitment, induction, training, book-keeping and accounting and delivery of skills-based sessions. Many employers have volunteering policies and practices that encourage employees to volunteer. At present, they tend not to specifically guide employees towards the cadets, but some do volunteer in the ACF. I am not aware of employers tracking in which organisations their employees volunteer. Some employers recognise volunteering through employee awards. For example, PwC employees can earn funding for charities of their choice by doing more volunteering. It would be helpful to see case

<sup>25</sup>New rules effective 1 September 2016 freed up c.6000 Army trainees to help in civil emergencies such as multiple terror attacks, or widespread flooding. For Operation Temperer, soldiers will back up police in the event of a large terror attack, by taking on duties guarding buildings and manning cordons.

<sup>26</sup>Principles LSBU has signed up to include: Offer support to local cadets units, by encouraging employees to volunteer using their discretionary voluntary leave of up to 5 days; Endeavour to offer work experience and job shadowing opportunities for cadets at LSBU, managed through their Employability Service; Provide discounted junior membership for cadets to their academy of sports.

<sup>27</sup>X Forces proposal for Enterprise Education for Cadets (Nov 16) briefed to YOU Board.

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More emphasis is needed on 'security' – Manchester and Operation Temperer show the police understanding of this and they currently own the communications space

studies to demonstrate the impact of such schemes. In the Civil Service, each Government department has its own approach, but volunteering is encouraged. Civil Service Local runs an 'expressions of interest' process to link volunteers to opportunities in localities, bringing together volunteers from different departments and delivering an L&D benefit to the business.

The O2 Think Big initiative is an objective for every employee and part of the performance plan. In employee surveys, the

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*Team effort: A soldier from 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers provides security in central London alongside an armed member of the MoD Police as part of Op Temper.*

encouragement of volunteering has been shown to improve engagement and retention, and reduce levels of absenteeism. Around 10 per cent of Sky employees are engaged with Sky Academy. Many British Gas employees volunteer and the business offers flexibility in the volunteering policy that would fit well with the different role types and models in the cadets.



# THE ARMY'S CONTRIBUTION TO UK PROSPERITY AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

The Army's commitment to training, both through provision of career courses and apprenticeships, ensures that all Service personnel can progress in their careers and maximise their potential, regardless of the educational standards or qualifications they entered the Services with. Since the Services do not do lateral recruitment, they need to develop their own people and ensure that the best people reach the highest ranks equipped with the necessary skills and experience. Social background or previous family deprivation is not a factor in progression and there are many examples of Service personnel who had difficult starts in life, achieving successful Service careers.

The British Army teaches leadership from the outset of training, based on its Leadership Code and values and standards. Through challenging training and operational deployments and exercises, Service personnel develop personal resilience, trust in others and an ability to work well in teams as well as being able to make decisions and take command. Service personnel are, therefore, well placed to support young people in society to develop their leadership skills, team work and resilience.

The British Army currently engages with young people by contact through school visits, visits to further education and higher education establishments and by working with young people in the community, delivering day and residential activities. It delivers leadership, team building activities, STEM projects, citizenship, and engages through sport and music and through discussing shared heritage and commemoration activity.

The largest youth engagement, however, is through provision

of the cadet movement and the value that a CCF can bring to a school or an ACF detachment to a community is significant in improving the outcomes for young people. The CCF CEP should be targeted at schools in deprived areas of the UK and particularly at struggling schools, but must be adequately funded and supported to succeed. School leadership teams or CEOs of educational trusts need to be made aware of the report on benefits of cadet service being produced by Professor Denny from The University of Northampton. The value added to a school by introduction of a CCF detachment should be recognised by OFSTED.

The Army has so much to offer society to support social mobility but delivery is limited by a lack of formal acceptance that this work – which is so valuable to UK PLC – is core Army output, secondary to securing the nation at home and the nation's interests abroad. Formal recognition would enhance the Army's reputation across other government departments and within society and could influence the allocation of budgets. It would also encourage better collaborative working between the MoD and Department for Education and with the Department for Communities and Local Government and with the Home Office for the benefit of all. It would also assist with governance issues and our ability to use publicly-funded resources to deliver engagement activities. Production of a social impact report would be a useful first step in articulating the importance of what the Armed Forces can offer society to support social mobility.

Finally, the Army needs to better seek support from businesses that hold the Gold Employer Recognition Scheme award; through their Armed Forces Networks they are well placed to provide advocates to promulgate the Armed Forces' messages.



Pictures: Peter Russell, Somerset ACF ©Army Cadet Force

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The [Army's] largest youth engagement is through provision of the cadet movement and the value that a Combined Cadet Force can bring to a school or an Army Cadet Force detachment to a community is significant in improving the outcomes for young people

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# EXISTING ‘MILITARY-STYLE’ PROGRAMMES TO SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE...

## ...into employment (an RFCA view)

### **TEDS** – *Technical Engineering Design Scheme*

A five-day course where participants construct a beach buggy from scratch to test drive. Focus is on teamwork, communication and engineering skills. Participants are selected by JobcentrePlus and courses are run by the Army Reserve.

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**Comment:** *Highly successful and should be rolled out further*

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### **SPUR** – *Supporting People out of Unemployment using the Reserve*

A four-week course consisting of two weeks’ Army Reserve recruit training, one week college attendance (focus on CV writing, interviewing skills etc) and one week work experience. Participants selected by JobcentrePlus and courses are run by the Army Reserve and sixth-form colleges.

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**Comment:** *Highly successful and should be rolled out further*

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### **AFEP** – *Armed Forces Employability Pathway*

Longer courses jointly run by a major employer and the Army. Participants selected by JobcentrePlus. Employer runs vocational training and Army provides basic recruit training. At the end of the course, selected participants are offered employment with the employer and the opportunity to join the Army Reserve alongside their regular employment.

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**Comment:** *Remain unsure regarding London – has apparently been successful elsewhere.*

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## ...in schools (in conjunction with DfE)

The Department for Education runs a ‘Military Ethos’ programme, which aims to assist pupils struggling with mainstream schooling by teaching military values and standards and ‘soft skills’ training to show these pupils a positive way of life.

### **CEP Schools Cadet Expansion Programme**<sup>28</sup>

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**Comment:** *Successful and scope to do more.*

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### **CVQO Schools Project**

This project is already running successfully in other parts of the country and is about to launch in Croydon. Ex-military instructors take groups of pupils one afternoon a week during term time for ‘command task’ style activities.

### **Commando Joes / SkillForce / Challenger Troop**

All run similar programmes in London schools.

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<sup>28</sup>In response to the original MinSub for this phase of CEP in Sep 15, SofS directed that sServices should find the new CEP units beyond March 2020 from within existing TLB resources. This was reconfirmed and acknowledged by sServices at 3\*YCSG in Mar 17. Could pursue corporates and philanthropists for top up or project funding but also need to underpin with sustainable ‘mainstream’ TLB funding in case the former evaporates. The corporates who committed funds to the Cadet Bursary Fund all reversed out of their agreements in the wake of the Brexit vote leaving the fund in a dire state.

## ...generally

### **YOU London**

A partnership of ten uniformed youth organisations in London (ACF, ATC, Boys’ Brigade, Fire Cadets, Girls’ Brigade, Girlguiding, SCC, Scouts, SJA, VPC). All organisations teach citizenship, leadership, teamwork etc. and offer the opportunity for qualifications such as BTECs through CVQO or DoFE.

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**Comment:** *100K youngsters in uniform – ‘uniform begets uniform’.*

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### **NCS** – *National Citizen Service*

This is a Government-run scheme for 15-17 year-olds which takes place over the summer holidays. Part of the course involves a visit to a professional establishment. Several Reserve units (Navy and Army) offer this professional establishment visit. Participants are shown around the training centre and are then required to present a business plan in a *Dragon’s Den* style presentation to their hosts.

### **LifeMAPS**

The LifeMAPS course (MAPS standing for Multi Agency Partnership Scheme) is a course designed to take up to 32 vulnerable young people out of their environment for a week and offer them a challenging and rewarding experience themed on a military training scenario. The aim is to deliver a military community engagement task in which military discipline and team ethos can be used to give young people a renewed outlook on life and life skills to take away for future education or employment opportunities.

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**Comment:** *Successful and should be continued.*

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### **Army Challenge Weekends**

These events are designed primarily as a black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) engagement activity. Youths are taken on a two-day ‘look at life’ activity that is delivered by soldiers from the outreach team. The event is designed to highlight the ‘shared values, history and general commonality’ of youths from the BAME community and others. The aim is to increase greater understanding, enable future positive engagement and improve confidence of the participants.

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**Comment:** *Successful and should be continued*

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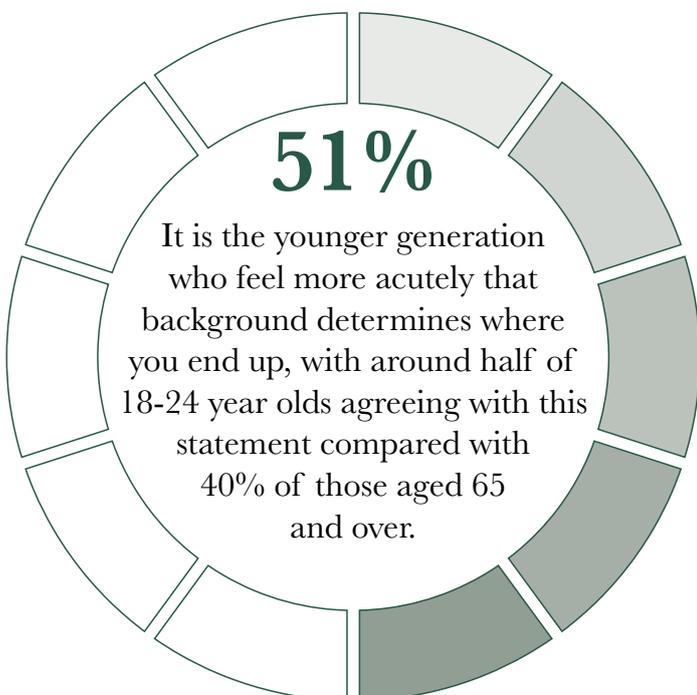
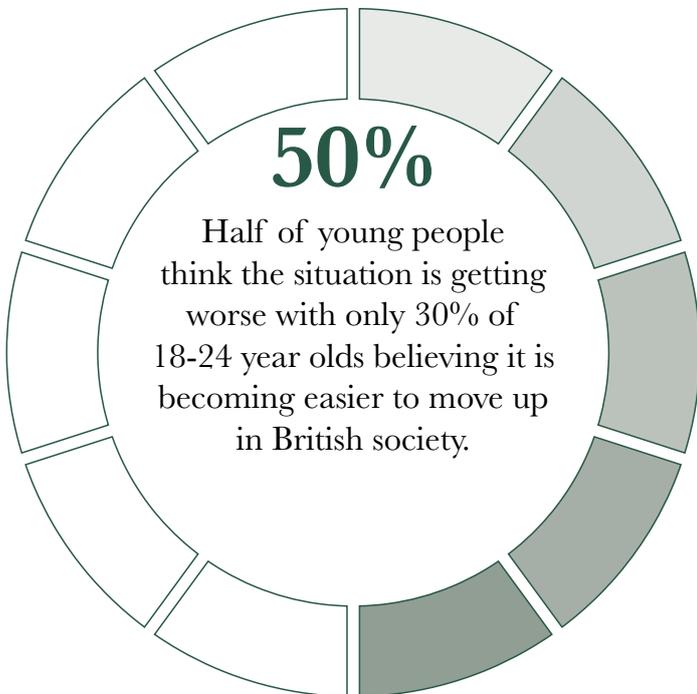
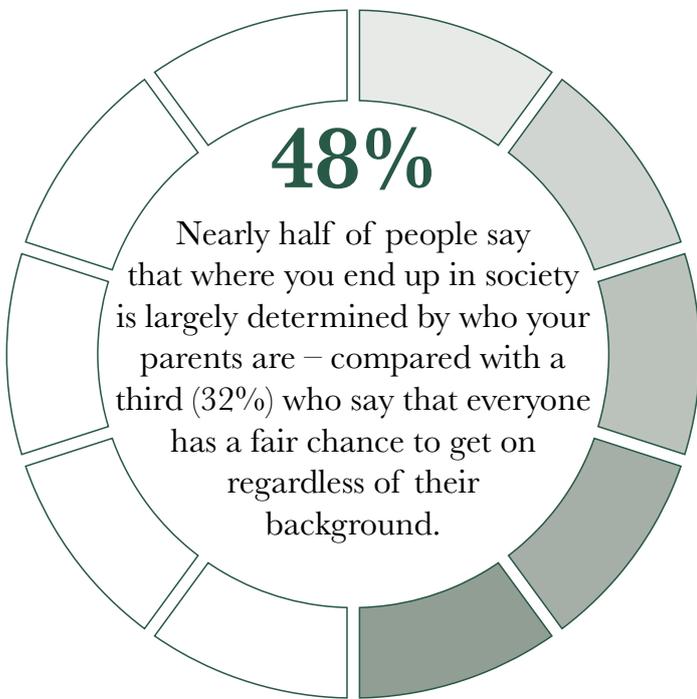
### **Ocean Youth Trust ‘Adventure under Sail’**

HMS *President* works with the sailing charity Ocean Youth Trust to give young people from Tower Hamlets the opportunity to participate in a five-day adventurous sail training voyage. The young people are taken out of their usual environment, tested both mentally and physically and given feedback on their strengths and weaknesses.

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**Comment:** *Successful and should continue*

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## CLOSING REMARKS

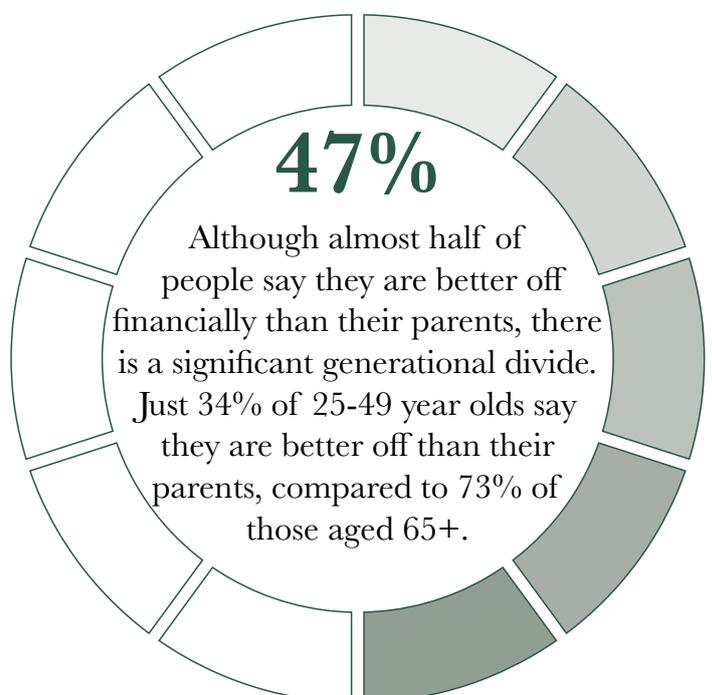
**Much has happened since the workshop on 24th May, both in the politics of the nation and more broadly in society after the election. Of particular note is the publication of the Social Mobility Barometer<sup>29</sup>. It is best described as a wake-up call. People should be stopped in their tracks; our United Kingdom is not united. Social mobility is getting worse; those who have a bad start in life are highly likely to remain at the bottom of the social mobility ladder and opportunities to progress are few and far between. The Rt Hon Alan Milburn, Chair of the Social Mobility Commission, has stated this has to become a domestic priority requiring deep-seated social reform.**

**So what has this to do with the Army? Lots – we are a beacon of good practice with social mobility in the UK. We can't enable "deep-seated social reform" on our own but we can broadcast far and wide the 'level playing field' which exists in the Army's meritocratic system. This system may not, yet, be agile enough to identify and promote the next Mark Zuckerberg at an early age, but it is a system which truly gives opportunity for all. It is not perfect and it requires constant work, but no other meritocratic system in the civilian sector comes close to ours in enabling social mobility.**

**The inherent ethos of giving everyone, wherever they are from, a chance; allowing people to learn**

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<sup>29</sup>[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/618627/Social\\_Mobility\\_Barometer.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/618627/Social_Mobility_Barometer.pdf)





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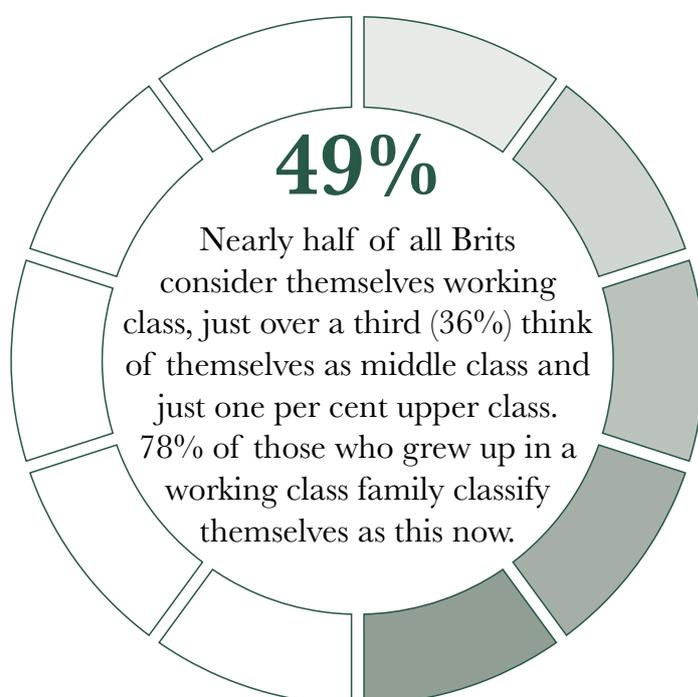
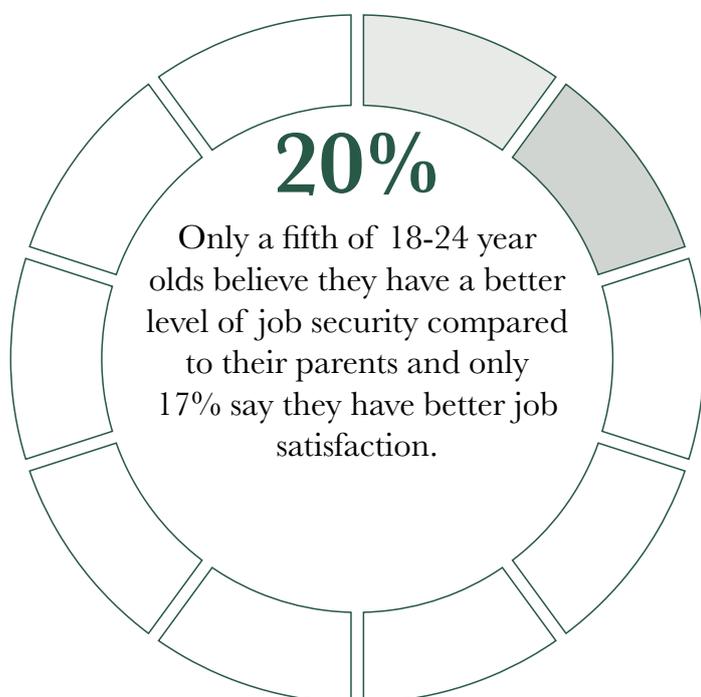
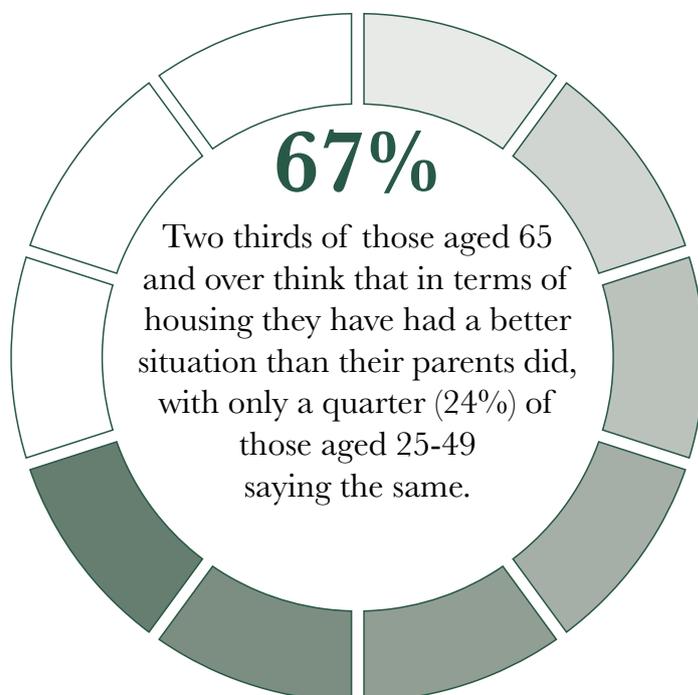
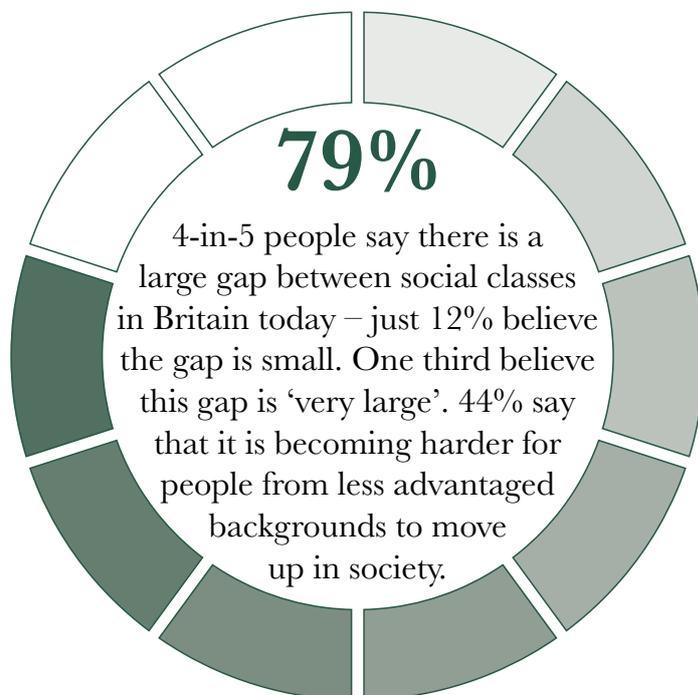
[The Army’s meritocratic] system may not, yet, be agile enough to identify and promote the next Mark Zuckerberg at an early age, but it is a system which truly gives opportunity for all

to publicise this impact, both across Whitehall and within society. This will be a win-win situation as the more people who are aware of it, the more will support the Army.

The next steps are for RC to complete a social impact assessment on the Army in cooperation with some of our supporters from the civilian sector, including those from the Employer Recognition Scheme Gold award alumni who will help us to articulate the Army’s contribution to society and social impact.

from their mistakes, giving them unrivalled training opportunities and focusing on personal development, education and training are all too rare among employers today. Young people are the lifeblood of the Army but too few people are aware of the unrivalled opportunities offered by our meritocratic system. The Army represents social mobility in action.

The Army makes a huge social impact; social mobility is a by-product of all we do. However, we are not aware of how much this matters within society, and the wider public is not aware of how good the Army is at delivering social mobility. We need





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## CHACR MISSION STATEMENT

**To conduct and sponsor research and analysis into the enduring nature and changing character of conflict on land and to be the active hub for scholarship and debate within the Army in order to develop and sustain the Army's conceptual component of fighting power.**