

# FUTURE HORIZONS

A BRIGHT START IN CIVILIAN LIFE

## Transition Support for British Army Early Service Leavers

An evaluation of the  
Future Horizons Programme  
Infantry Training Centre, Catterick



Matt Fossey

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This is a hugely timely and important report. The public focus, and that of the Government, is very much on our Armed Forces and veterans and on the welfare of these personnel and their families, as exemplified by the recent Armed Forces Covenant. However, many of those who enter the Services do not complete their training and many of those who do, also leave early through compulsory discharge. The numbers involved are significant, especially in the Army, and particularly in the Infantry, where around only a half of those who enter complete the physically demanding training that is involved. The problem is particularly compounded in this group also because entry requirements for Infantry training are comparatively low and therefore the forty per cent or so that leave training early, and often extremely rapidly, constitute a particularly vulnerable group. The mental health and welfare of those leaving the Services has formed the subject of a number of recent research papers and reports, by Nicola Fear and Joshua Buckman and their colleagues from King's College London, for example, and by the author of this report, Matt Fossey, in 'Across the Wire'. Until recently, however, very little has been known about the fate of this group of Early Service Leavers (ESLs) and to date there has been no published literature in this area.

The military are very good at aiding personnel who leave their number at the end of their engagements to make the transition back to civilian life and recently the MOD has begun to look more closely at what happens to those who leave early. Ann Braidwood and Chris Williams' fairly recent study on so-called 'light touch mentoring' was therefore very much a move in the right direction.

Matt Fossey's report on the Future Horizons Programme at ITC Catterick shows what can be achieved by a programme offering support to ESLs in transition and helping them to secure, and remain in, suitable employment. Over a twelve-month period, the study reports nearly complete engagement in the programme, with nearly four-fifths still being engaged six months after leaving the programme and virtually all of those questioned endorsing and recommending the programme to others.

As mentioned above, Infantry recruits are a particularly vulnerable group of Service leavers and so it is appropriate that this pilot was carried out with this group. It is now hoped that this report, and the case studies contained in it, will inspire the wider use of such programmes across other Army training establishments, and in the other two Services.

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# Executive Summary

The Future Horizon Programme (FHP) is one of two trials commissioned by the MOD to test different ways of offering support to Early Service Leavers (ESL), especially helping them into sustainable employment.

The Future Horizons Programme provides support for untrained ESLs leaving the Infantry Training Centre, Catterick Garrison. It also provides support for trained soldiers, who also qualify as ESLs, leaving from any unit within Catterick Garrison. During the period of this evaluation FHP has **engaged with 777 ESLs with a take-up of 99%**.

It has long been recognised that ESLs are some of the most vulnerable young people leaving the British Army. The difficulties faced by ESLs may be attributable to pre-service vulnerabilities, such as social circumstances or educational attainment, or may be associated with their service history. Very little academic work has been undertaken to explore this important area.

ESLs receive very little support in their transition back to civilian life, even though the limited evidence suggests they are a group that would benefit the most.

The Future Horizons Programme **tracked 84% of the ESLs who joined the programme**, offering them a range of employment and training support and opportunities. Much of this support was delivered by Specialist Employment Consultants, with an array of partner organisations providing bespoke services to ESLs requiring additional input.

**After 6 months 63.4% of the ESLs were in employment or training.** This figure compares very favourably to other government funded employment schemes. At the 6 month review point over **90% of the ESLs using the programme said that they would recommend it to others.**

As well as the ESLs that we have shown to be in employment after 6 Months FHP it is also possible to interrogate the system to get live information about the ESLs using the programme. As of 31 January 2013, 302 ESLs had been in employment for 13 weeks or more, meeting the DWP sustainability test.

As a result of this evaluation, **four key recommendations** are made:

1. The MOD should consider the viability of adopting this model across all three branches of the Armed Forces;
2. Further on-going analysis and research of the data held by the programme should be considered;
3. Research needs to be commissioned by the MOD to understand the differences and levels of vulnerability between untrained and trained Early Service Leavers;
4. Different models of ESL engagement and the use of different technologies and interfaces to communicate with ESLs should be explored further.



# Introduction

Meeting the unique needs of those transitioning out of the Armed Services, for whatever reason, should be of great interest to many in the Country. Lord Ashcroft has recently been commissioned by HM Government to undertake a detailed review of transition arrangements, and this review is due to publish its interim finding towards the end of 2013<sup>1</sup>. It is hoped that the outcomes of this programme and the observations made in this report will go some way to contribute towards this important piece of work.

The issues surrounding the management of personnel leaving the Armed Services has been drawn into sharp relief by the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review (Ministry of Defence, 2010c) and the subsequent work to ensure that the British Army is fit for purpose from 2020 and beyond (British Army, 2012). This describes a “generational change in [the Army’s] vision, structure, composition and capability” and sees a reduction in the size of the standing forces by 2017 with an anticipated 20,000 Service personnel being made redundant during this period.

The MOD recognises that it has a duty of care for all those that have committed themselves to serve this country. For the purposes of transition this duty of care extends across the wire requiring closer cooperation with civilian organisations.

Key elements in the successful transition of personnel out of the Armed Services are set out in the Armed Forces Covenant “support should be available for all Service personnel in order to assist their transition from Service to civilian life. Provision should include training, education, appropriate healthcare referral and job-finding preparation and assistance. It should also include information, advice and guidance on such matters as housing and financial management, and the availability of support from government departments and the voluntary and community sector. The level of support will be dependent upon individual circumstances” (Ministry of Defence, 2011).

Whilst the responsibility for transition for those who serve 4 years or more, is covered by the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) arrangements, provisions for those who have served less than 4 years, namely Early Service Leavers (ESLs), is an area long identified as requiring attention.



<sup>1</sup> <http://www.veteranstransition.co.uk/>

# Background to the Future Horizons Programme

The Future Horizons Programme was developed by the Education, Resettlement and Job-Finding Cluster of the Confederation of Service Charities (also known as COBSEO)<sup>2</sup>, the umbrella group for British Service Charities, and is funded in the main by the Forces in Mind Trust<sup>3</sup> with initial pump priming funding provided by The Royal British Legion<sup>4</sup>. The Education, Resettlement and Job-Finding Cluster brings together many partner military charities who have an interest in the employment and welfare of veterans and is led by the Regular Forces Employment Association (RFEA)<sup>5</sup>.

## Definition of Early Service Leaver (ESL)

Early Service Leavers comprise of two distinct groups: those that are **compulsorily discharged** from the trained or untrained strength and lose entitlements because of the nature of their discharge; and **those who opt to take their own discharge** having **served less than 4 years**. Thus, anyone who has served for a day or more could qualify as an ESL. (Ministry of Defence, 2010b)

The Future Horizons Programme gives us a unique opportunity to begin to understand the transitional needs of Early Service Leavers. The possibility of using these FHP data and resources to expand the knowledge base in this area is crucial, particularly as there is currently no published academic literature focusing specifically on the outcomes for untrained ESLs.

The MOD has operational guidance exclusively for managing the transition of ESLs, this is called JSP575 (Ministry of Defence, 2010b). This policy was developed following recognition by the MOD that there were shortcomings in the resettlement provision for ESLs and, as the limited evidence suggests, they are a particularly vulnerable group.

The JSP575 operational guidance focuses almost entirely on the administrative processes required to ensure that the ESL is moved as effectively and smoothly as practicable out of the Military. Importantly, the guidance also highlights the possibility that ESLs could be vulnerable and makes provision for action should this be the case.

However, it has long been observed that the existing transition support fails to meet the needs of ESLs. Although some changes have been made to the basic provision offered to ESLs, it is still seen as unsatisfactory and in 2008 the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee noted that, *“Early Service Leavers are most vulnerable to social exclusion, yet the majority of the [MOD] resettlement support is directed at those with longer service histories. The [MOD] sees resettlement support as a reward for service and as an aid to retention, but many longer-serving Service Leavers will secure civilian employment and accommodation without any assistance. The [MOD] should develop and introduce additional targeted measures for Early Service Leavers and others in most need. It should do this on the basis of better evidence on the effectiveness of its existing assistance.”* The Committee also recommended changes in the first line resettlement support provided for ESLs stating that this was *“weak and poorly monitored in the Army.”* (House of Commons Public Accounts Committee, 2008). This view was also expressed by the National Audit Office who found that, *“Inconsistencies in the quality of support offered to [ESLs] at Unit level*

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cobseo.org.uk/about-us/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.fim-trust.org/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.rfea.org.uk/>

*undermine[d] the overall provision made by the [MOD].” (National Audit Office, 2007)*

In recognition of these issues the MOD commissioned a small controlled trial of light touch mentoring for ESLs (Braidwood & Williams, 2009). This trial highlighted the systemic weaknesses in the provision of employment support across the wire for ESLs and the ineffectiveness of adopting a passive approach to supporting this cohort. Even though the results of this trial have not been formally published, the commitment of the MOD to undertake this exercise shows concern for this particularly vulnerable group of service leavers.

In relation to future employment, ESLs are not given support in identifying relevant employment opportunities and are not tracked in accordance with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) protocols set out in JSP534 (Ministry of Defence, 2010a). In effect **nobody knows what happens to ESLs once they have left the Armed Forces.**

In an effort to further improve the transition pathway for ESLs, in 2011 the MOD commissioned two further trials to consider how the employment and transitional needs of ESLs could be met. **The Future Horizons Programme is one of those trials.** This report considers the outcomes of this 12 month programme focused on providing support for ESLs transitioning out of both ITC Catterick (untrained) and units within Catterick Garrison (trained).

## Infantry ESLs

There are many different roles that need to be filled within the British Army, and the Infantryman occupies a very important position. There are though no minimum educational requirements to join the Infantry, so a school-leaver with no recognised formal qualifications could become an Infantryman: which often is the case

For Infantry recruitment certain factors may be of importance when considering the future welfare or employment opportunities for ESLs. First, traditional Infantry recruiting grounds are historically areas of economic and social deprivation, where the armed services offer potential to young people that can often not be achieved locally. Second, the educational threshold for recruitment into the Army is very low. According to an independent report funded by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust the Army's own research suggests that up to 50% of recruits have literacy and numeracy skills at Entry Level 3 (equivalent to those of an average 11 year-old) or Entry Level 2 (equivalent to an average 7 year-old) and anecdotal reports suggest that the average reading age of trainees at the Infantry Training Centre at Catterick is that of a 10 year-old (Gee, 2007).

It is anticipated that Infantry soldiers will attain certain qualifications and skills that will be transferable back into civilian life, including NVQ level 2 qualifications and driving licences – but these qualifications and skills are only acquired over time. For the majority of ESLs seen within the context of the FHP, they have not served long enough to attain these.

In summary, the Army recruits between 1000 - 1500 young men into the Infantry annually and around 40% leave as ESLs who have not completed basic training and have no additional qualifications. Given the very low educational standards required of Infantry soldiers in general, and the paucity of transferable skills for this particular cohort of ESLs, finding sustainable employment following transition out of the Army is a considerable challenge.

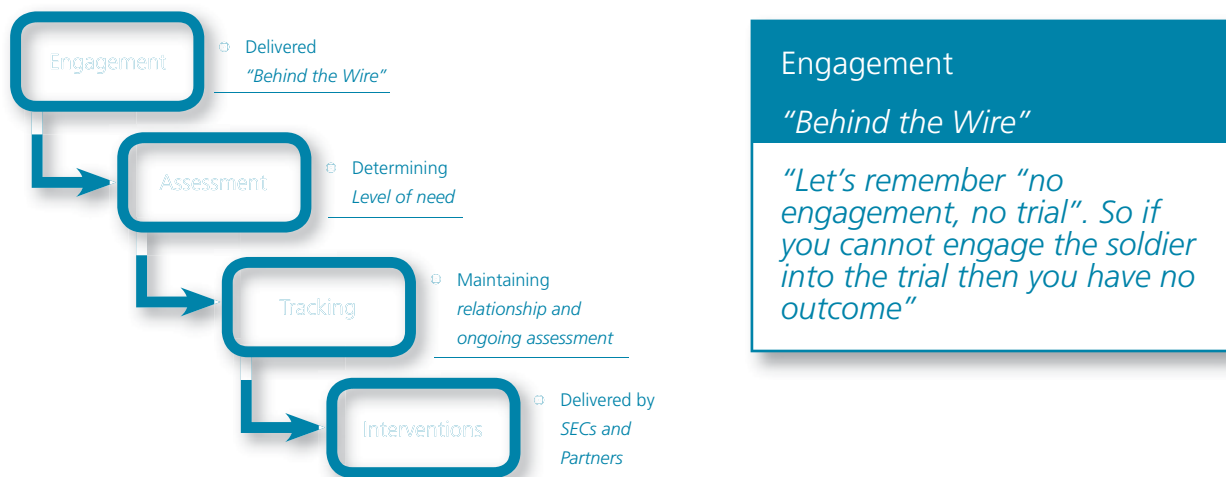
# The Future Horizons Programme Model

Assistance with job finding, skills and employability are at the core of the MOD's Career Transition Partnership (CTP)<sup>6</sup> yet currently ESLs have no entitlement to help in this area. The Future Horizons Programme is therefore focusing its resources on engaging ESLs as they pass through the MOD's administrative processes and then assisting them with employment finding through the transition process and beyond.

The main aim of the programme is to assist and support ESLs with the transition from the Army back into civilian life and importantly to help ESLs find and remain in appropriate employment once they leave. Practical support is also available if ESLs have more immediate needs around accommodation, health concerns or other issues that they feel they need help with.

One of the most impressive aspects of the Future Horizons Programme has been the role of the different partners (outlined in Appendix A.) Some of the organisations have offered guidance in the development and operation of the programme, whilst others have played an active role in working directly with ESLs. FHP has shown how organisations from across the voluntary and private sectors can work together to provide support and interventions for ESLs. It can be concluded that the Future Horizons Programme is not, in itself, a single employment intervention for Early Service Leavers. It is a systematic approach for enabling ESLs to have access to a range of different forms of employment and welfare provision through a structured and well-organised model of tracking and support.

The Future Horizons Programme model has 4 key elements. Within this section we will look at each in some detail.



It is often asserted and one of the observations from the light touch mentoring trial (Braidwood & Williams, 2009) that engagement is crucial to success.

The first crucial element of the Future Horizons Programme is the initial engagement with the ESL. This happens in Hook Company at ITC Catterick, in other words: *behind the wire*.

<sup>6</sup><https://www.ctp.org.uk/>



## Infantry Training Centre, Catterick

The Future Horizons Programme is delivered out of Catterick Garrison. Catterick Garrison is the largest military garrison in Western Europe and home to the Infantry Training Centre (ITC) of the British Army. Recruits joining any of the Infantry Regiments undertake all their initial training at ITC Catterick. They complete the relevant Combat Infantryman's Course, which represents their combined Phase 1 and 2 training.

## Hook VC Company

Hook Company is unique within the British Army: its primary objective is to ensure the smooth transition of ESL and medically discharged soldiers out of the ITC and back into civilian life. Hook Company started the centralisation role of dealing with ESLs in 2006, partly in response to the recommendations set out in the Blake Report into the deaths of soldiers at Deepcut Barracks (Blake, 2006) and partly to manage the large numbers of ESLs who leave the Infantry annually. Over the past 5 years the attrition rate for ITC Catterick has been, on average, 40%.

Within other British Army training establishments, ESLs are generally processed by their units and there is hardly any centralised ESL dispersal function. However, the numbers of ESLs in other areas are often considerably smaller than ITC Catterick and this hub approach may not be appropriate.

Alongside its unique function, Hook Company has also developed a particular ethos and set of values that help with the management of ESLs. This is very important, because ESLs are generally not held in particular high regard by the Army – and it is more than conceivable that these attitudes, negatively impact on the transition experience of this cohort.

The discharge pathway for ESLs is rapid, often lasting for no more than 2 weeks. The discharge manual for ESLs (JSP575) requires that all ESLs have a one-to-one interview with their Unit Interview Officer (UIO), where any overt problems with vulnerability should be identified. The ESLs then have a mandatory briefing, in the case of ITC Catterick at Hook Company, where the availability of ex-Service and welfare organisations; financial matters; employment; and issues relating to housing and accommodation are presented using a standardised set of slides.

It is during this briefing that outside agencies, that could potentially help the ESL with employment, are introduced, and there is an opportunity for ESLs to register with the RFEA and the RBLs Civvy Street initiative. However engagement with other agencies is reliant upon two important factors:

1. How information is imparted to the ESLs by briefing officers, and
2. The willingness or ability of ESLs to absorb this information

ESLs are given a booklet outlining what has been presented, however “Briefing Officers would often collect these from the bin after the presentation to give to the next lot of ESLs.” In most cases ESLs only have the opportunity of this briefing to assimilate complex information about the potential outside resources available to them.

# JSP575 Mandatory Briefing

So, what is the FHP doing differently? The Future Horizons Programme has employed civilian staff (advisors) to work in Hook Company, providing a welcoming and non-threatening presence that is not part of the military chain of command and provides the first tangible link to civilian life. Even though enormous steps have been taken at ITC Catterick to support untrained ESLs, the introduction of staff who are not part of the military structure or system is important given the somewhat understandable pervasive attitude towards ESLs in training units.

The introduction of civilian staff has helped break down the barriers that, no matter how much empathy the Hook Company staff display, will always exist when the ESL is interviewed or briefed by a person in uniform.

In advance of the official ESL briefing which is delivered by military staff, the FHP team engage with the ESLs and communicate the benefits of signing up to the Future Horizons Programme.

Observation of this briefing process has shown that there is a contrast between the different approaches adopted by the military and FHP advisors. Although it is not within the scope of this evaluation to describe the styles of delivery of these briefings there are a number of observations. First, allowing FHP staff to talk to ESLs at the start of the briefing has helped to capture the attention of the ESLs. ESLs are encouraged to see the benefits of signing-up to the programme and are invited to meet with the FHP team to explore what further assistance may be available. The programme has managed to engage 99% of eligible ESLs seen in the briefing. This can be compared to a pre-FHP proxy measure of ESLs signing up the Service of Care (SoC) option, provided by the RFEA, of 53%.

Second, the standard briefing given to all ESLs did not appear to engage the audience. The slides contain information which is densely presented using some difficult language. Given the low educational attainment and reading age of Infantry ESLs, the basic information of most use, may not be assimilated by the individual. It is understandable that the MoD needs to meet its obligations to ensure that all ESLs are briefed and given the right information ahead of discharge, but trying to distil all of this information into a short briefing session may be counter-productive.

The style and communication skills of the Future Horizons Programme staff has made a real difference in engaging Infantry ESLs onto the programme.

## How does the Military view ESLs?

This is quite a contentious issue, but has a material bearing on why a service like the Future Horizons Programme, provided by outside agencies, is so important.

It is generally accepted that ESLs are not held in particularly high regard by most in the military. For those that do not complete basic training and leave before they become trained soldiers they may be viewed as immaterial. After all, they have not contributed to the function of the Infantry and in the case of those who have waited until the end of their training before leaving, are an expensive and, in some eyes, wasteful commodity.

For ESLs who have served more than 4 years, but are compulsorily discharged, attitudes may be even worse. Although not formally recorded within the scope of this evaluation, it has been observed that many of this group of ESLs are discharged following positive tests for illegal drugs. Drug use in the British Army is not tolerated (Bird, 2007) and those caught following compulsory drug testing (CDT) are seen to bring shame on their cap badge, and are treated accordingly. Similarly those trained soldiers discharged for breaches of discipline or not deemed to be suitable for any form of service are often considered not worthy of any transition support or assistance.

These strongly held views, although understandable in the context of delivering an effective fighting force, mean that some of the most vulnerable service leavers may not get the assistance they need, even when this may be available under the provisions set out in JSP575. This is supported by the fact that the numbers of ESLs who are considered to be vulnerable and referred for additional CTP support throughout the UK is very low; with estimates suggesting less than 1% are referred through existing processes.

# Future Horizons Programme Interview

Once engaged the ESLs are invited to attend a meeting with the FHP advisors, where a number of steps are followed:

1. Obtaining consent for engagement in the programme and information sharing
2. Validation of personal details: This information is crucial for future continuing engagement. ESLs are asked to physically confirm mobile telephone numbers and email addresses, as this information is not always accurately recorded
3. A self-evaluation of areas of need. This is a crude indicative measure of vulnerability which helps the FHP advisors in their conversations with ESLs about next-steps and helps staff post discharge have some understanding of the needs ESLs self-report
4. Manually signing-up ESLs onto the ADAPT management information system which allows further registration onto the Royal British Legion's Civvy Street and the RFEA's databases
5. An explanation of all the opportunities available through the programme, what services are available to the individual in their local area and how FHP will keep in touch with individuals post discharge.

All of the above are undertaken within the context of an informal interview where the FHP advisors work to tease out information that could be crucial to the successful transition of the ESL. The style of engagement and the ability to develop a rapport with the ESL is particularly important as there is only a very small window of opportunity and these staff represent the front-end of the programme.

A bad experience at this point could be detrimental to future engagement.

Being onsite also means that the FHP advisors can develop a relationship with the MoD staff whose job it is to process ESLs flowing through the system. Since the launch of the trial in January 2012, the FHP has become an integral component of the Hook Company ESL process. Integration of the two processes is clearly important in providing a successful outcome for the ESLs.

## Assessment

One of the decisions made during the interview is the level of support the ESL should receive once they have transitioned out of ITC Catterick, this is discussed in more detail later in this report.

### Levels of FHP Transition Support

**Level 1:** The ESL has been identified as very low risk and may have already identified and taken steps towards securing employment upon discharge. Action: refer to tracking team for monitoring

**Level 2:** The ESL requires some assistance with job finding, and would benefit from some assistance. Action: refer to the RFEA Specialist Employment Consultants for individual support; refer to the tracking team for monitoring

**Level 3:** Through self-report, interview and the use of the crude risk stratification tool, civilian staff have identified that the ESL may have a number of vulnerabilities which could impact on their life chances post discharge. Action: refer to level 3 partners for more bespoke and specialist support; refer to the tracking team for monitoring.



# Tracking and Interventions

The third and fourth significant components of the FHP focus on activities beyond the wire i.e. the support and assistance that is offered to ESLs once they have left the Army. We will briefly consider the following components:

- Tracking
- The role of the specialist employment consultants (SECs)
- The role of level 3 providers.

## Tracking

All ESLs that flow through the FHP are automatically allocated to be tracked by two dedicated ESL tracking staff. Their roles are to:

1. Contact the ESLs at regular monthly intervals to determine their current circumstances, employment/training status
2. Determine whether further support is required
3. Respond to daily contact from ESLs requiring extra support
4. Ensure that an accurate and up-to-date record is maintained of ESL activity
5. Liaise with level 3 partners to ensure they receive the accurate information on ESLs who require further support.

Some concerns have been raised by the tracking team about the amount of data input duplication. The tracking team are required to input data on 2 different systems with additional information collected for evaluation. Whenever there is multiple inputting of the same data there is the potential for losing information or wasting capacity. This is an operational issue relating to the way that information is processed during the period of the trial. Should the Future Horizons Programme continue and become mainstreamed, this issue will need to be addressed.

Throughout the duration of the trial period, the Future Horizons Programme has been responsive and accommodating. All FHP staff have identified issues early and worked to ensure a seamless ESL journey. This was especially noticeable in the following areas:

- Validating accuracy of information
- Making judgments about risk and vulnerability
- Determining the support that ESLs should receive from the programme.

## Role of Specialist Employment Consultants

Specialist Employment Consultants (SEC) are employed by the RFEA. They provide national coverage with the different SECs working regionally. The RFEA offer a Service of Care (SoC) programme which is open to ESLs leaving all three branches of the military. Even though this service has been in operation for a number of years the general take-up by ESLs is relatively low. The FHP has introduced many more ESLs to the SECs who are then able to use the range of interventions and services they offer.

SECs provide individual tailored assistance to ESLs in areas such as CV writing and interview skills. They provide up-to-date job vacancies for the ESL and offer guidance in applying for employment. SECs liaise with other agencies on behalf of the ESL in order to assist them in accessing benefits and identifying agencies that provide assistance with a wide range of educational and job finding skills, such as literacy and numeracy. SECs help ESLs to source funding for educational or employment support grants.

## Interventions and Role of Level 3 Providers

Level 3 providers are constituent members of the partnership model described earlier in this report and their function is set out at Appendix A.

Level 3 providers are generally representative of employment and training support organisations from across the private and voluntary sectors, including ex-Service and civilian organisations. Some of the organisations have national coverage whilst others are regionally based. A range of employment support interventions are provided by the different organisations. It is **not within the scope of the evaluation** or the intention of this report to consider or compare the different methodologies applied or support given to ESL by the third tier providers. However they do provide a valuable resource in introducing ESLs to potential funding options and access to support that is currently available through Government funded schemes (TUC, 2012). It is a view, often expounded, that some employment funding and support options are underused because potential clients are unaware of their existence or incapable or unwilling to access them.

In the initial interview by the FHP advisors at Hook Company, a proportion of the ESLs are identified as being at greater risk of not being able to find sustainable employment without the need for immediate and/or intensive assistance. The level 3 providers are responsible for providing this level of support. A simple system is in place where the tracking team send over all appropriate information directly to the providers so they can immediately engage with the ESL on an individual basis. This element to the programme is vital for those who require extra support and ensures ESLs do not have to search for this support, often unaided, which is not always easy to access.

The evaluation has shown that the FHP has successfully facilitated a large number of Royal British Legion Civvy Street Employment Support Grant applications, and in working with The Princes Trust and other partners has also helped ESLs to gain apprenticeships, training and qualifications that it is unlikely they would have sourced independently.



# The Evaluation

A decision was made at the start of the programme, in full consultation and agreement with the MoD and the funders of FHP, the Forces in Mind Trust (FIMT) that the evaluation should take the form of a service audit focusing on a number of key aspects in line with the contractual requirements set out by the MoD. The evaluation work would include:

- Establishing indicative performance indicators
- Building outcome measures into the operationalization of the programme
- Working across the programme to promote fidelity to the data collection model
- Undertaking analysis of the data collected
- Working with the partners to consider lessons learnt from the programme
- Making a range of observations pertinent to the operation of the programme
- Developing a set of key recommendations.

Throughout the trial the evaluation strategy used has adopted an approach modelled on a modified CIPP evaluation model checklist (Stufflebeam, 2002) and considers a combination of both formative and summative effects (Scriven, 1967). There are limitations to the scope and design of the evaluation and these can be summarised under 5 broad headings:

**Absence of Pre-existing Data:** prior to the FHP, ESLs have never been comprehensively tracked and there is no comparable employment outcome data for the infantry cohort of ESLs. Employment outcomes are of great interest for different Government Departments and other researchers. The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) are very interested in ESLs, particularly as there is emerging body of evidence highlighting the vulnerabilities of this cohort. The DWP have also considered the limitations of existing data relating to ESLs and have been unable to undertake meaningful quantitative and comparable analyses.

**Study Design:** to demonstrate unequivocal effectiveness of the FHP a control sample would need to be identified. The best way of determining effect would be to use a control group. This could be achieved by randomising ESLs who enter into the programme; developing a waiting list control; or pair-match with another group of ESLs. These approaches were not deemed appropriate because: first, the MoD were clear that they did not want a scientific-experimental model

## Case Study...James

- Spent two years in the Army
- He failed CDT and left in April,
- Future Horizons got in touch and he spent three days a week Mon-Weds living at Finchale College.
- Finchale College helped him get a rail apprenticeship in engineering but he had to leave for financial reasons
- Now works at a warehouse
- It has been really hard and quite strange for him leaving the Army, and he wishes he could turn back time
- He thinks that everyone should have access to Future Horizons, but feels that those who are forced to leave should be a priority rather than ESLs who just hate the environment
- "Future Horizons and Kevin have been amazing and I couldn't have done this without their support"

*"I wish I could turn back time, it has been a really difficult life change leaving the Army as it was my whole life. However, I have started to pick myself up with the amazing support of Future Horizons and I couldn't have got to where I am without them. The programme organised for me to attend a residential course at college, picking me up from home on the Monday and dropping me back every Wednesday. They then helped me to get an apprenticeship and out into the workforce. I really believe that every ESL should have access to the Future Horizons Programme."*

**James now has a full time job in a warehouse and credits Future Horizons for his achievement.**

\*Name has been changed

evaluation requiring ethical approval; second, it was felt that disqualifying participants from access to the trial, through any form of randomisation, may bring into question the charitable aims of a number of the participating organisations, and may raise understandable ethical questions at Board level; third, the practicalities of contacting the controls and obtaining enough data to be statistically significant may prove insurmountable. This was one of the key findings of the previous attempt at undertaking an RCT for this cohort (Braidwood & Williams, 2009); and fourth, the Catterick ITC ESLs represent a unique population, with particular challenges with regard to educational attainment and other pre-service vulnerabilities.

**Time Limitations:** Developing an evaluation protocol, undertaking collection and analysing data could not be achieved within the short timescales available.

**Costs:** Undertaking a control trial is expensive and would need to be undertaken by experienced evaluators probably from a University Department. The costs of undertaking the work required would be considerably more than the sum set aside by FHP for service evaluation.

**Strategic Challenges:** there are a number of challenges which fall outside of the purview of the FHP. Importantly these include cross-governmental data-sharing challenges, meaning that information is either not readily available or inaccessible between government departments.

Therefore, the evaluation of the FHP is based on an audit of the programme using both quantitative and qualitative data collected throughout the programme; interviews with a self-selected sample of participants at 3 and 6 months; and a small selection of ESL case studies.

The untrained ESLs at Catterick are all drawn from front-line infantry regiments. We have briefly considered some of the characteristics of recruits in to the infantry earlier in this report. Given the characteristics of infantry recruits it would be very challenging to match the Catterick sample with ESLs from other branches of service (i.e. RN and RAF). Catterick Garrison is not though the only Army training establishment. Why can't we compare the ITC Catterick Sample with ESLs from ATC Pirbright or ATR Winchester? The answer contains two main elements. First, the same matching challenge that you would have across services – different regiments have different standards of entry requirement and different recruiting patterns.

This means that, in general, the qualifications of infantry recruits are much lower than recruits elsewhere and they are often recruited from areas of high deprivation, potentially making the transition journey to employment of an infantry ESL more difficult. Second, and even more fundamental: there are no mechanisms in place for tracking ESLs anywhere in the British Armed Services. In other words a separate exercise would have to be established to track and monitor suitably matched ESLs from other training establishments.

The design of a programme to track matched ESLs would have to take into account a number of factors. First, the cooperation of the MoD and the different training establishments would be needed. Second, ESLs would also need to actively join the sample group, even though in the first instance there would be no obvious benefit to them. Third, there would also be understandable ethical considerations associated with this research activity and the requirement for ethical approval.

Within the parameters of the evaluation it is not possible to draw any concrete statistical conclusions about whether the programme is more effective than a control group or service as usual, for the reasons set out above. Having said this, it is still possible to consider similar, but not matched samples, from work that has already been undertaken with ESLs and within the general population to begin to make inferences about the effectiveness of the programme.

Very little has been written about the outcomes for ESLs once they have left the military. However a recent review of the available literature suggests that ESLs are more likely to have adverse outcomes (e.g. suicide, mental health problems) and risk taking behaviours (e.g. heavy alcohol consumption, suicidal thoughts) than longer serving veterans (Fear, Wood, & Wessely, 2009) and recommendations have been made for more research in this area (Fossey, 2010). A recent study has also shown that current mental health problems are more commonly reported amongst ESLs than other Veterans (Buckman et al., 2012). There are also significant concerns about the ability of ESLs to find sustainable employment, particularly in the current economic climate.

Where ESLs have been considered, the research has tended to focus on ESLs who have completed their basic training but have left the British Armed Forces before completing 4 years of service. There is currently no published academic literature focusing on the outcomes for ESLs who leave the British Army before they join the trained strength.

### Progress to Date – Engagement and Support

This 12 month report considers a number of groups of ESLs as they progress through the programme. First, the characteristics of the entire ESL cohort engaged at Hook Company, ITC Catterick; second those ESLs whose journeys have been monitored by the Birmingham Tracking Team and; third those who have participated in surveys at 3 and 6 months after joining the programme.

It is important to consider that ESLs have continued to join the programme throughout the year as illustrated by Figure 1 and Table 1. Although ESLs continue to enter the programme, for the purposes of this report, meaningful employment outcomes are only reported for those entering the programme in the first 9 months of the FHP trial period, as these are the parameters of the agreed evaluation. Employment data therefore covers the period for those ESLs who left Catterick from January through to September 2012. However, as the programme has been extended, further evaluation data is continuing to be collected and will be reported in September 2013.

There has been a steady decrease in the numbers of untrained ESLs entering the programme over the 12 month period, with the numbers of trained ESLs remaining relatively steady. With 99% of untrained ESLs who attend the mandatory JSP575 briefing opting to join the programme, this reduction is in concordance with the decrease in Infantry recruits to ITC Catterick over this period. It has been noted that the numbers of new recruits have risen again over the past few months and so there will be an anticipated increase in demand for the FHP by Infantry ESLs. As the graph shows in March and May more ESLs entering the programme than we would have expected by chance, that is one standard deviation from the mean ( $1\sigma$  from  $\bar{x}$ ). Similarly for August and December less than expected entered the programme. Further analysis would help to identify whether these were chance events or associated with Infantry recruiting patterns.

Figure 1

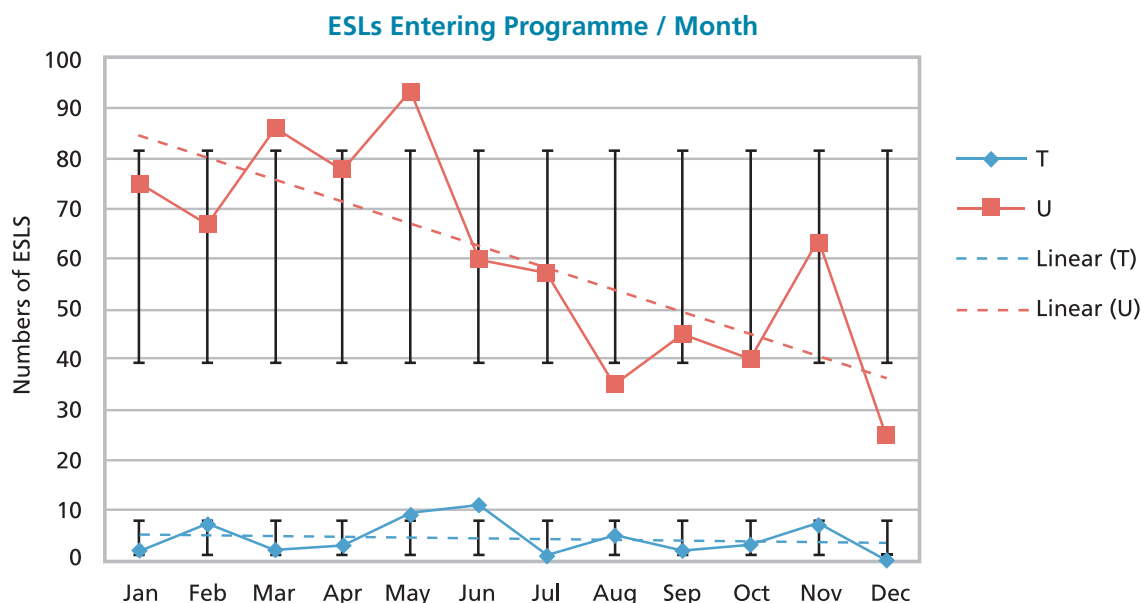


Table 1

**ESLs ENTERING FUTURE HORIZONS PROGRAMME**

2012	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	Total
<b>Soldiers Briefed <sup>8</sup></b>	110	97	104	99	140	86	85	44	73	77	86	39	1040
<b>Soldiers Opted In</b>	85	77	80	76	114	58	66	30	51	53	60	27	777
<b>Soldiers Refused</b>	5	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	8
<b>Medical Discharges<sup>9</sup></b>	20	20	24	23	25	28	19	13	22	24	25	12	255
<b>Total Interviewed</b>	85	77	80	76	114	58	66	30	51	53	60	27	777
<b>Registration ADAPT</b>	85	77	80	76	114	58	66	30	51	53	60	27	777
<b>Trained Strength</b>	9	1	3	3	14	13	1	0	4	5	5	0	58
<b>Untrained Strength</b>	76	76	77	73	100	45	65	30	47	48	55	27	719
<b>Level 1 Registration</b>	10	9	6	8	27	8	13	4	12	9	6	11	123
<b>Level 2 Registration</b>	66	64	69	57	59	32	35	19	32	26	34	10	503
<b>Level 3 Registration</b>	9	4	5	11	28	18	18	7	7	18	20	6	151

<sup>7</sup> Along with many extraneous MOD functions Hook Company closed between 19 Dec 2012 and 7 Jan 2013. This may well account for the lower than expected ESLs numbers during this period.

<sup>8</sup> All ESLs that passed through Hook Company during the period of the FHP trial were provided with a briefing.

<sup>9</sup> Of the ESLs briefed, 255 were eventually classed as medical discharges and offered transition support through the extant CTP channels. These ESLs were not eligible for the Future Horizons Programme.

### Case Study... Marcus Edwards

- Discharged from the army on May 5th after 7 months as couldn't keep up fitness wise with the squad
- Future Horizons got in touch and kept in touch which was appreciated
- Was offered help and training but in the end found a job working at the docks
- Found things very strange coming out of the army but Future Horizons helped and he knows he could go back there if needed
- All ESLs should benefit from this programme

*"I really appreciated the support and training offered from Future Horizons. It is very strange leaving the Army but Future Horizons helped me integrate back into society and I know that if I need assistance in the future, they will be there. All ESL's should have the opportunity to benefit from a programme like Future Horizons."*

Throughout the duration of the Future Horizons Programme (9 January 2012 - 31 December 2012), **777** ESLs have engaged with the programme. Only **8** soldiers have opted not to register with the programme – an engagement rate of **98.9%**. This is a marked improvement on the previous process of third sector engagement, through the RFEA's Service of Care Programme (SoC), where ESLs were invited to fill out a registration form as part of the mandatory briefing. This achieved an initial engagement of 53.5% with further marked differences in other outcomes, reported later in this report.

Table 2 summarises the basic demographic details for the ESLs on the programme. There are a number of points of interest to note. Of the 777 ESLs in the programme only 2 were female and they were from the trained strength. The average length of service for untrained ESLs was

123.4 days, however this number is effected by a number of outliers as illustrated by the enormous range of 4119 days, over 11 years! This is explained by untrained soldiers who have gone absent without leave (AWOL) for an extended period of time and have then been returned to their training unit to be discharged. A more realistic interpretation of the data could be to look at the mode, which shows the most frequently occurring length of service at which untrained ESLs joined the Future Horizons Programme: 47 days.





Table 2

		Trained	%	Untrained	%	Total
Number		n=58	6.69	n=719	93.31	N=777
Gender	M	50	96.15	725	100.00	
	F	2	3.85	0	0.00	
Age on enlistment	Max	31		31		
	Min	16		16		
	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	18.83		20.12		
	Standard					
	Deviation ( $\sigma$ )	3.04		3.12		
Length of service (days)	Max	3,839		4,122		
	Min	269		3		
	Range	3,570		4,119		
	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	1,203.3		123.4		
	Median	1,140.5		74		
	Mode	N/A		47		
	Standard					
	Deviation ( $\sigma$ )	788.46		193.99		
Ethnicity (Aggregated)	Asian	0	0.00	6	0.83	
	Black	0	0.00	9	1.24	
	Mixed Heritage	0	0.00	2	0.28	
	White	52	100.00	708	97.66	
Reason for discharge	DAOR	0	0.00	474	65.38	
	DOE	0	0.00	10	1.38	
	RFAS	9	17.31	135	18.62	
	SNLR	43	82.69	70	9.66	
	UFAS	0	0.00	36	4.97	

Ethnicity data for the ESLs shows us that they are overwhelmingly White (>97%). Office for National Statistics data shows England and Wales to have a White population of 87.9% (with regional variation 69.7%- 95.9%). Figures obtained from DASA tell us that 9.4% of the British Army are made up of soldiers from Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds. However these figures do not differentiate between the different parts of the British Army, and figures relating specifically to the Infantry are not readily available.

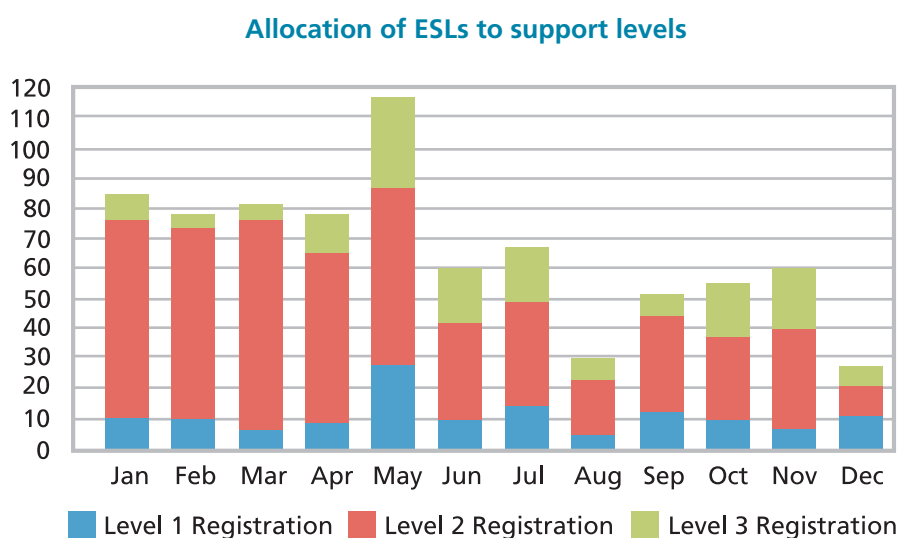
<sup>10</sup> See Glossary for term definitions

<sup>11</sup> Defence Analytical Services and Advice

Reason for discharge data shows us that the majority of untrained ESLs entering the programme (65%) took their own discharge from the Army: that is discharge as of right (DAOR). The majority of trained ESLs were required to leave the Army (n=43, 83%) as their services were no longer required (SNLR). This is usually as a result of a breach of discipline and in civilian terms could be compared to being dismissed from employment. Interestingly, nearly 10% (n= 70) of the untrained ESLs were also discharged following the SNLR route.

As described earlier, all ESLs engaged in the FHP are given an initial interview whilst still serving. Based on the outcomes of this interview they are all assigned a level of future support dependent upon need: level 1 for those with minimum support needs; level 2 for those who need some assistance with job finding, but are not deemed to have additional vulnerabilities that would significantly impact on their employability; finally, level 3 high intensity support for ESL who would be at the greatest risk of not finding employment upon discharge. Figure 2 illustrates the allocation of ESLs to these support levels over the first 12 months of the programme.

**Figure 2**



Most of the ESLs were allocated into level 2 (level 1, 15.8%: n=123; level 2, 64.7%: n=503; level 3, 19.4%: n=151). What are the possible reasons for the larger proportion of ESLs being allocated to level 2?

First, it is possible that the advisors in Hook Company think that ESLs do not require as much support as they may actually need. This initial decision is based on an interview and a self-report tool completed by the ESLs. Second, ESLs do not always recognise the support they will require until they are discharged and start to try and find employment. This is supported by the number of additional level 3 referrals made post discharge. Third, advisors cannot be expected to fully explain the full scope, spread, availability and function of the level 3 partner providers, so they will often allocate directly to level 2 if the ESL is not explicitly

<sup>11</sup> More details on DAOR are set out in information produced by the Army on terms of service [http://www.army.mod.uk/documents/general/Army\\_terms\\_of\\_service\(AGC\).pdf](http://www.army.mod.uk/documents/general/Army_terms_of_service(AGC).pdf)

requesting support at that stage as this can always be facilitated post discharge by the RFEA Specialist Employment Consultant (SEC) or the tracking team. Fourth, the risk stratification tool completed by the ESLs is crude and not very sensitive. Although only used as an illustrative guide (in conjunction with interviews and the 1173A), it could be speculated that the outcome may have more influence in allocation.

ESLs allocated to level 2 are automatically assigned to one of 5 specialist employment consultants who between them cover designated areas of the UK. ESLs seen within the programme are recruited from all over the UK, with the majority coming from the NE, NW and Scotland and a review of discharge data made available by the MoD, shows the majority return back to these areas. This leads to a disparity in caseload sizes amongst the SECs (with more work allocated to those covering the North of England) with the potential for variable response times and quality of intervention, however, this has not been directly measured as one of the outcomes of the trial.

### Case Study... Scott Carnegie

- Scott has been in the Army for a total of two years, having to leave twice:
  - o First time due to a fractured femur
  - o Second time due to a recurring knee problem
- Leaving the Army was very difficult for Scott, he was 'totally gutted'
- Future Horizons signposted potential courses and Scott is currently waiting for funding to go on a forklift truck driving course
- He talks to his SEC and the tracking team a couple of times a month, he finds the fact that they are on hand to give him advice very reassuring
- Scott has been in a very vulnerable position and was absolutely sure that without the help of Future Horizons, he would be fighting for his life in hospital
- Scott had nothing, FHP have helped him get a flat, bed and a microwave – he is looking forward to getting a sofa very soon

*"FHP gave me a push in the right direction; I would have literally nothing if it wasn't for Future Horizons. I have a way to go but I know the support is there and I can ask for help and advice anytime."*



## Risk and Vulnerability

Following JSP575 protocol, ESLs who are deemed as vulnerable to social exclusion or “at risk” by their Unit Interviewing Officer (UIO), are diverted onto a prescribed pathway in an effort to meet with specific needs, however, very few are ever referred for these services through this route. Interestingly, FHP staff at Hook Company speculate that a significant number of the ESLs within the Infantry cohort of the FHP potentially meet the JSP575 criteria for vulnerability to social exclusion, particularly with respect to housing and employment and possibly other factors such as poor mental health.

As previously discussed, in an effort to identify areas of vulnerability, FHP worked with the Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI) to adapt a vulnerability questionnaire used by the RBLI. The questions are set out in Table 3. The adapted version of the questionnaire is not validated and there are some issues about its sensitivity and appropriateness for the Infantry ESLs. Nevertheless, all of the ESLs completed the questionnaire and we have been able to draw some inferences from the data. A comparison of VAQ responses is graphically illustrated in Figure 3.

**Table 3**

### Value-Added Questions

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 I want to get a job as soon as possible              | 6 My disciplinary record won't prevent me from achieving my goals |
| 2 I have transferable skills I can use                 | 7 I don't tend to get anxious or worried                          |
| 3 I'm confident that I'll get the job that I want      | 8 I don't often overdo it on drink or drugs                       |
| 4 My health doesn't prevent me from getting on in life | 9 I don't have caring responsibilities for others                 |
| 5 I have a safe and secure place to live               |   |

## Case Study... Jonathan Crawford

- Discharged from the army in March after 3 months service.
- Jonathan went to Future Horizons after he was discharged
- Even though Jonathan moved back to Northern Ireland, Future Horizons kept in touch and helped him to get onto a security training course for two weeks
- As a direct result of the course, Jonathan got a job in the security industry in July 2012
- Future Horizons are directly responsible for Jonathan's current employment

Quote: Commenting on the Future Horizons Programme he said; *"I am so grateful to Future Horizons for all their support since I left the Army. The staff were extremely helpful throughout this process. All ESLs should have the opportunity to use the services of the Future Horizons Programme."*

<sup>15</sup> 1173A is the MOD administrative form recording ESL resettlement interviews

Figure 3

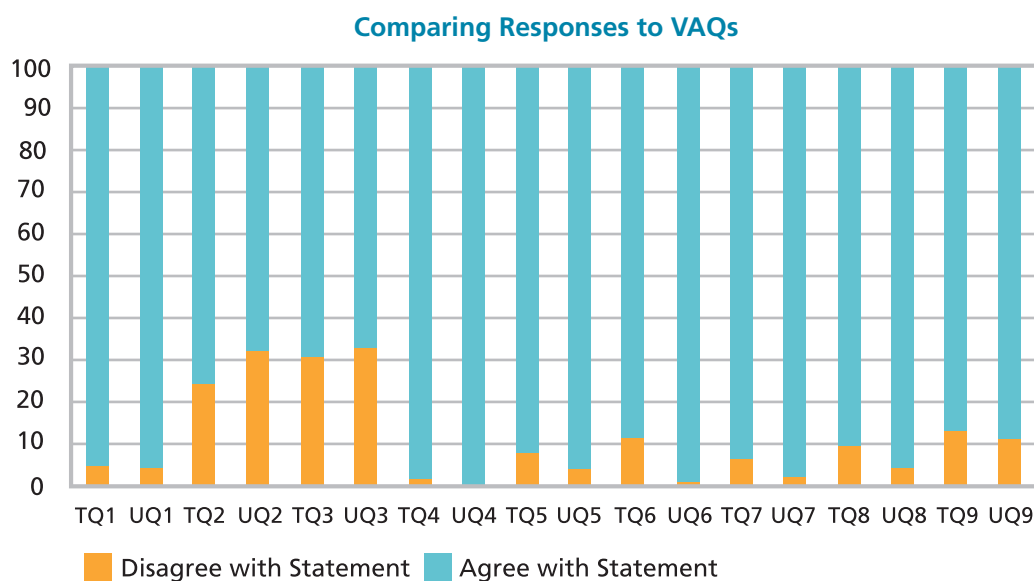


Figure 3 shows the percentage of trained and untrained ESLs who responded to the value-added questions (VAQs). TQ1-TQ9 are the responses for the trained ESLs to VAQs 1-9 and the same pattern for untrained ESLs applies. For ease of analysis the responses were aggregated into agree and disagree statements.

The value added questions 2 and 3 show that there is anxiety amongst both trained and untrained ESLs as to whether they will be able to get the job that they want and also have transferable skills. 25% of trained and 32% of untrained ESLs didn't feel they had transferable skills and 31% of trained and 33% untrained were not confident in getting the type of work they wanted when they transitioned out of the Infantry.

However other interesting observations can be drawn from these data. Comparing the responses given between trained and untrained ESLs, shows that there are differences between the responses for questions 5 – 8.

The absolute numbers of respondents are too small to carry out any meaningful statistical comparison, but in each case the trained soldiers expressed more concerns than untrained ESLs about accommodation, their disciplinary record, becoming anxious and use of substances. This may well be an area that warrants further investigation.

### Case Study... Mathew Beaumont

- Matthew spent two months training in the Army
- Matthew has a fiancé and little girl who rely on him as the breadwinner
- Future Horizons briefed Matthew about post Army life and provided potential career opportunities to consider
- Future Horizons put Matthew in touch with the RFEA
- Future Horizons organised funding for Matthew to learn to drive, he has already passed his theory and will take his driver's test at the end of the month
- Future Horizons continues to stay in touch with Matthew, forward job opportunities and hold monthly check ins

*"Everyone who leaves the Army early should have the opportunity to benefit from the Future Horizons Programme, they are a vital resource for the transition into civilian life."*



## Employment Outcomes

Key to the FHP is understanding the employment outcomes for the ITC Catterick ESLs. Employment data is obtained from 2 sources. First, the ADAPT tracking system used by the CTP and adapted for use by the FHP. This information gives us useful employment status information on all of the ESLs who have passed through the FHP throughout the trial. This is a live database, the initial ESL record is created by the ITC Catterick advisors, and is updated by both the FHP Tracking Team, based in Birmingham, and data taken from the SECs database, Logical Office. The second important source of employment data for FHP is a rolling tracking evaluation programme managed by the tracking team. They routinely contact all ESLs on the programme, at the 3 and 6 month point, to carry out a formal evaluation interview, alongside information received from their on-going interactions with the ESL. How these tracking systems work is best illustrated using an example:

ESL Smith leaves ITC Catterick on 10 February, 2012. As a result of the FHP Interview he will be registered with Civvy Street and the RFEA Special Employment Consultants. He will be contacted within 48 hours of his discharge, usually by mobile phone, to remind him that he is signed up to the FHP and to validate his registration with the SECs – this process has to be done electronically. Once ESL Smith has completed his registration he will be contacted by the SEC who will begin assistance with employment support, sourcing training and funding and referral to Level 3 support if required.

The prioritisation and level of assistance for ESL Smith will be determined by the initial allocation of support levels undertaken at the FHP interview and illustrated in Diagram 2. It is possible that ESL Smith's level of need may change – he may not have the job or accommodation he thought would be ready for him on discharge. Support levels are dynamic and ESL Smith can move between levels dependent upon his need. This information is captured in the tracking system via routine monthly contact or updates from the SEC.

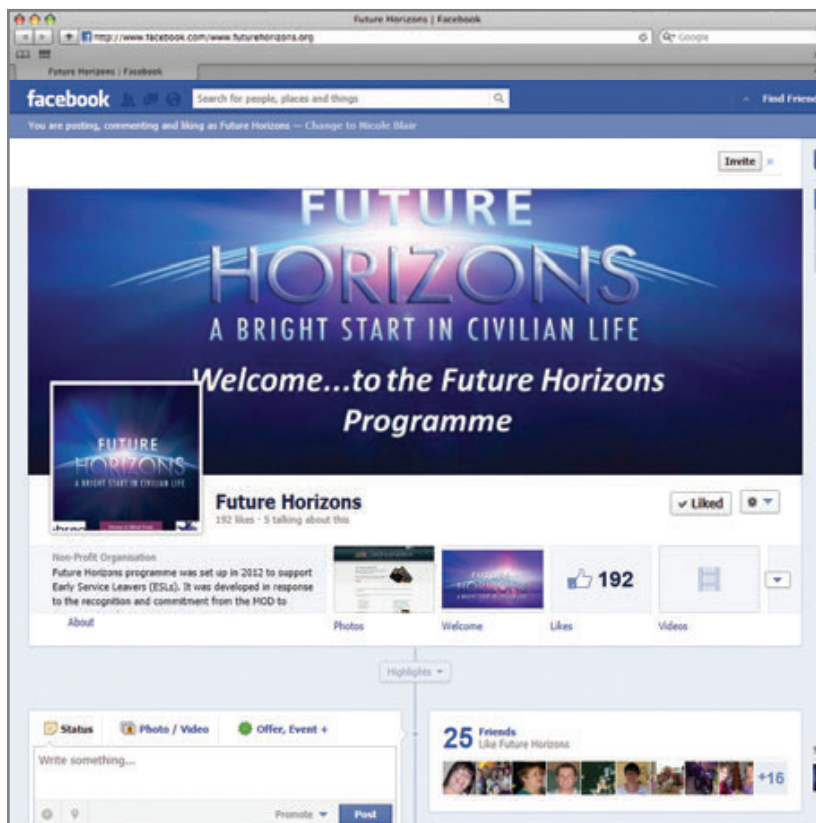
At the 3 and 6 month tracking calls, May and August, ESL Smith will be invited to complete a more detailed questionnaire about his current status and experiences of the programme.

Of course ESL Smith, is just one of many ESLs who are progressing through the system (for the period of this 12 month evaluation, 777). Each ESL will receive the same level of contact and support. Naturally, the ESLs are not always available to take calls or respond to emails, so the job of the tracking team requires patience and perseverance.

With such high levels of initial engagement there were some concerns that there would be a high level of attrition once the ESLs had left ITC Catterick. This concern has proven to be unfounded. Over the first 9 months of tracking only 102 of the 642 ESLs have proven un-contactable, this equates to a **post-transition engagement of 84%**. This compares very favourably with similar schemes in employment support, health and the social care sector.

The Future Horizons Programme also use social media to help maintain a high level of engagement with the ESLs participating in the programme. A dedicated Facebook page<sup>14</sup> has been created and all ESLs are invited to join. As Facebook is a social media site widely used by ESLs, this provides a good interface for posting job and training opportunities, as well as updating them on other FHP programme activity.

Although the FHP advisors make an initial informed decision about whether ESLs require job-finding assistance from level 3 partners, inevitably more support will be required by ESLs in levels 1 or 2. With the exception of the January cohort, the tracking team have been able to **refer 100% of all level 3 ESLs to an appropriate level 3 provider**. Additionally they have also referred a further 115 ESLs who were originally allocated to level 2. In total **178 ESLs** have been referred to level 3 partners for additional intensive employment support.



It's only possible to report on the employment outcomes for ESLs that we have managed to track during the trial period of the trial. For the 16% overall who have remained un-contactable we cannot be certain about their employment outcomes. Of the successfully 540 tracked, 258 went on to complete a further more detailed evaluation of their progress at 3 months (48% response rate) showing 47% employed. After 6 months the response rate increased to (91%) and of these 451 individuals, 286 (63%) are employed or in education. These data are further illustrated in Table 4, Table 5 and Figure 4.



<sup>14</sup> <http://www.facebook.com/www.futurehorizons.org>

Table 4

## Initial Tracking: Cohort at 3 Months

Month of entry into FHP	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	6 Month Total	%	July	Aug	Sep	9 Month Total	%
Start Figure	85	77	82	77	117	60	498		64	30	50	642	
No Response (Attrition)	11	13	12	7	27	11	81	16.27%	9	3	9	102	15.89%
ESLs tracked	74	64	70	70	90	49	417	83.73%	55	27	41	540	84.11%
Employed	28	25	32	27	28	25	165	39.57%	24	14	18	221	40.93%
Education	0	0	0	2	3	2	7	1.68%	5	3	7	22	4.07%
Total in Employment or Education	28	25	32	29	31	27	172	41.25%	29	17	25	243	45.00%

Table 5

## Second Tracking: Cohort at 6 Months

Month of entry into FHP	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	6 Month Total	%
Start Figure	85	77	82	77	117	60	498	
No Response (Attrition)	10	6	6	3	17	5	47	9.44%
ESLs tracked	75	71	76	74	100	55	451	90.56%
Employed	49	35	43	40	62	29	258	57.21%
Education	3	6	4	5	7	3	28	6.21%
Total in Employment or Education	52	41	47	45	69	32	286	63.41%

## Case Study...Shane Riley

- Shane spent 3 weeks with the Army and
- Following his mother's ill health, Shane decided to leave the Army and called FHP for help
- FHP have kept in touch with Shane and helped him to get a grant to enable him to learn to drive
- Shane started a mechanic/parts apprenticeship programme after 3 months
- FHP continue to send Shane job opportunities as they come through
- Shane commented on his experience with FHP "All ESLs should have the opportunity to receive help from the Future Horizons Programme and the contacts that they can offer once you leave the Army."

Figure 4

#### Numbers of ESLs in Employment or Training at 3 and 6 Month Tracking

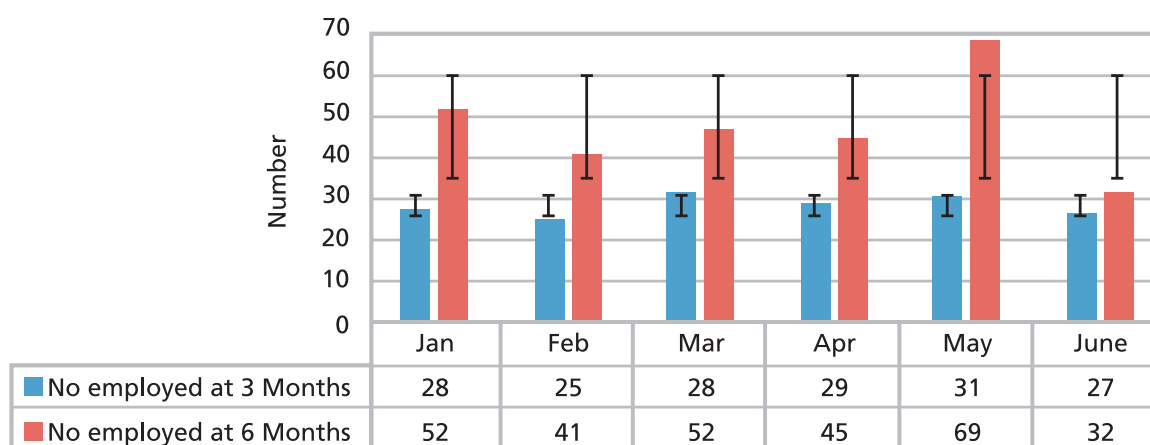
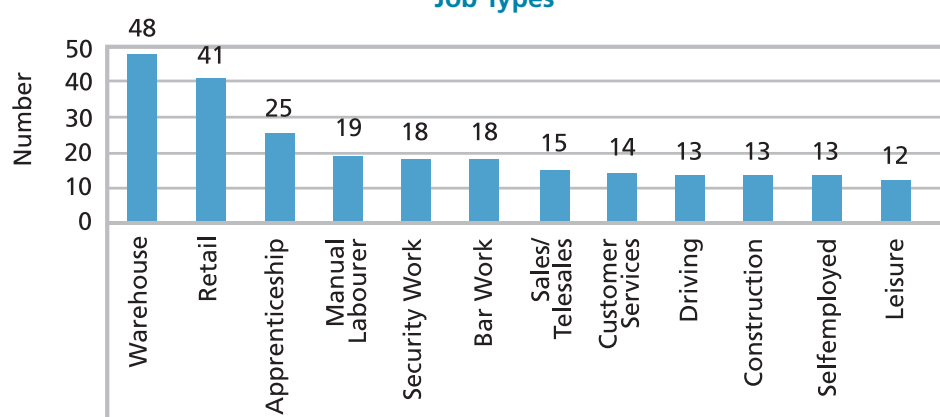


Figure 5

#### Job Types



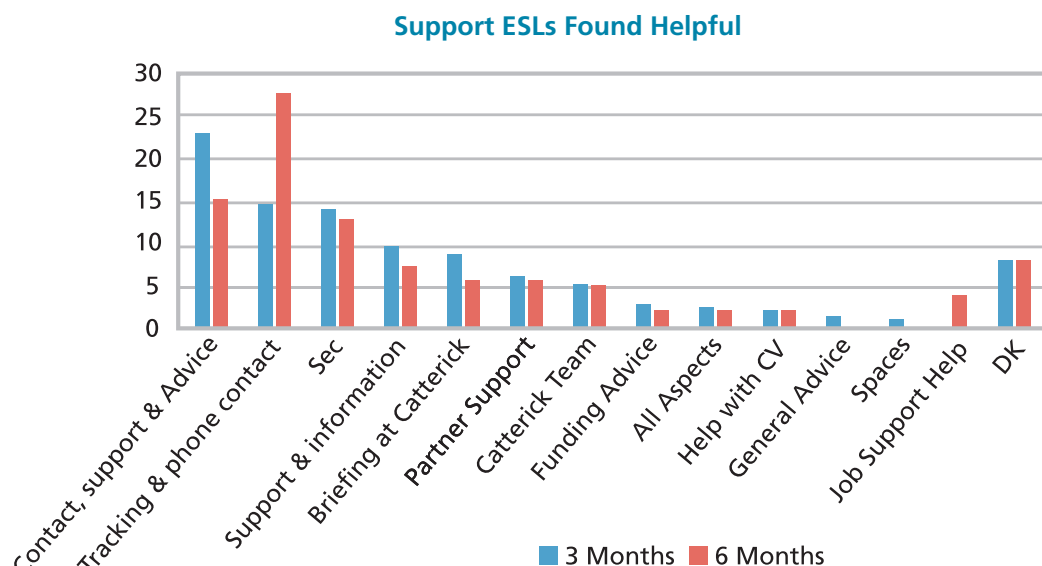
The types of employment undertaken by the ESLs has also been analysed. Figure 5 shows the top 12 most frequent types of employment for the ESLs on the programme. It is noteworthy that, to date, 25 of the ESLs who have passed through the FHP have gone on to join apprenticeship schemes.

As Figure 4 illustrates, the longer the cohort of ESLs remains in tracking, FHP are able to determine that more of them that are in employment or training. This is not unsurprising and this effect would be expected. Is it therefore possible to draw any conclusions about validity at this point? In the absence of a control group, this is where we draw on qualitative data collected during the trial and other external sources of comparable information.

Table 6

	Number of respondents	In Employment	In training	Enough Information to take next steps			Confidence in taking next steps			Would you recommend the programme		
				Y	N	DK	Not Confident	Confident	V Confident	Y	N	DK
<b>3 Months</b>	369	222	40	353	4	3	127	168	70	323	1	40
<b>6 Months</b>	208	143	30	205	1	0	54	94	59	203	1	2
<b>3 Months%</b>	369	60.16	10.84	95.66	1.08	0.81	34.42	45.53	18.97	87.53	0.27	10.84
<b>6 Months%</b>	208	68.75	14.42	98.56	0.48	0.00	25.96	45.19	28.37	97.60	0.48	0.96

Figure 6



### Case Study... Matthew Stacey

- Matt spent 7 weeks in the Army
- Matt didn't want to leave the Army but had to quite suddenly due to his parents' ill health
- FHP has kept in contact with Matt and helped him to get a grant from The Royal British Legion to enable him to learn to drive
- Matt finds the regular contact via email and phone with his SEC reassuring
- If it wasn't for the FHP he would be just signing on at the Job Centre and feeling quite uninspired
- Matt hopes to re-join the Army, if that is not possible, he will continue to stay in touch with FHP and look for employment

*"Future Horizons has been useful but they need to make sure that everyone knows exactly what it does! A lot of the lads like to do their own thing and don't realize the stuff that it can help with."*



# Assessing the Impact

As discussed, at the 3 and 6 month tracking points, ESLs are invited to participate in a more detailed questionnaire about their experiences. Table 5 and Figure 6 illustrate some of the questionnaire responses. The questionnaire also showed that at 3 months **70.7%** of respondents (n=369) said they found the programme helpful and this rose to **76.9%** (n=208) at the 6 month point. At both points **>95%** of respondents said that the programme had given them the information they needed. Figure 6 shows which aspects of the programme respondents felt most helpful. Contact and support seems to be important for ESLs at both 3 and 6 months. For those ESLs who responded to the 6 month questionnaire, tracking and telephone contact is the most helpful. The fact that ESLs particularly valued the tracking function of FHP is an important finding, as this is a service that would not normally be available to them.

Even though >70% of respondents found the programme helpful, some said that they didn't actively use the programme (22.2% at 3 months, dropping to 14.4% at 6 months). Of these individuals >85% described themselves as "confident" or "very confident" in taking their next steps. Of those describing themselves as "not confident" in taking their next steps (n=127 at 3 months; n=54 at 6 months), they found support and advice and the SECs to be the most helpful. It is interesting to note that the number of ESLs not actively using the programme is roughly equivalent to the number who were initially assessed as requiring very little intervention, i.e. level 1. These ESLs may eventually go on to appreciate the benefits of the programme, as once registered with the FHP they have access to the lifelong support offered by the RFEA and the Royal British Legion's Civvy Street service.

**At the 3 month interview 87.5% of respondents said they would recommend the programme which rose to 97.6% at the 6 month interview.**

Whilst the 3 and 6 month questionnaires are not validated tools and there may be some potential bias issues in how questions were asked and information gathered, the results are indicative and point to a service that is very well regarded by those that use it and may be of particular importance for ESLs who are not confident in taking steps and need more support and advice, particularly in gaining employment and accessing other levels of support.

Earlier in this report we briefly mentioned the Service of Care (SoC) programme that was operating at ITC Catterick prior to the commencement of the FHP. Although it is not possible to directly compare the two programme and the ESLs that used them, although they are a very similar cohort, it may be helpful to draw some parallels between them. Of those who registered onto the SoC programme at the ESL briefing >21% had no further contact compared with 9 - 16% of those on the FHP. Of the 550 ESLs who remained in contact with the SoC, 23.6% had found employment or training within 12 months. The Future Horizons Programme has already seen **63.4% in education or training after 6 months tracking.**

Is the Future Horizons Programme value for money? The evaluation did set out to reflect on this question, but it may be useful to compare FHP with other Government funded employment programmes even though there are differences in delivery and the cohorts using the programmes.

We have calculated that if those service leavers who had not found employment in the first 3 months had gone onto the Work Programme at 3 months as part of the voluntary early access group, which Service leavers can volunteer for, the costs incurred to the public purse would have been in excess of £232,000. However, it should be noted that, as the definition of early access for service leavers only changed in the autumn. DWP do not have any figures available to indicate how many access the work programme at this stage and are currently of the opinion that this figure would probably be low. Nevertheless this is a very useful indicator as to how the Future Horizons Programme, and its consortium approach, could potentially contribute towards savings to the overall public purse. Additionally, The Work Choice Programme for those with complex barriers to employment, costs the DWP on average £5,000 - £6,000 per client, with the majority of this funding being paid up front and not dependant on an employment outcome.

Also of note is the value the FHP consortium brings by drawing together partners who can help ESLs access the existing range of government-funded support, helping to maximise scarce public resources. Additionally, the fact that the programme has been successful in helping more than 63% of its participants into employment or training so far compares very favourably with other current government employment support programmes.

Because of the consortium approach adopted by FHP, it is more than reasonable to speculate that the broad costs of the programme are lower than those spent on other mainstream welfare to work programmes and as such FHP can be seen to offer value for money.

Finally, as well as the ESLs that we have shown to be in employment using the 3 and 6 Month FHP evaluation, it is also possible to interrogate the ADAPT system to get live information about the ESLs using the programme. As of 31 January 2013, **302 ESLs had been in employment for 13 weeks or more, meeting the DWP sustainability test.** A further 63 ESLs were in employment, but had not yet reached the 13 week cut off. ESLs have entered into a range of different jobs, with warehouse work, retail and entering apprenticeships being the top three.



# Conclusions

It can be concluded that the Future Horizons Programme is not, in itself, a single employment intervention for Early Service Leavers. It is a systematic approach for enabling ESLs to have access to a range of different forms of employment and welfare provision through a structured and well-organised model of tracking and support.

With the limits placed upon this evaluation, it is not possible to draw an explicit conclusion that FHP is solely responsible for getting the ESLs into employment or training. However, it is not unreasonable to conclude that the FHP has played a significant role and the evaluation has shown that the majority of ESLs using the programme feel that it is of benefit.

During the period of this evaluation report 777 Early Service Leavers have engaged with the Future Horizons Programme. Only 8 ESLs declined to opt in. Of those on the programme, so far 451 have been tracked over 6 months and of those more than 63% are in training or employment. Over 70% of respondents to the 3 and 6 month questionnaires said that they found the programme useful with on average > 90% of respondents saying they would recommend the programme to others.

There appears to be a number of factors that are crucial to the success of the programme: engagement, maintenance, tracking and the support of partners. FHP has demonstrated that for this enterprise to succeed there must be cooperation and collaboration with the MOD and the Military. Relationships are essential. It would be impossible to engage with such a high number of ESLs if the programme did not operate in some capacity behind the wire. How ESLs are engaged and the use of different technologies and interfaces should be explored further. Once engaged it is crucial that the ESL is not lost. The FHP has managed an attrition rate of between only 9% – 16%. This is an enormous achievement given the nature of Infantry ESL and the experiences of other programmes, such as the Light Touch Mentoring Pilot, where poor engagement was a significant factor.

One of the most impressive aspects of the Future Horizons Programme has been the role of the different partners (outlined in Appendix A.) Some of the organisations have offered guidance in the development and operation of the programme, whilst others have played an active role in working directly with ESLs. FHP has shown how organisations from across the voluntary and private sectors can work together to provide support and interventions for ESLs.

Throughout this report are selected case studies from ESLs who have benefited from the programme. It is important not to forget the human element when considering what has been achieved. Early Service Leavers, whether trained or untrained, remain, a relative low priority for the British Army. The procedures are in place to assess risk, but it remains open to further research whether vulnerable ESLs do get the interventions they need whilst they are still serving. Undoubtedly there are needs that can only be met through structural and procedural cooperation with external agencies, such as the network of collaboration established by the Future Horizons Programme.

Notwithstanding the benefits outlined above, this programme also goes some way to helping the MOD deliver its social responsibility for these potentially vulnerable young people and could help foster a more positive ESL attitude towards the MOD and the transition services that are available.

# Recommendations

## **Recommendation 1:**

Within the scope of this evaluation the FHP has been shown to help ESLs on their journey to employment. The MOD should consider continuing to work with this consortium model and consider the viability of adopting this model for ESLs across all three branches of the Armed Forces.

## **Recommendation 2:**

The tracking of ESLs is a crucial part of the FHP and allows on-going evaluation and research to be undertaken on this cohort of individuals, whose outcomes were previously unknown to both the MOD and DWP. Further on-going analysis and research of the data held by the programme should be considered.

## **Recommendation 3:**

Further research needs to be commissioned by the MOD to understand the differences and levels of vulnerability between untrained and trained Early Service Leavers. Early indications from this evaluation show that this is an area that warrants further investigation. Research could include a comparison between the employment outcomes for ESLs using the FHP and the employment outcomes for 4-6 year service leavers who receive the basic level of support from the CTP.

## **Recommendation 4:**

Should the Future Horizons Programme continue as a mainstream initiative, then different models of ESL engagement and the use of different technologies and interfaces to communicate with ESLs should be explored further.





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## Glossary

CDT– Compulsory Drugs Testing

CET – Central Employment Team

CIPP – Context, Input, Process, Product

COBSEO – Confederation of British Ex-Service and Service Organisations

CTP – Career Transition Partnership

DAOR – Discharge as of Right

DASA – Defence Analytical Services and Advice

DOE – Defect on Enlistment

DWP – Department for Work and Pensions

ESL – Early Service Leaver

FHP – Future Horizons Programme

FiMT – Forces In Mind Trust

ITC – Infantry Training Centre

JSP – Joint Service Publication

MOD – Ministry of Defence

RCT – Randomised Controlled Trial

RFAS – Released From Army Service

RFEA – Regular Forces Employment Association

SEC – Specialist Employment Consultant

SoC – Service of Care

TRBL – The Royal British Legion

SNLR – Services No Longer Required

UFAS – Unfit for Any form of Service

UIO – Unit Interviewing Officer

UWO – Unit Welfare Officer

VAQ – Value Added Questions





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## Appendix A

Partner	Services Provided	Geographical Area
RFEA	Specialist Employment Support. All ESL's are assigned a Specialist Employment Consultant	UK wide
Shaw Trust	Specialist Employment Support	UK Wide
Groundwork UK	Specialist Employment Support	UK Wide
The British Legion & Civvy Street	Specialist Employment Support Employment Support Grants and links to Specialist Welfare Support	UK Wide
The Officers Association	Specialist Employment Support	England, Wales & N Ireland
The Officers Association Scotland	Specialist Employment Support	Scotland
RBLI	Specialist Employment Support	South West & South East
Reed In Partnership	Specialist Employment Support	London, North East & West England
The Princes Trust	Specific courses and training programmes aimed at young adults	UK Wide
Cobseo	Provides specialist advice, a link into other armed forces organisations and promotes the welfare of veterans	UK Wide
Tomorrows People	Specialist Employment Support	A number of sites across the UK
Finchale College	Specialist Employment Support, Vocational Training & Personal Support	North East England
Poppyscotland	Specialist Employment Support including Employment Support Grants, Business Start Up loans/grants and links to specialist welfare support in the areas of financial assistance and advice.	Scotland
Right Management	Provides specialist advice and guidance to the partnership and provides an IT framework for the advisors and tracking team.	UK Wide
ESG	Specialist Employment Support & Integrated Employment and Skills provider	North West England
Armed Forces & Veterans Group	Provide media / communications advice to the programme, a veterans privilege discount card for veterans and offer links into affordable accommodation	UK Wide
SSAFA	Providing practical, financial and emotional support to veterans	UK Wide
North East Chamber of Commerce	Employability Programmes & Links into Apprenticeship training programmes	North East England
Avanta	Specialist Employment Support	North East England
ASAP	Providing confidential independent impartial advice to the armed forces community	Scotland

Riverside echg	SPACES provides help finding accommodation solutions for veterans	UK Wide
Endeavour	Provide personal, educational and social skills development programmes	Various UK wide locations
JHP	Specialist Employment Support & Integrated Employment Skills & Apprenticeship provider	All English regions Scotland and South Wales
The Poppy Factory	Specialist Employment Support for Wounded, Injured and Sick Veterans.	UK Wide
Jobcentreplus	Providing advice and support to the programmes development and links to Armed Forces Champions	UK Wide
Remploy	Specialist Employment Support for individuals with disabilities and health conditions	UK Wide
Pertemps People Development Group	Employment & Skills provider	North East, Yorkshire and Humber, North West, West Midlands and South East.
About Turn CIC	Comprehensive Veterans support Programmes	North East England
Job Match	Job Finding Service	Yorkshire
Manpower	National Recruitment Team	UK Wide
Football Foundation	Community Veterans Programmes	Colchester & Everton
Foundation Of Light	Employability Programmes	Sunderland
The Big White Wall LTD	Provide an on-line mental well-being service for serving personnel, veterans and families,	UK Wide
Personal Development Bureau	Personal Development and Training Opportunities and video based e learning	UK Wide
Judgement Index UK	Transition, Personal Development and Recruitment / Job Fit Personal Assessment	UK Wide
Serco	Employment opportunities through preferred suppliers	London & Home Counties
Skills For Logistics	2 week work placements within civilian companies	UK Wide
Live at Ease	Comprehensive support for service leavers	North West
Northern Pinetree Trust	Business Start Up / Business Mentoring Business start up loans and grants	North East England
The Warrior Programme	A personal transformational, motivational and educational course	UK Wide
Remount	A specialist residential programme to help veterans and serving personnel make the successful transition into civilian life	UK Wide
Niace	Promoting adult learning and links to adult learning programmes	UK Wide
White Ensign Association	Specialist Employment Financial & Resettlement Support for ex Naval personnel	UK Wide

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