

A person in military uniform is holding a hand. The hand being held has a white poppy bracelet with a red poppy flower in the center. The bracelet has the text 'FORGET 1914 2014' on it. The person holding the hand is wearing a black poppy bracelet with the text 'UNFORGET' on it. The background is blurred, showing other people in military uniform.

# WELFARE SERVICES STATISTICAL REPORT

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OCTOBER 19 – SEPTEMBER 20

poppy   
scotland



# CONTENTS

## ITEM

Key Facts Summary **P1**

## SERVICES

1 Tailored Support and Funding **P3**

1.1 Funding to individuals P3

1.2 Annual Grants P13

2 Advice, information and Support **P14**

2.1 Welfare Centres P14

2.2 Welfare Support Service P18

2.3 Armed Services Advice Project P20

2.4 Pensions Advice Service P20

3 Employment Services **P22**

3.1 LifeWorks P24

3.2 Employ-Able P25

3.3 Employment Grants P27

## APPENDICES

ASAP Annual Report **P29**

Employ-Able Annual Report **P40**





# Key Facts Summary

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From October 2019 to September 2020 Poppyscotland provided assistance to 1,551 cases across a wide range of our Welfare Services, including our Employment Services, Tailored Support and Funding, Inverness and Kilmarnock Welfare Centres, and our Welfare Support Service. We also reached many more people through the Armed Services Advice Project and provided funding to other organisations.

The Covid-19 pandemic has seen Poppyscotland's Welfare activity decrease slightly from previous years. Although the pandemic has presented a significant number of challenges for the Welfare Service, the team has been proactive in finding new ways of working and engaging with clients remotely, with welfare checks to the more vulnerable and socially isolated clients over the phone, to completing Form A's and group drop-in sessions via Zoom and MS Teams chats.

## Proactive contact during the pandemic

- Since the start of the pandemic and the new ways of working for the Poppyscotland Welfare team, we have been able to have positive contact with our beneficiaries on 4413 occasions.

## Tailored Support and Funding

- The total funding support to individuals was £639,020.
- 803 Immediate Needs Grants were awarded to individuals to help with a wide range of needs from home adaptations and household expenses to clothing.
- The total Immediate Needs Grant expenditure this year was £561,555.
- A further £77,465 was spent on providing annual grants to 63 recipients.

## Employment Services

- A total of 214 beneficiaries accessed Poppyscotland's Employment Services.
- In total, £176,530 was spent on assisting members of the Armed Forces community with their employment needs.
- 165 veterans received ongoing one to one support through the Employ-Able service.
- 40 clients were supported to obtain the qualifications or equipment required to take up an employment opportunity.
- A total of £58,615 was required to enable Employment Grant clients. Poppyscotland contributed 58% of this figure with remainder met by other Service charities.
- 9 veterans attended a LifeWorks course.



### **Inverness Welfare Centre**

- There were 1,922 individuals who accessed support from the Inverness Welfare Centre.
- 985 individual enquiries related to welfare advice, while another 937 accessed the general information and guidance service.
- 103 individuals, all with multiple needs, benefitted from 1:1 specialist advice and support.

### **Kilmarnock Welfare Centre**

- There were 1,521 individuals who accessed support from the Ayrshire Welfare Centre.
- 448 individual enquiries related to welfare advice, while another 1,073 accessed the general information and guidance service.
- 103 individuals, all with multiple needs, benefitted from 1:1 specialist advice and support.

### **Welfare Support Service**

- The Welfare Support team conducted 1594 visits (face to face and via telephone)
- 219 referrals were received from partner organisations, almonised over £302,654 and completed 185 Form A's
- A total of £5,612 was spent on 46 Crisis Grants to support clients in some of the most difficult situations.

### **Armed Services Advice Project**

- ASAP Advisers helped 2,004 individual members of the Armed Forces community over the year, giving advice over 11,600 times.
- ASAP client financial gain recorded for the year was over £3.4m.



# 1. Tailored Support and Funding

We supported 866 individuals through Tailored Support and Funding, including Immediate Needs Grants and Annual Grants. Our financial support to individuals totalled £639,020.

## 1.1 Funding to individuals

Poppyscotland provides direct financial assistance to veterans and their families through our Immediate Needs Grants Scheme.

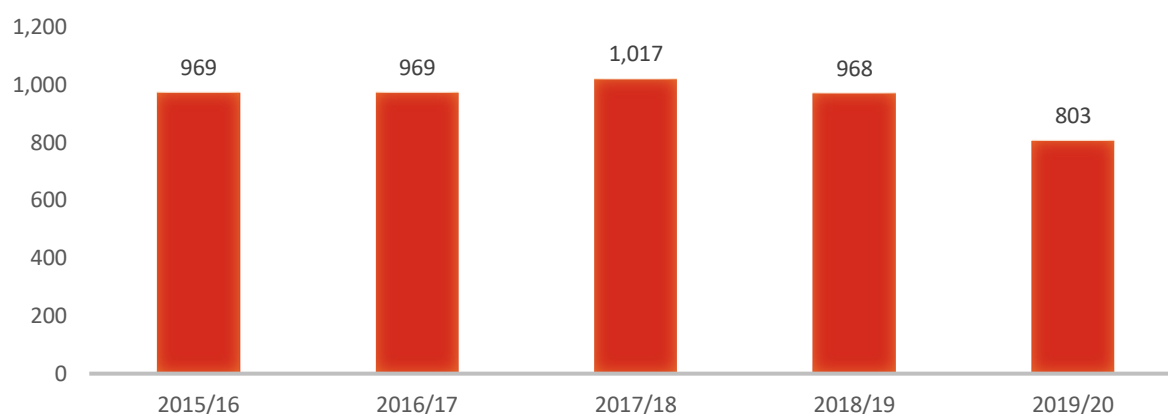
We awarded on 803 grant applications between October 2019 and September 2020.

### Grants at a glance

Year	Total number of grants awarded	Total Grants expenditure	Average cost per case
2017 - 2018	1,017	£608,668	£598
2018 - 2019	968	£670,789	£693
2019 - 2020	803	£561,555	£699

The total Immediate Needs Grants expenditure this year was £561,555.

### IMMEDIATE NEEDS GRANTS BY NO. OF AWARDS (2015-2020)





The number of awards this year has decreased to 803, with total expenditure dropping by 16% primarily due to the pandemic. However there has been a 1% increase in average cost per award this year.

### IMMEDIATE NEEDS GRANTS BY TOTAL EXPENDITURE (2015-2020)

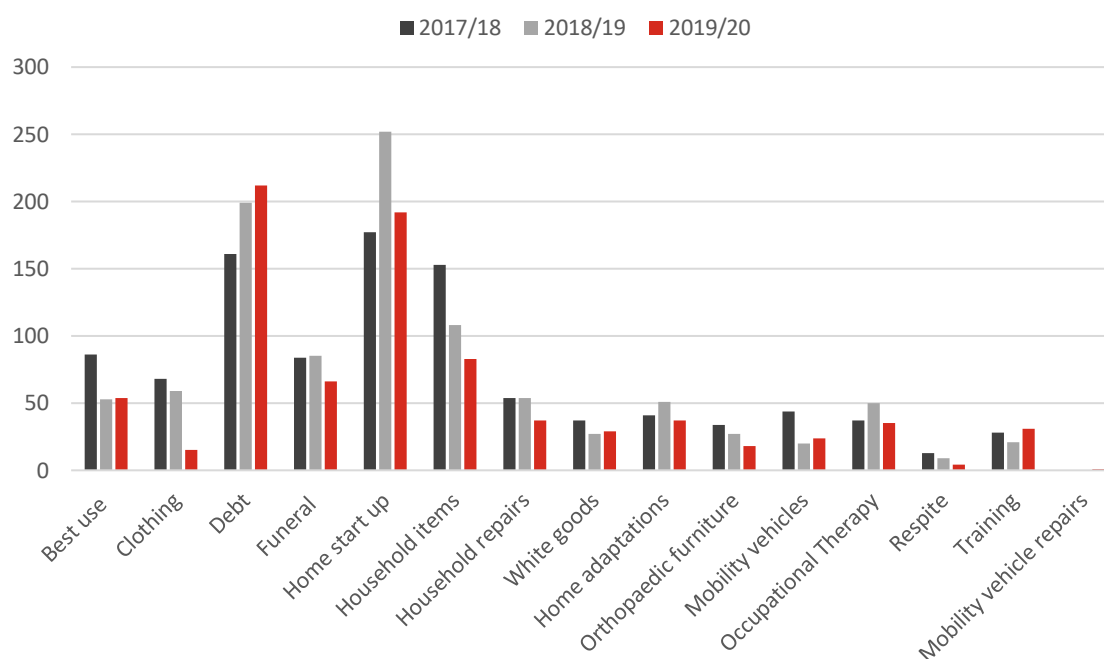


### IMMEDIATE NEEDS GRANTS BY AVERAGE AWARD (2015-2020)

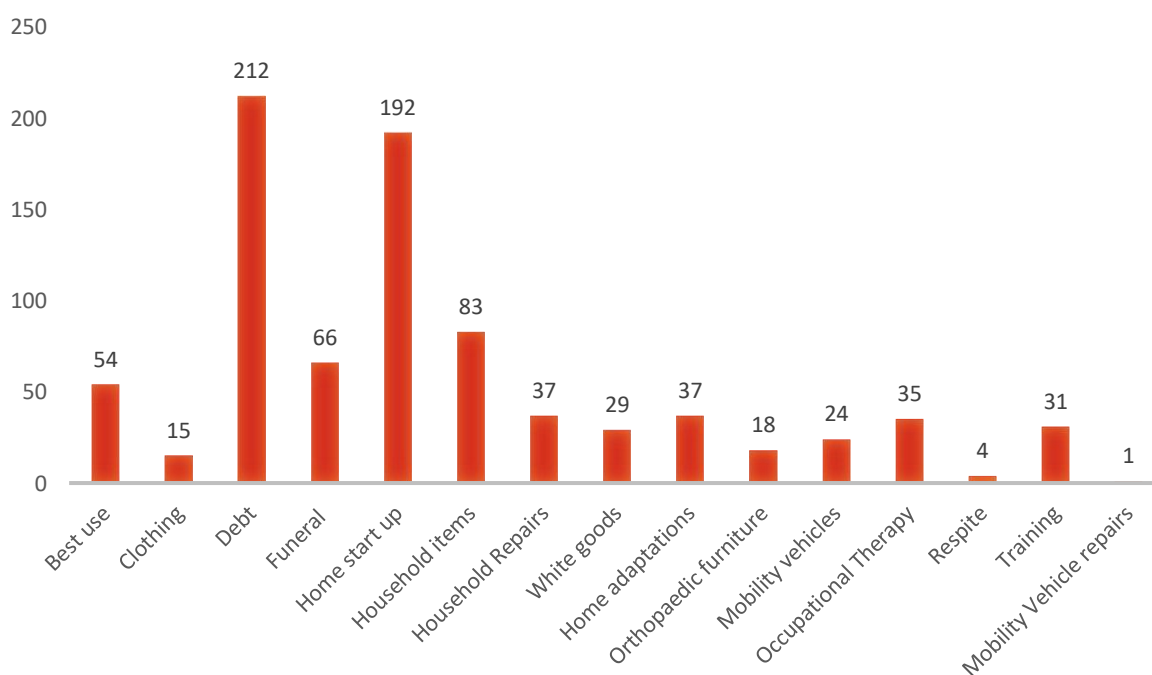




## GRANTS PURPOSE COMPARISON (NO. OF AWARDS)



## NO. OF GRANTS AWARDED BY CATEGORY 2019-20





## Grant Purpose by Number of Awards – Top 5

2017/18		2018/19		2019/20	
Grant Purpose	Number of awards	Grant Purpose	Number of awards	Grant Purpose	Number of awards
Home start up	177	Home start up	252	Debt	212
Debt	161	Debt	199	Home start up	192
Household items	153	Household items	108	Household items	83
Best use	84	Funeral	85	Funeral	66
Funeral	84	Clothing	59	Best use	54

## Grant Purpose by Number of Awards 2019-20

Grant Purpose	No. of Awards	%
Debt	212	25.3%
Home start up	192	22.9%
Household items	83	9.9%
Funeral	66	7.9%
Best use	54	6.4%
Home adaptations	37	4.4%
Household repairs	37	4.4%
OT Report*	35	4.2%
Training	31	3.7%
White goods	29	3.5%
Mobility vehicles	24	2.9%
Orthopaedic furniture	18	2.1%
Clothing	15	1.8%
Respite	4	0.5%
Mobility vehicle repairs	1	0.1%

*\*OT Reports not included in the 803 figure*



## Grant Purpose by Total Expenditure – Top 5

### 2017-18

Grant purpose	Overall funds awarded	Average awarded per beneficiary
Debt	£114,761	£713
Home start up	£110,607	£625
Funeral	£58,035	£691
Household items	£95,716	£504
Mobility home adaptations	£56,422	£1,376

### 2018-19

Grant purpose	Overall funds awarded	Average awarded per beneficiary
Home start up	£185,383	£736
Debt	£165,028	£829
Household items	£66,557	£616
Mobility home adaptations	£55,518	£1,089
Funeral	£54,768	£644

### 2019-20

Grant purpose	Overall funds awarded	Average awarded per beneficiary
Debt	£160,273	£736
Home start up	£133,756	£697
Mobility home adaptations	£49,347	£1,334
Household items	£43,745	£527
Funeral	£41,765	£633



## Grant Purpose by Total Expenditure 2019-20

Grant Purpose	Total Amount Awarded	Average Amount Awarded	Number of beneficiaries
Debt	£160,273	£756	212
Home start up	£133,756	£697	192
Mobility home adaptations	£49,471	£1,337	37
Household items	£43,745	£527	83
Funeral	£41,765	£633	66
Household repairs	£34,728	£939	37
Mobility vehicle	£19,831	£826	24
Orthopaedic furniture	£16,575	£921	18
Training BEN	£15,020	£485	31
Medical	£10,996	£2,199	5
Household white goods	£10,735	£370	29
Best use	£10,095	£326	31
Visa fees	£6,533	£2,178	3
OT report*	£5,355	£153	35
Travel costs	£2,850	£407	7
Clothing	£2,654	£177	15
Respite BEN	£1,430	£477	3
Children's needs	£398	£398	1
Crisis grant	£366	£52	7
Respite RAFA	£235	£235	1
Mobility vehicle repairs	£100	£100	1

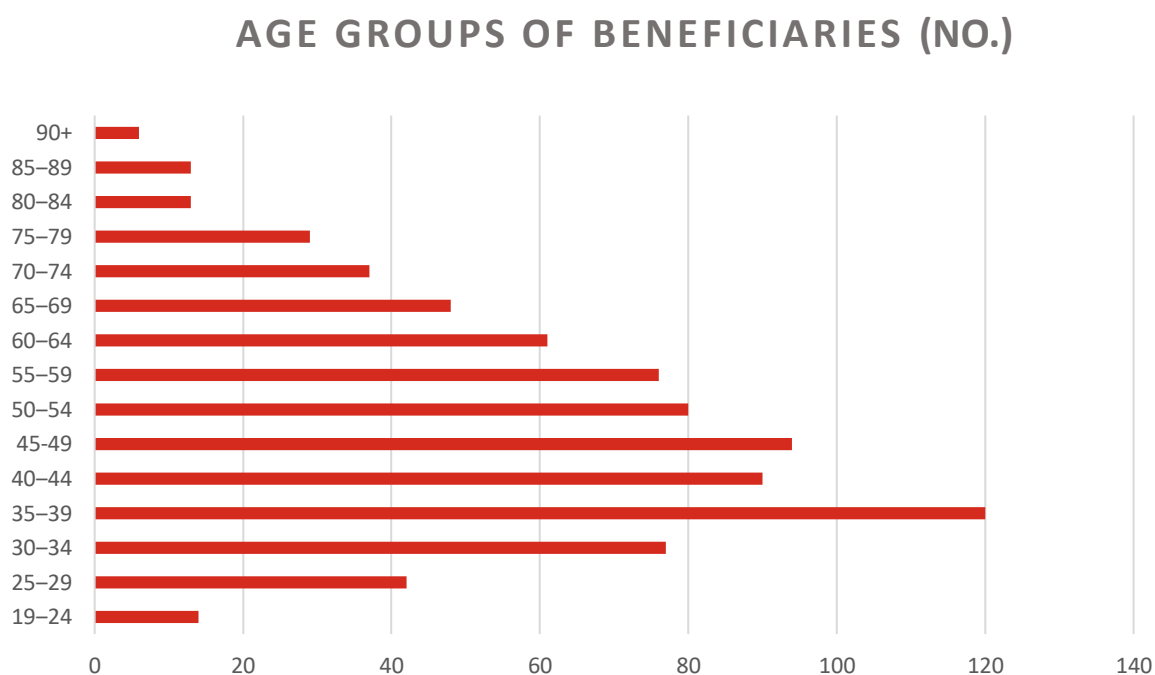
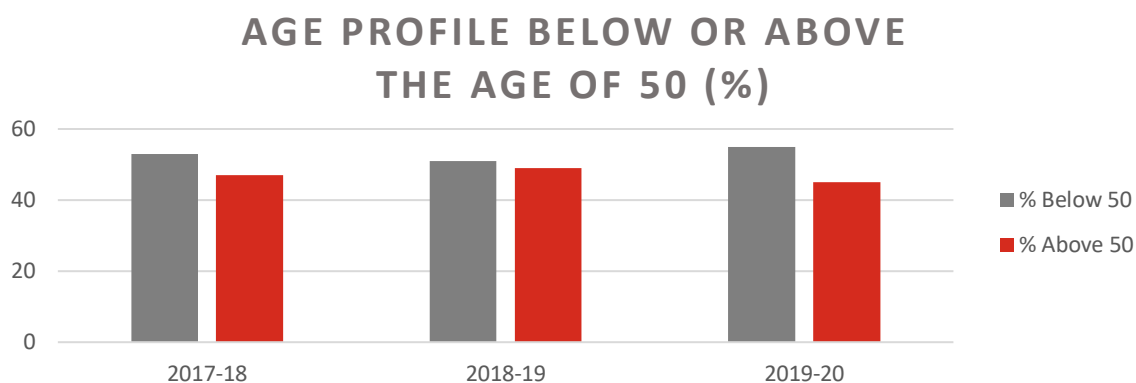
*\*OT Reports not included in the 803 figure.*

When grant awards are looked at by number approved or by overall funds spent, the top two categories are the same: Debt and Home start up grants.



## Profile of Beneficiaries

There continues to be a fairly even split between beneficiaries over 50 (45%) and those under 50 (55%).



The majority of grants were awarded to males (83%). Most awards were again to those having served in the Army (84%) with 10% being awarded to those from the Navy and 6% to those from the RAF.



At the time of application, 56% of clients had received no previous assistance from Poppyscotland, similar to last year's level.

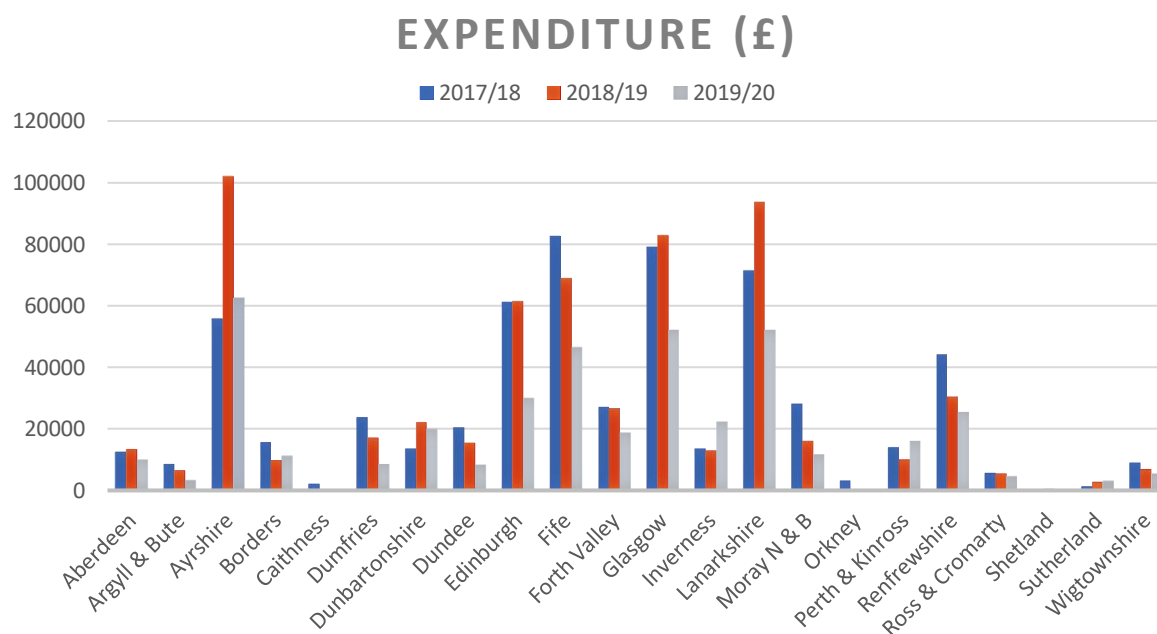
Evidence from grant application forms suggests that, while the incomes of the majority of applicants meets or exceeds their expenditure (57%), more often than not by a very small amount, for a significant minority (43%) there is a weekly deficit. For 15% of clients, their surplus is under £10.

716 beneficiaries (59%) were recorded as being in debt, with a combined debt total of over £4.1 million. This is an average of £5,834 per client, slightly lower than last year, however the total number of beneficiaries in debt is higher.

## SSAFA

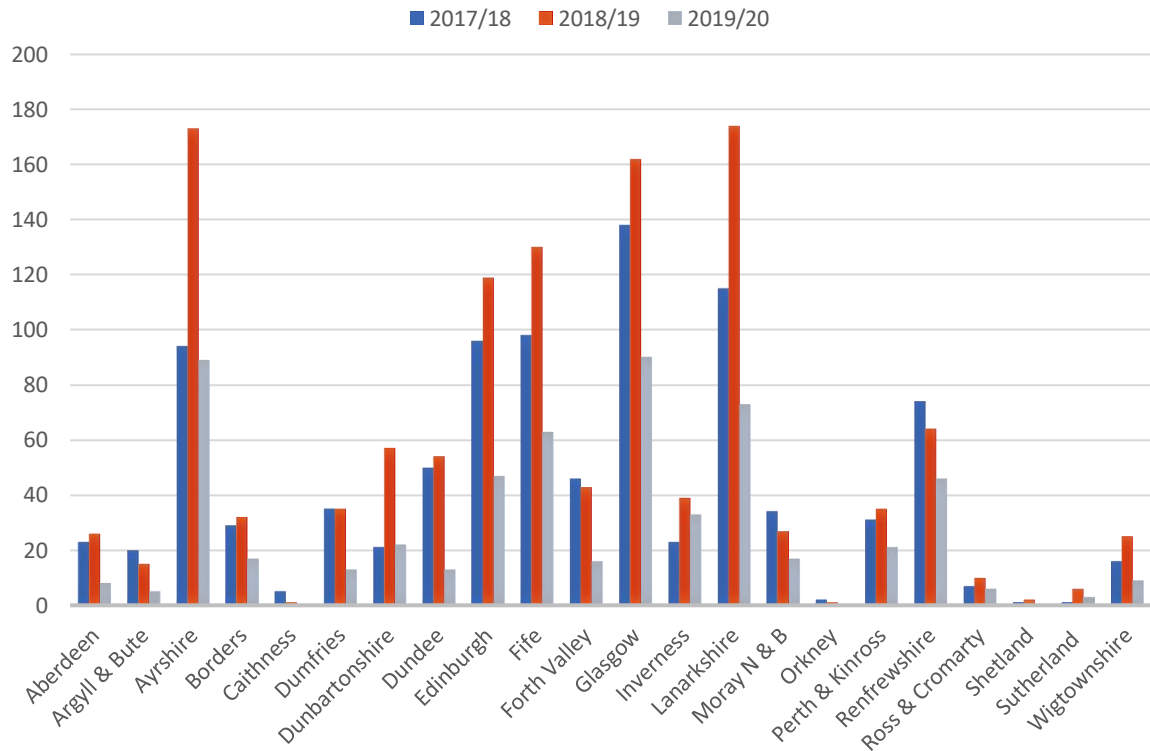
This year 74% of grant awards were completed with the assistance of SSAFA who provide casework for members of the Armed Forces community requesting assistance from Military and other charities throughout Scotland. Our Welfare Support Service completed significantly more than last year in its first full year of reporting, with 20% of grant awards completed by the service. 4% were completed through Glasgow's Helping Heroes and other organisations and the remaining 3% through RAFA.

## Grants by SSAFA branch

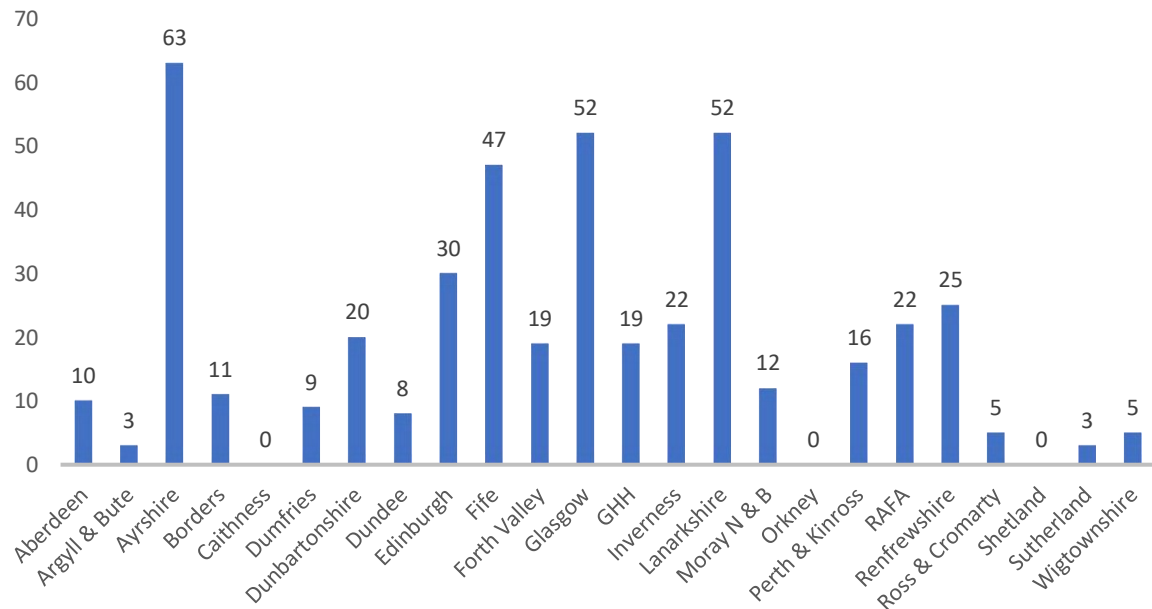




## CASE NUMBERS

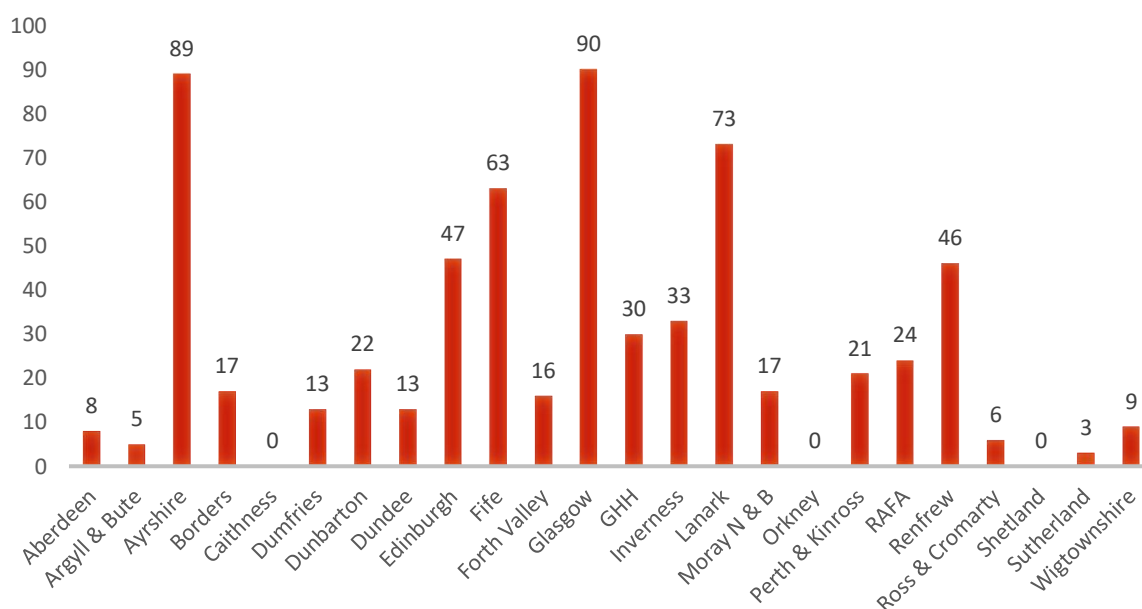


## AMOUNT AWARDED BY BRANCH (£K)

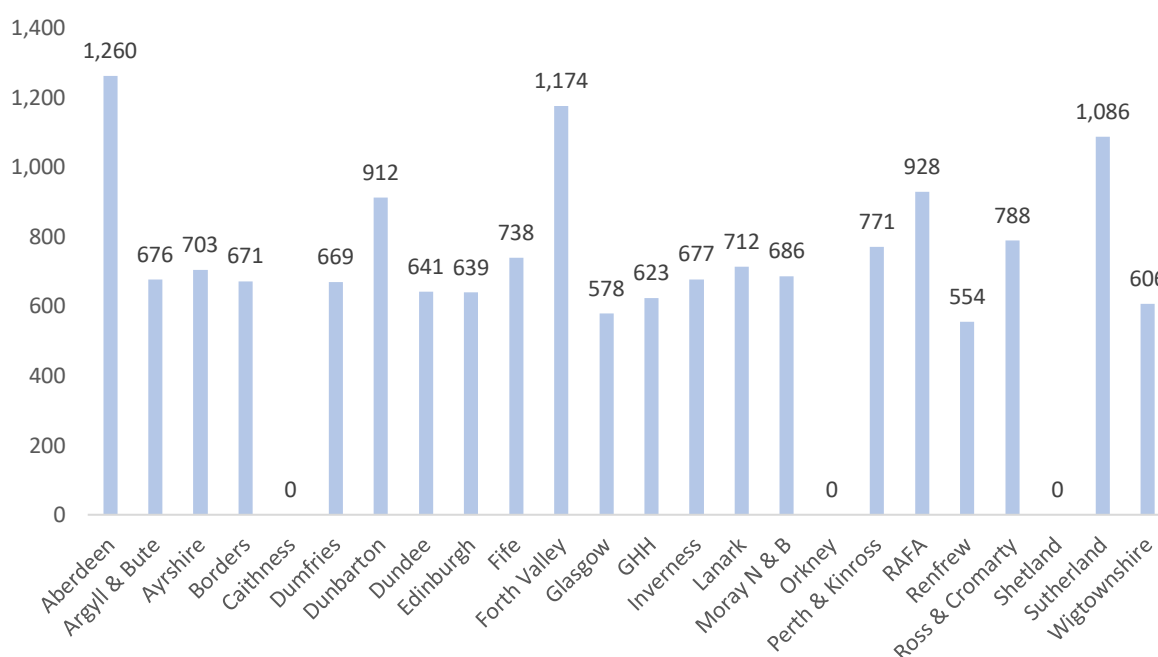




## NUMBER OF AWARDS PER BRANCH



## AVERAGE AWARD PER CASE (£)





## 1.2 Annual Grants

Poppyscotland spent a total of £77,465 providing Annual Grants and although new annual grants are no longer awarded, 63 individuals were still in receipt of this form of financial assistance, with that number falling to 54 individuals by the end of the year. The grants are paid quarterly, and amounts vary from £130 - £650 per quarter. Clients are still, of course, able to apply for repeat support year-on-year if their circumstances necessitate their doing so. 68% of beneficiaries are female and 32% are male. The average annual grant recipient is 72 years of age, but ages range from 38 - 99.



## 2. Advice, Information and Support

Poppyscotland's Advice, Information and Support Services help connect individuals in need with the services right for them, whether it is for financial solutions, employment support, housing, relationships, health and wellbeing or more.

### 2.1 Welfare Centres

Our Welfare Centres offer advice, information and support on a range of topics for current and former members of the Armed Forces and their families living in the North of Scotland (Inverness) and Ayrshire (Kilmarnock).

#### Inverness Centre

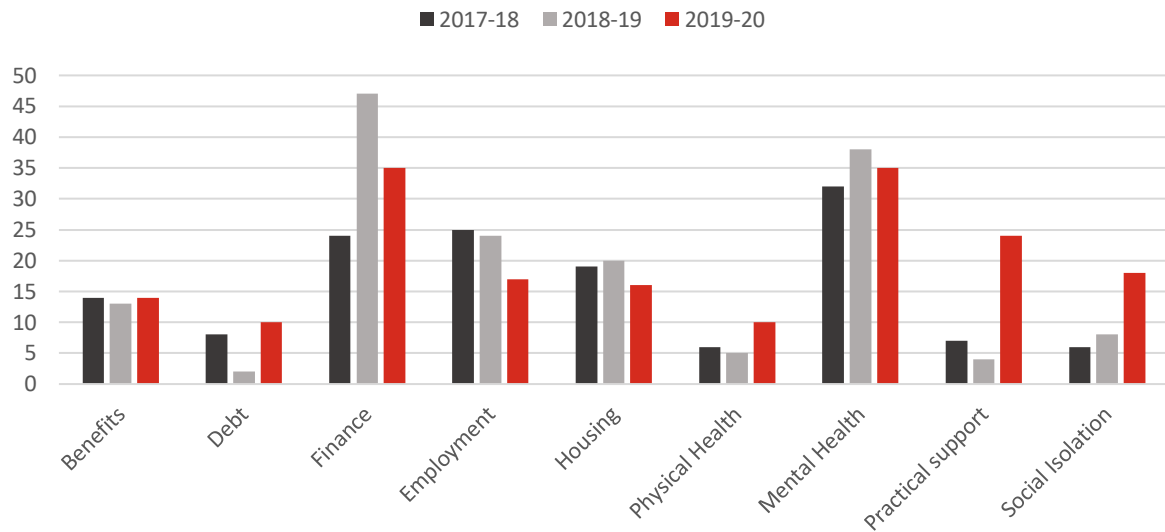
This year 1,922 individuals made enquiries to the service. 937 Individuals accessed the general information and guidance service, and 985 accessed the service with welfare enquiries. 103 individuals benefitted from 1:1 specialist advice and support services.

Referred By	No.	%
Self	75	73
Third Party	28	27
Total	103	100

73% of those using the specialist advice and support services were self-referrals.

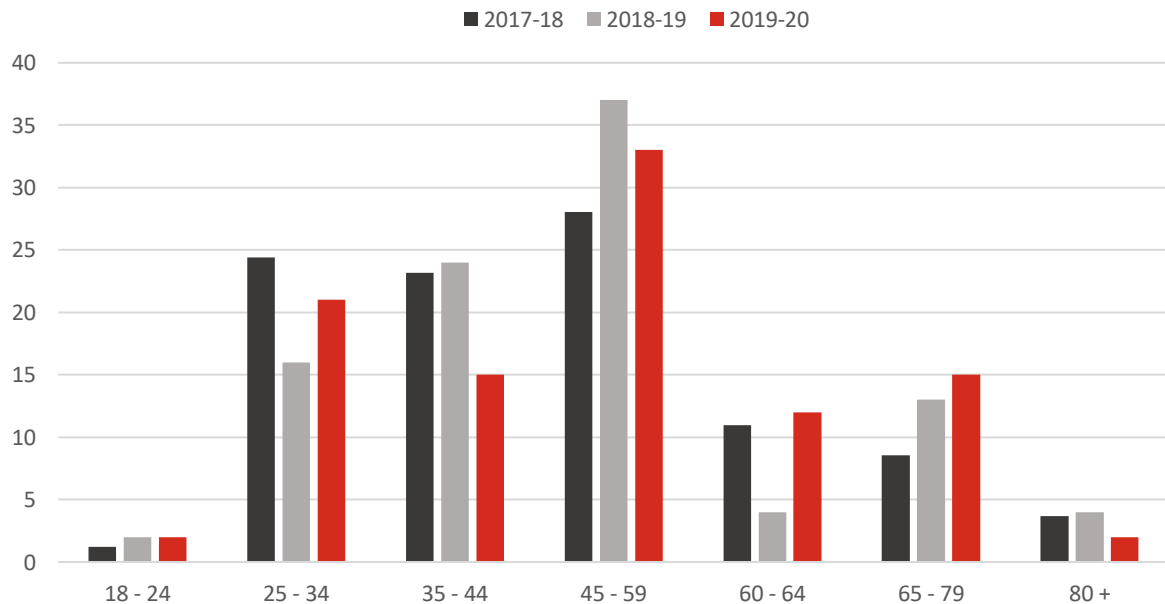


## PRESENTING ISSUES (NO.)



Finance, benefits and debt accounted for almost 35% of presenting issues in 2019-20. Issues around Mental Health (20%) were also high, followed by Practical Support (14%) and an increase in Social Isolation (10%). Issues around Employment and Housing each made up 9% of enquiries and Physical Health 6%.

## AGE PROFILE (%)



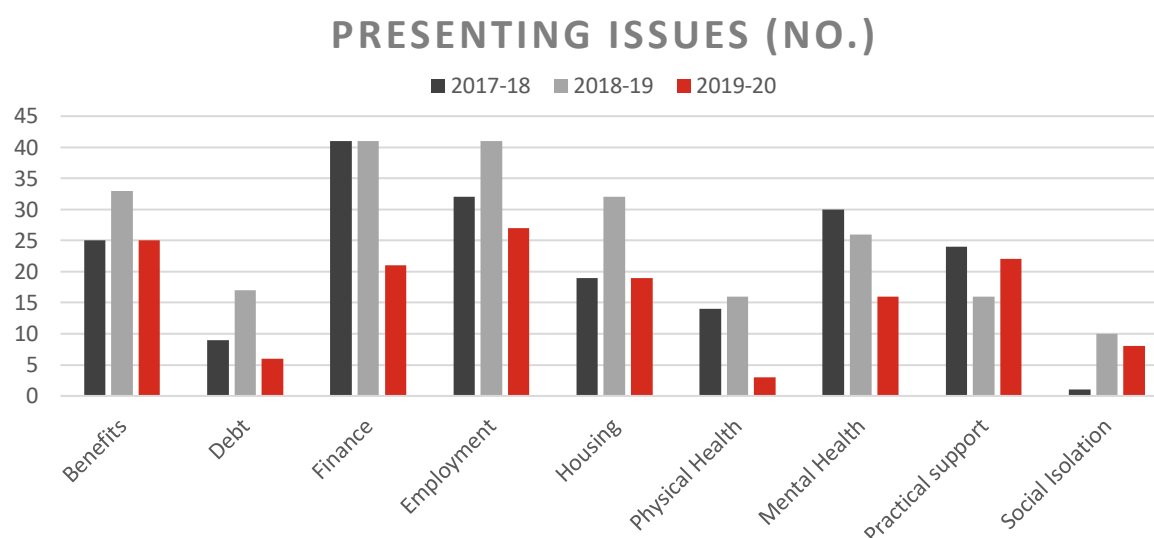


## Kilmarnock Centre

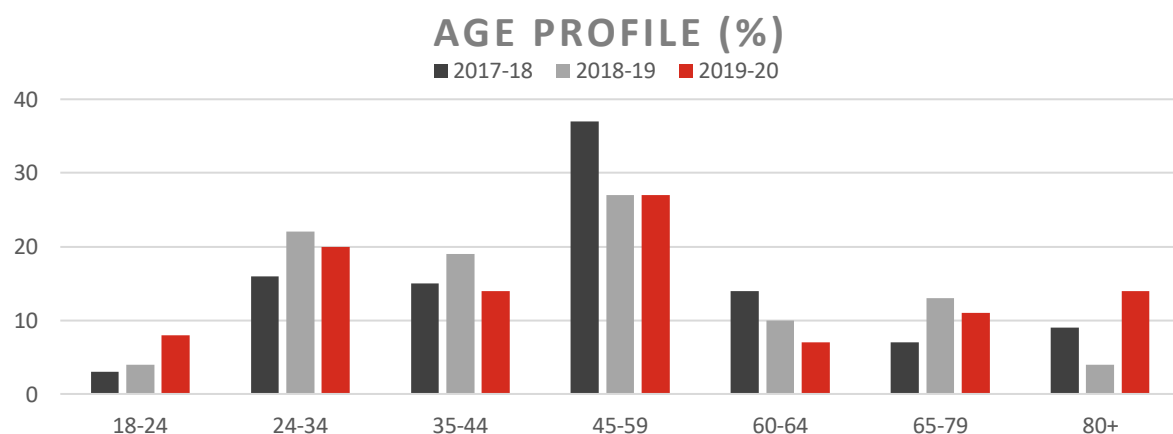
This year 1,521 individuals made enquiries to the service. 1,073 Individuals accessed the general information and guidance service, and 448 accessed the service with welfare enquiries. 103 individuals benefited from 1:1 specialist advice and support services.

Referred By	No.	%
Self	74	72
Third Party	29	28
Total	103	100

72% of those using the specialist advice and support services self-referred.

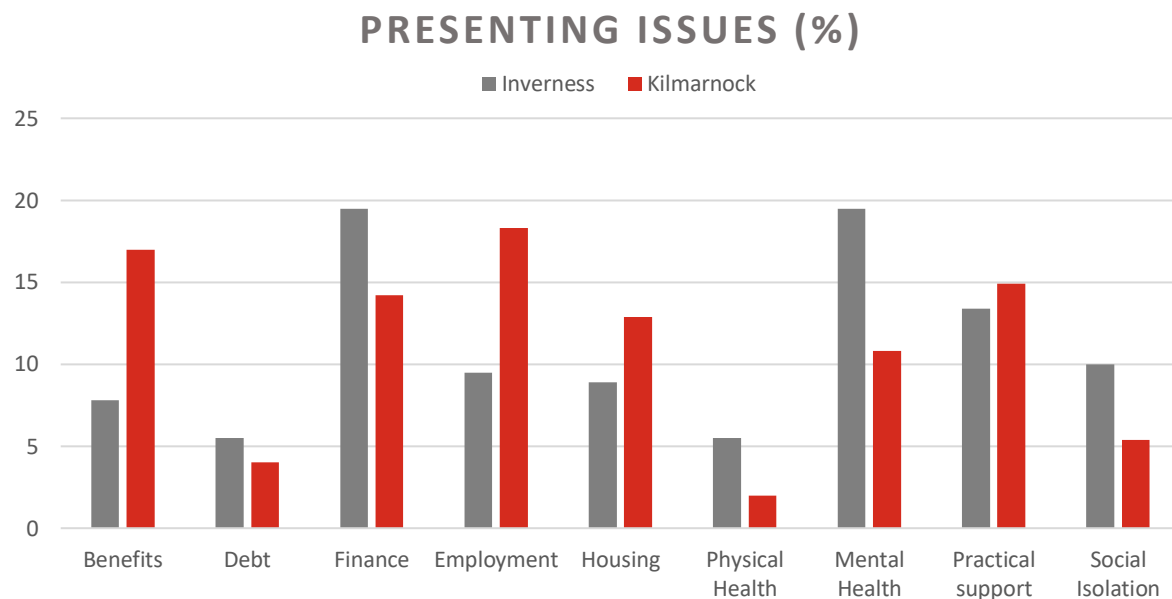


Finance, benefits and debt accounted for 35% of presenting issues in 2019-20. Issues around Employment (18%), Practical support (15%) and Housing (13%) were also high, followed by Mental Health (10%), Social isolation (5%) and Physical health (2%).

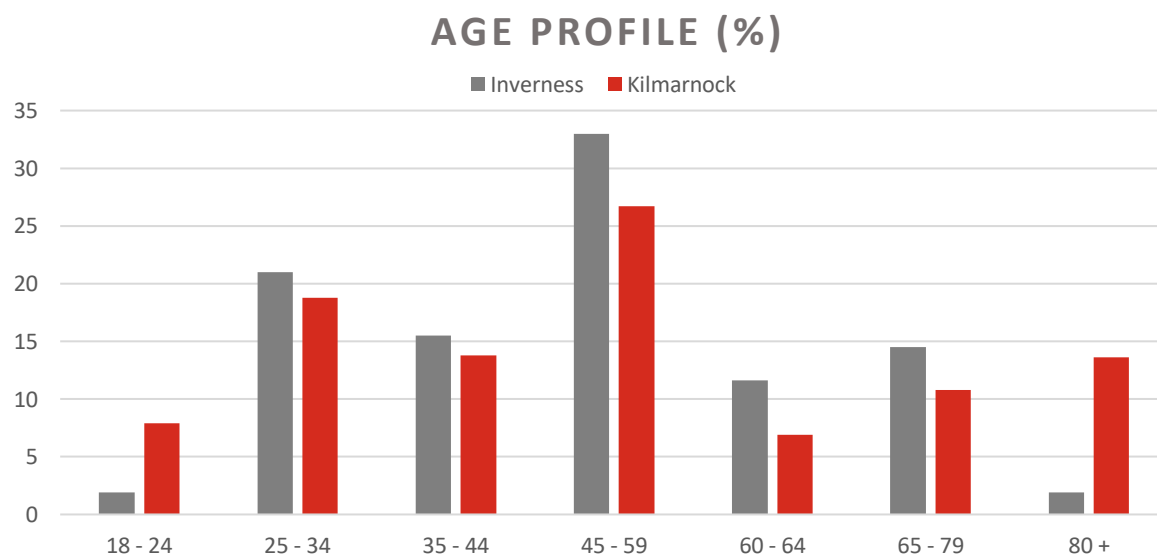




## Welfare Centre Comparisons



While some types of issues clients present with are similar in both centres, the North of Scotland sees a higher percentage of cases around Mental Health and Finances (9% and 5% higher than in Ayrshire respectively) while Ayrshire has a higher percentage of clients looking for Employment and Benefits support (both 9% higher).



If we compare the ages of beneficiaries in the Welfare Centres, they are fairly similar, with Kilmarnock having slightly more under 25's and over 80's.



## 2.2 Welfare Support Service

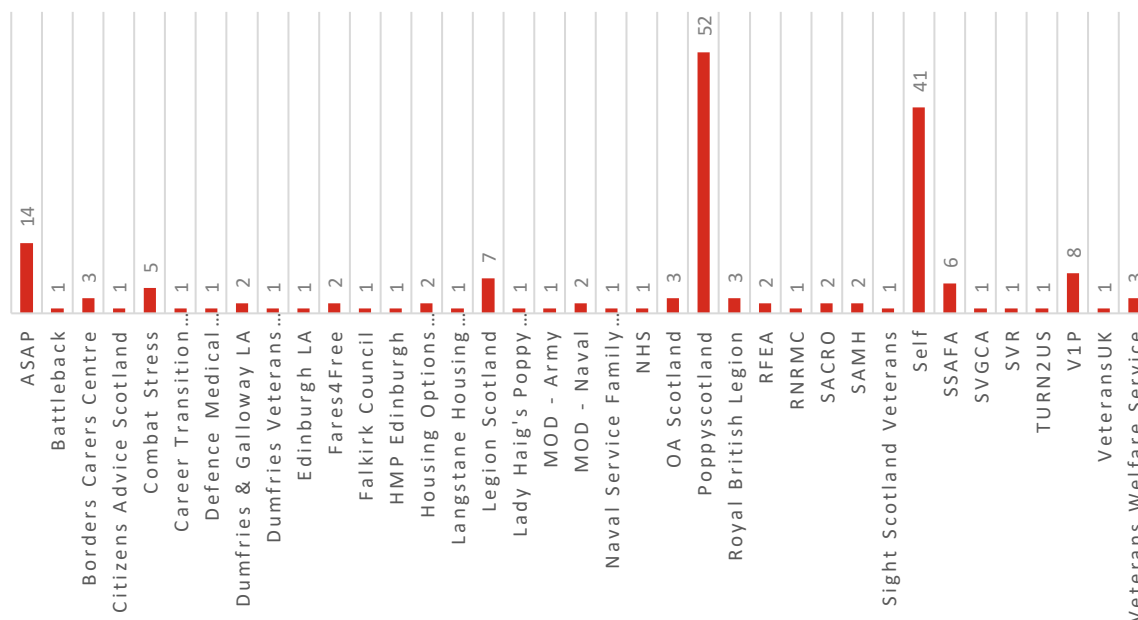
Poppyscotland launched the Welfare Support Service in May 2019 to address challenges experienced in delivering our welfare offering to vulnerable individuals and those with complex needs. This has been of benefit not only to Poppyscotland but further embeds the ethos of partnership working with organisations such as SSAFA and the Armed Services Advice Project (ASAP). In doing so the service has maximised the resources available, providing clear referral pathways that allow the service to work collaboratively and efficiently to provide the support where it is needed most.

The Welfare Support team conducted 1594 visits (face to face and via telephone), received 219 referrals from partner organisations, almonised over £302,654 and completed 185 Form A's

The team of 4 Welfare Support Officers provided support to 135 vulnerable veterans and dependants identified as having complex needs. A further 55 beneficiaries were supported by the team of 2 Independent Living Advisors who provided support to help give those with long term health issues the ability to maintain their independence and live in their own homes for longer.

A total of £5,612 was spent on 46 Crisis Grants to support clients in some of the most difficult situations.

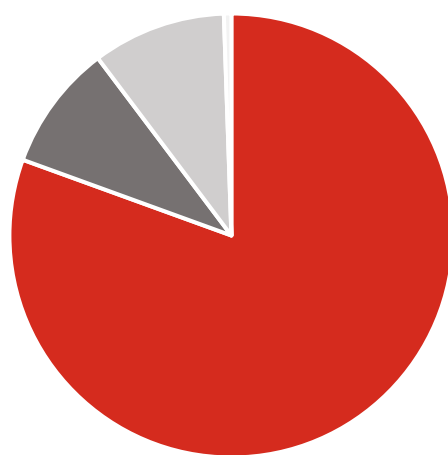
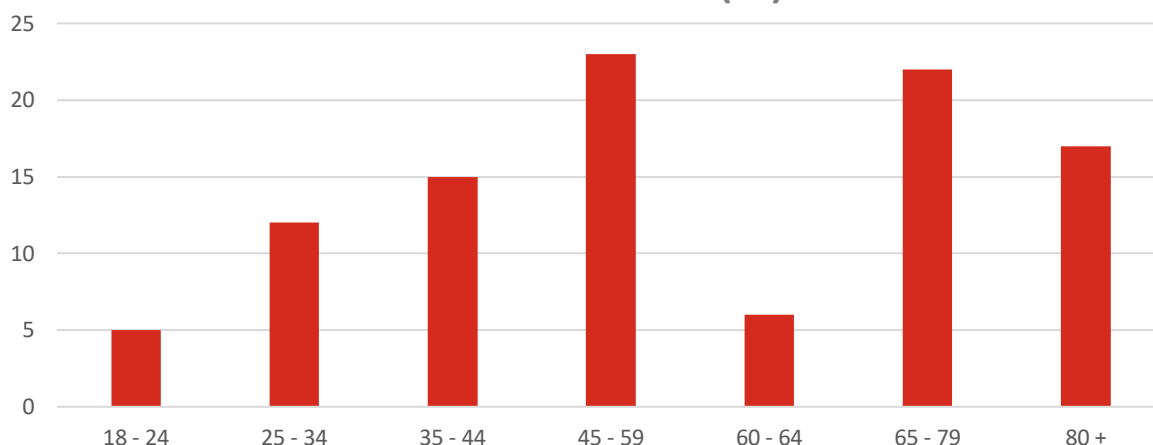
### REFERRAL SOURCES (NO.)



28% of all referrals to the Welfare Support Service came internally through Poppyscotland. While 23% were self-referrals.



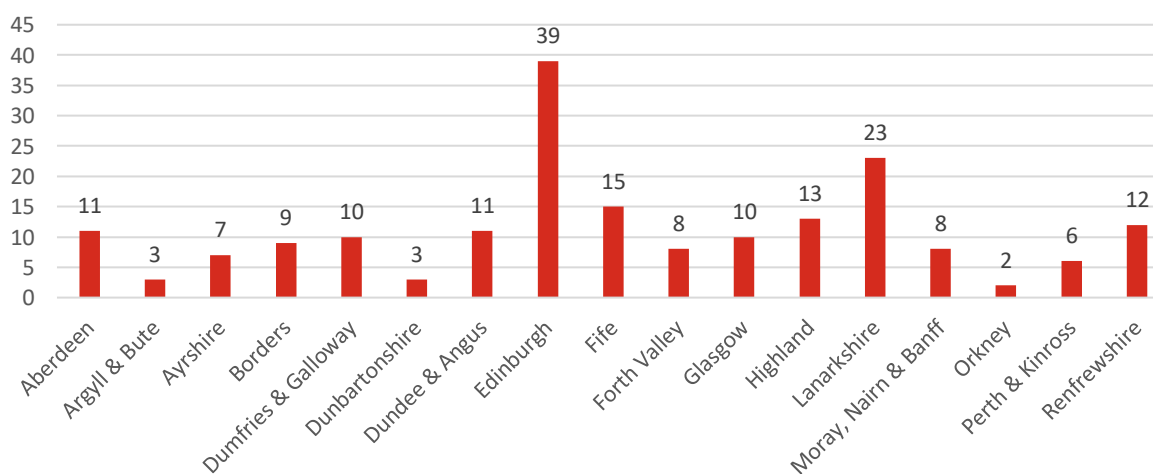
## AGE PROFILE (%)



■ Army ■ Navy ■ RAF ■ Reserve

81% of beneficiaries to the Welfare Support Service served with the Army, 10% RAF and a further 9% from the Navy, with Reserves making up the final 1% of referrals.

## CLIENT AREAS (NO.)





## 2.3 Armed Services Advice Project (ASAP)

The Armed Services Advice Project (ASAP) delivers information, advice and support to members of the Armed Forces community through a Scotland wide helpline and face-to-face casework in 11 regions.

Advisers helped 2,004 individual clients over the year and gave advice over 11,600 times.

This resulted in an average of 5.8 issues per client, compared with a bureau average of 2.6 issues per client. In addition to the 2,004, 340 clients were supported by the Unforgotten Forces representative.

51% of issues raised were about benefits and 12% concerned debts. Financial issues, including charitable grant applications, accounted for 11% of issues raised, and housing 5%.

Client financial gain recorded over the year was £3,410,587 and a total of 1,131 clients benefited from a financial gain; the average financial gain per client was £3,015.

*\*For more data on ASAP activity from this period please see Appendix 1.*

## 2.4 Pensions Advice Service

The Pension Advice Service, operated by Legion Scotland, offers free and confidential advice and representation to any veteran or currently serving member of the Armed Forces to pursue their possible entitlement to a War Disablement Pension or a claim under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme.

### Tribunals

The total number of cases listed by the tribunal for hearing during the last year was 165.

Legion Scotland represented 147 (89%) and a further 18 appeals either did not take up an offer of assistance or were represented by another third party such as a solicitor.

Outcome/Results of Appeals	
Completely heard & finalised appeals	79
Increased or found for client	40
Decreased	0
Disallowed & upheld against client	34
Written decisions (awaiting)	3
Appeals unable to win (due to legislation)	2



Success Rate	%
Legion Scotland	51
VeteransUK	43
Written decisions (awaiting)	3
Appeals unable to win (due to legislation)	2

Financial benefit to veterans following appeal decisions totalled to £966,815. This value does not consider any associated or passport benefits that may have been obtained following the awards being given.

Incomplete or other outcomes on appeals	68
Withdrawn	34
Adjourned	33
Unable to represent	1

## Claims

It takes over a year for initial claims to be decided upon by the MOD. None have been decided for the period 2019/20 however prior claims before the 1st November 2019 have resulted in awards totalling £36,852.00.

This does not include other benefits which they may be entitled to such a Mobility Allowance, Lowered Standard of Occupation etc. and which we are unaware of.

The Pension Advice Service currently hold 9 claims that pre-date a year and these are actively being pursued with VeteransUK.

Overview	2018/2019	2019/2020
Financial benefits (appeals)	£773,334	£966,815
Financial benefits (claims)	£101,195	£36,852
Appeals listed	227	147

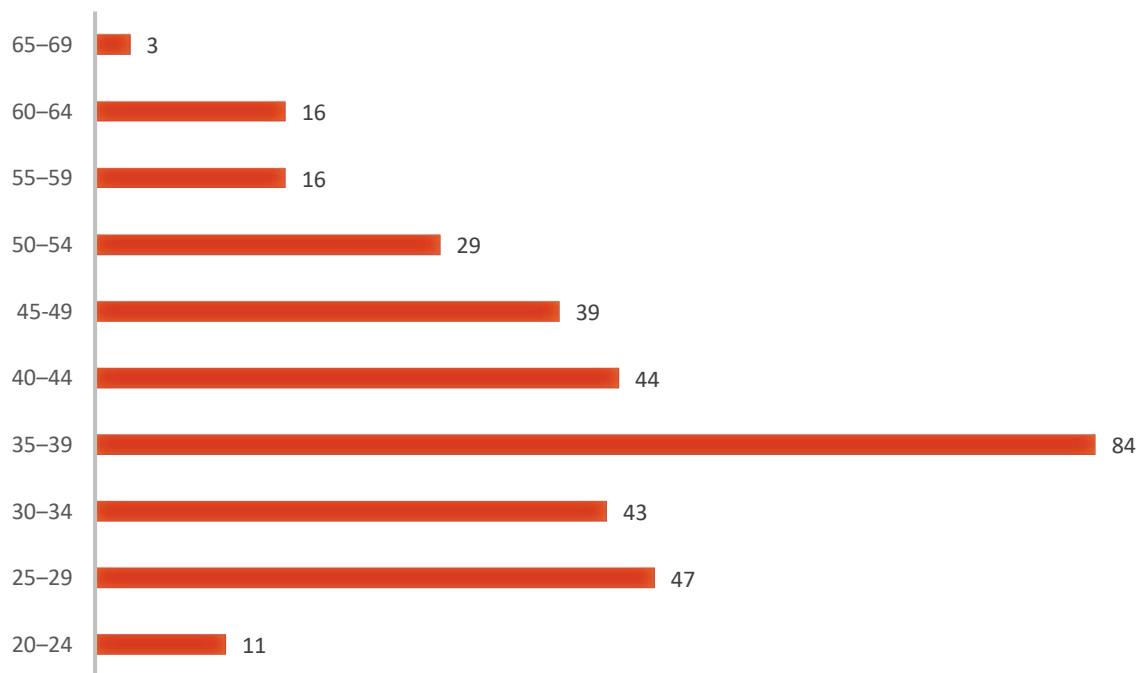


## 4. Employment Services

We supported 214 individuals through our employment services at a cost of over £176,000 .

165 clients received support through Employ-Able, 40 clients completed training funded by Employment Grants and 9 clients attended a LifeWorks course.

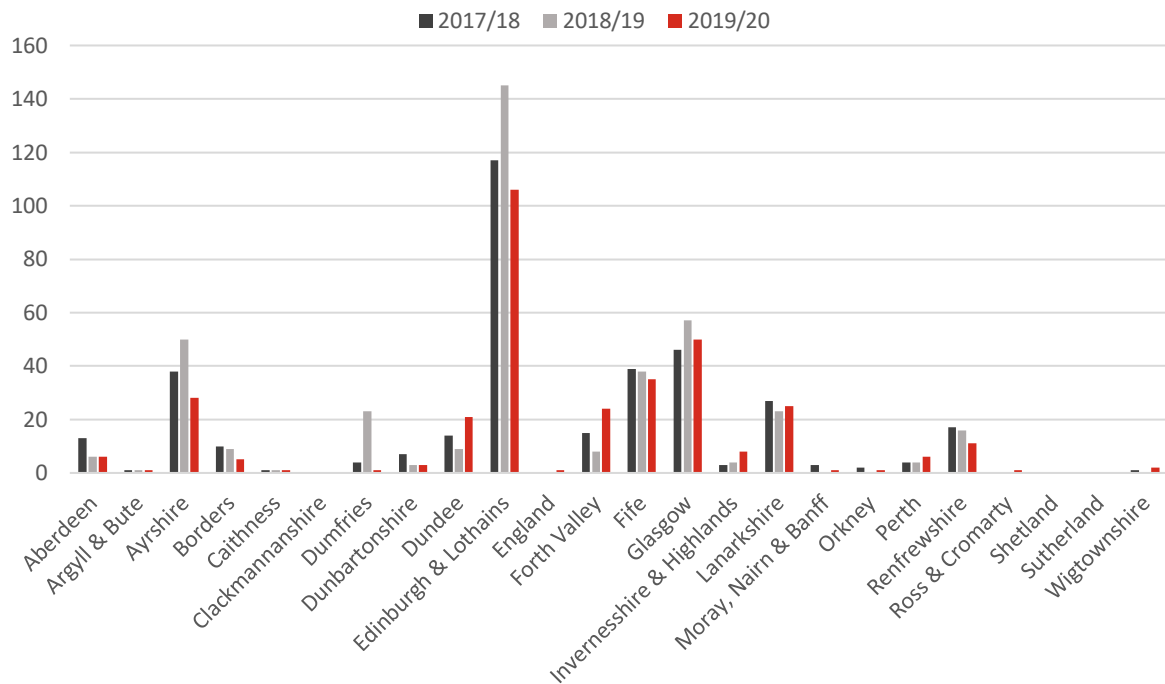
### AGE PROFILE (NO.)



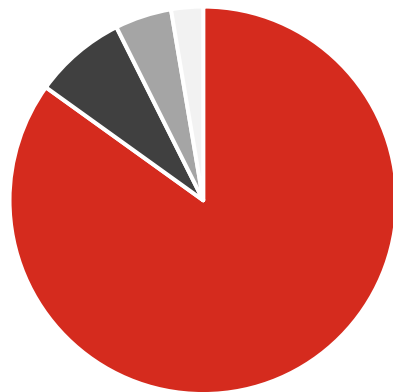
The average age of Employment Services applicants was 40, with the youngest being 21 and the oldest 67. 81% were under the age of 50 with the majority of individuals (38%) being in their 30s. This shows an increase in younger veterans seeking employment support.



## LOCATION OF INDIVIDUALS (NO.)



The majority of individuals referred to our employment services reside in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Ayrshire, Fife and Lanarkshire.



85% of clients served in the Army, 8% in the Navy, 5% in the RAF and 3% in the Reserves.

■ Army ■ Navy ■ RAF ■ Reserves

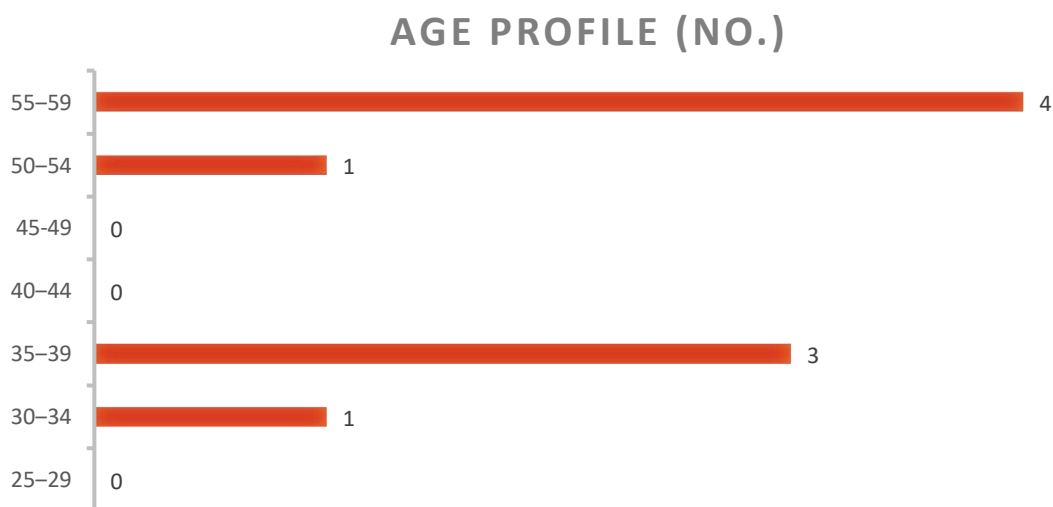
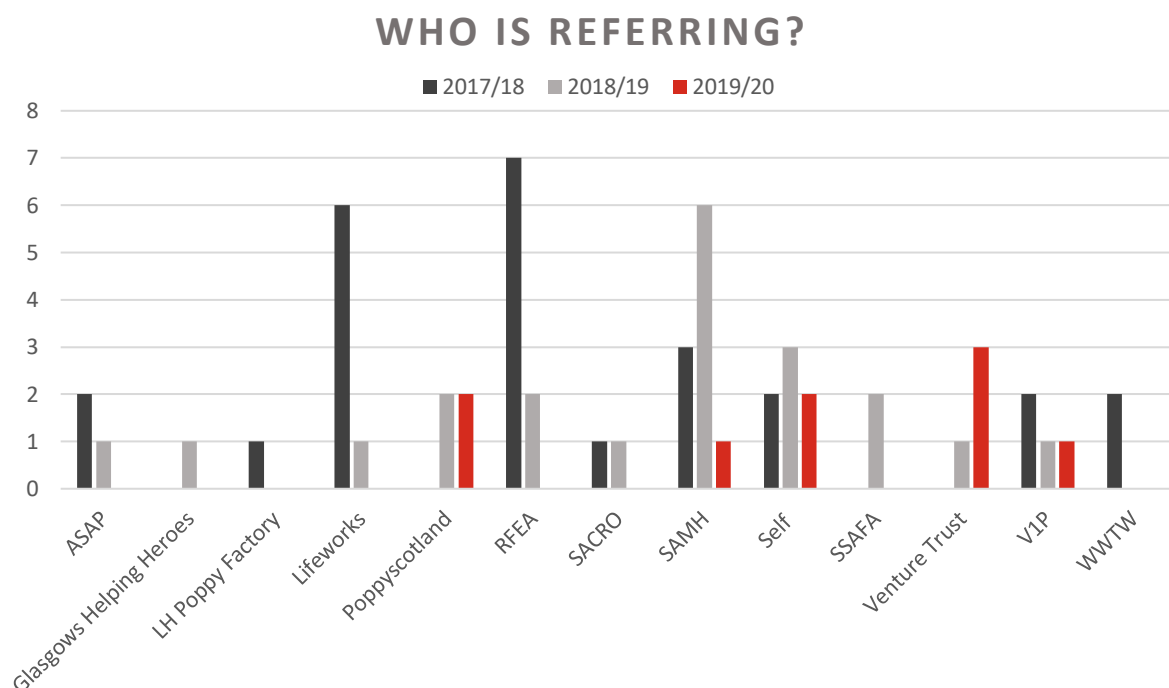
46% had previously accessed Poppyscotland's Welfare Services, fairly similar to the previous year's figures, and demonstrates nearly half of beneficiaries who have accessed Employment Services this year have previously engaged in Welfare support.



## 4.1 LifeWorks

LifeWorks, run in partnership with Royal British Legion Industries, is a vocational assessment and employability course that gives veterans, significantly struggling to get work, the support and confidence they need to help get the job they want.

9 individuals attended a LifeWorks course this year, with 8 attending the course in Scotland, while the other individual travelled to a course in Wales. Participation in LifeWorks was seriously impacted by Covid19. Whilst this service was available virtually it did not seem to appeal to our client group.





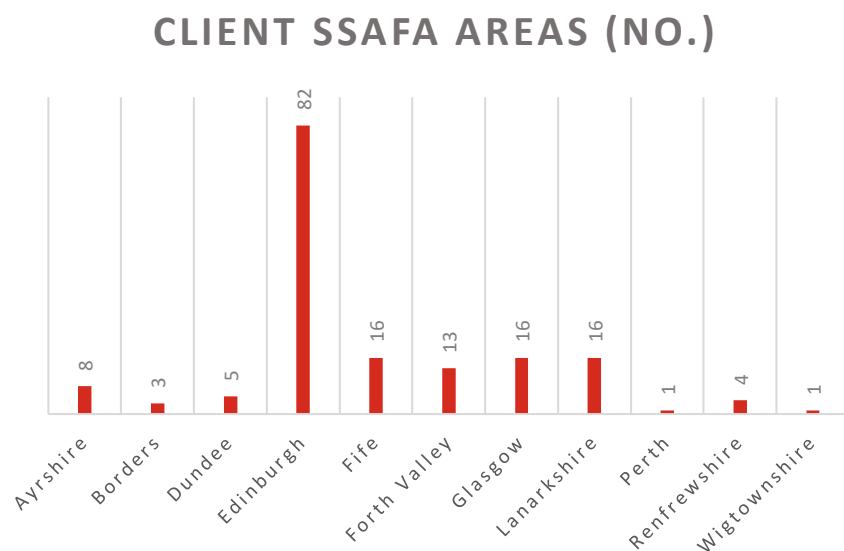
## 4.2 Employ-Able

Employ-Able, run in partnership with the Scottish Association for Mental Health, provides advice and support to assist veterans towards achieving vocational goals in paid work, education, training or volunteering.



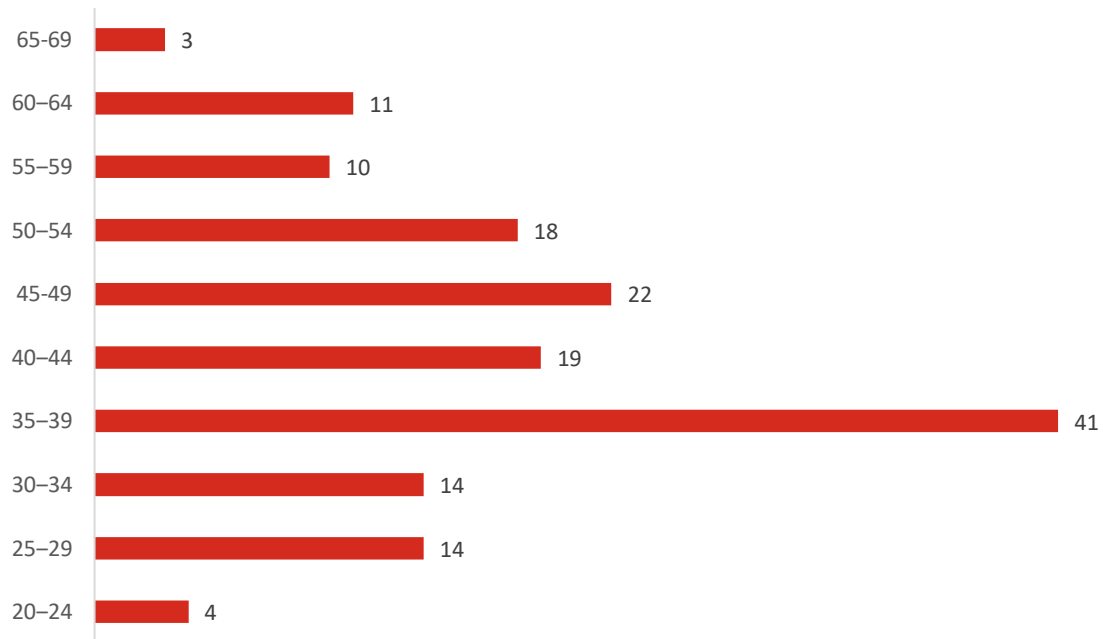
The Employ-Able service supported 165 veterans in 2019/20, which is a 33% decrease from the previous year.

The highest concentration of Employ-Able referrals was for clients in the Edinburgh and Lothians area. There were also high numbers of referrals in Fife, Glasgow and Lanarkshire.





## AGE PROFILE (NO.)



While client ages range from 22-67, most clients are in the 30s or 40s.

*\*For more data on Employ-Able activity from this period please see Appendix 2.*



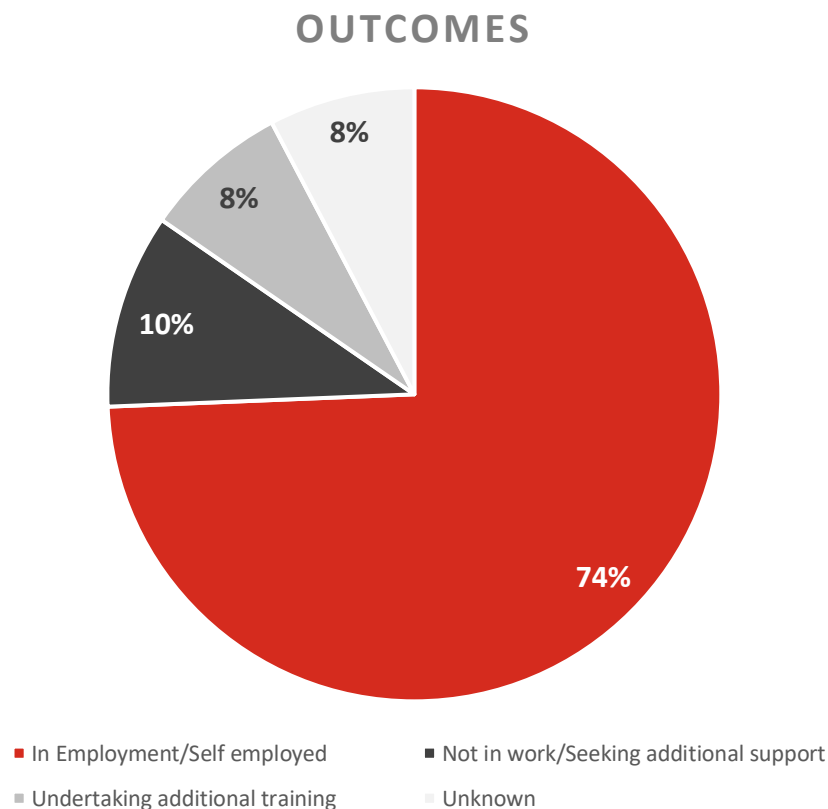
## 4.3 Employment Grants

Poppyscotland offers Employment Grants to members of the Armed Forces community who are unemployed or on a low income.

This year 40 clients were supported to obtain the qualifications or equipment required to uptake employment, a 17% decrease from last year.

Driving-related qualifications continue to be the most sought-after by our client group.

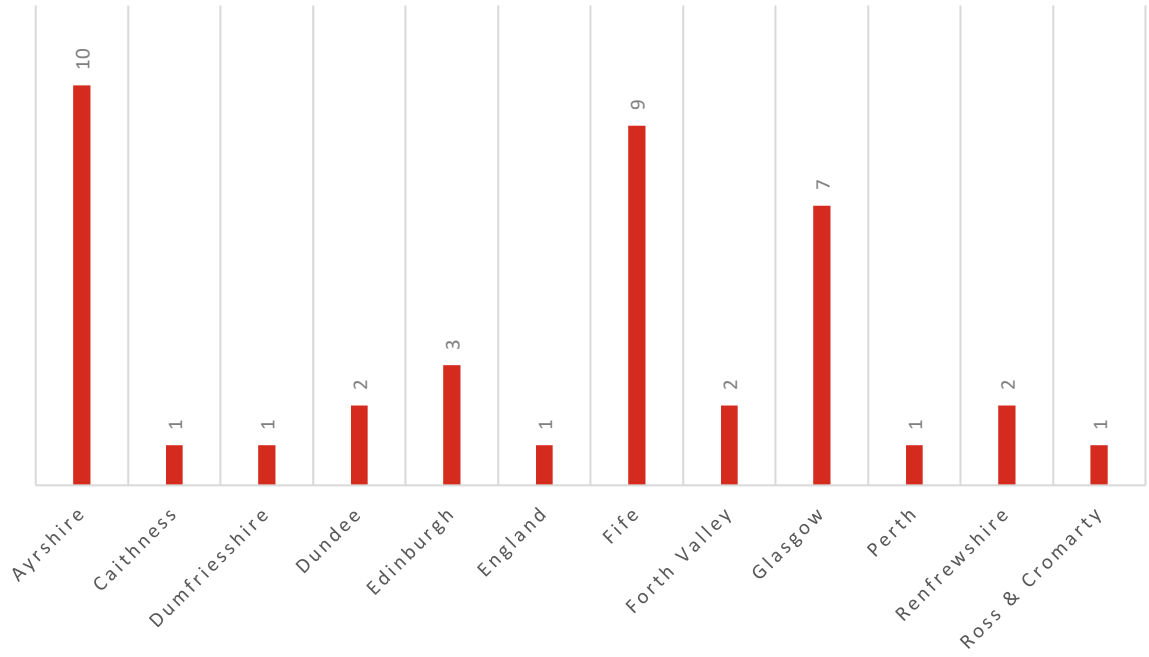
A total of £58,615 was required to enable these Employment Grant clients in 2019-20, roughly a 23% decrease from last year. Poppyscotland contributed £33,957.64 and sourced the balance from other funders.



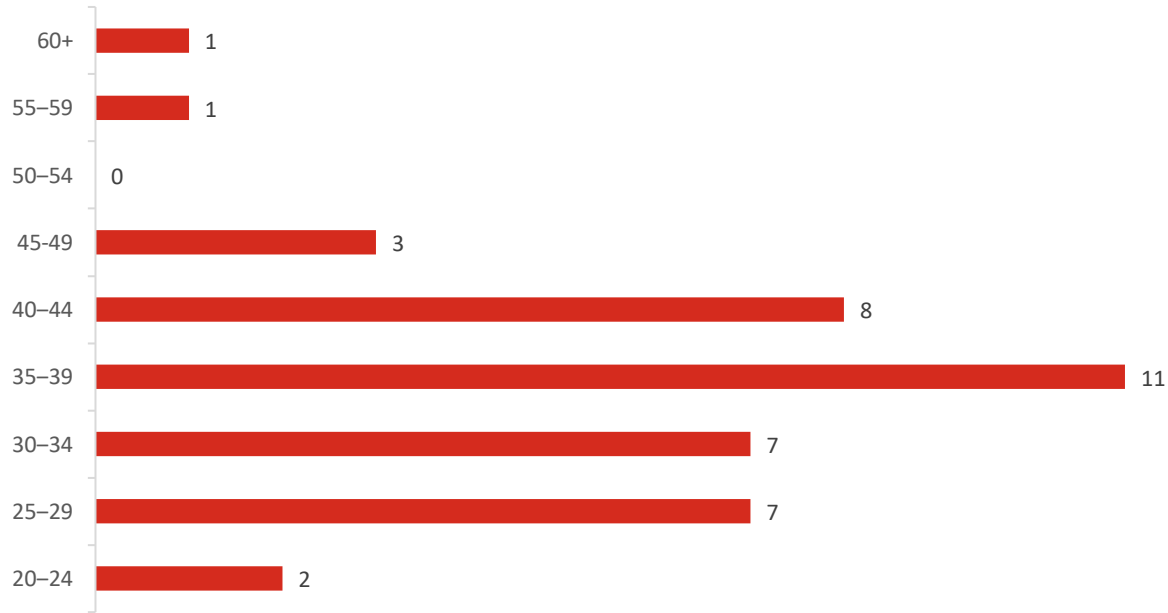
A total of 74% of clients are noted as gaining employment following completion of training funded by the Employment Grant scheme this year.



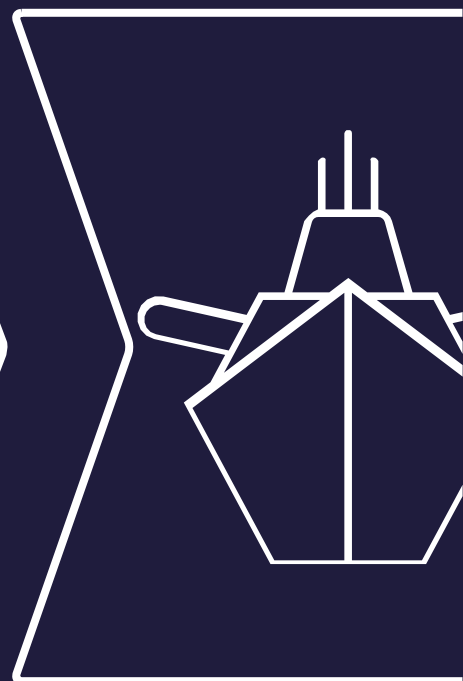
### CLIENT SSAFA AREAS (NO.)



### AGE PROFILE (NO.)







# ASAP Annual Report

1 October 2019 – 30 September 2020





# Key Achievements

The Armed Services Advice Project (ASAP) delivers information, advice and support to members of the Armed Forces Community through a Scotland wide helpline and face to face casework in 11 regions. The service is made possible by the funding partnership, led by Poppyscotland, with whom we work closely to develop the service and ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the clients we support.

## Key statistics for the period 1 October 2019 - 30 September 2020

- > Advisers supported 2,004 individuals over the year and gave advice over 11,600 times. This resulted in an average of 5.8 issues per client, compared with a bureau average of 2.6 issues per client. In addition to the 2,004, 340 clients were supported by Unforgotten Forces.
- > 51% of issues raised were about benefits and 12% concerned debts. Financial issues, including charitable grant applications, accounted for 11% of issues raised, and housing 5%.
- > Clients may gain financially as a result of the support they have received, for example through receiving benefits to which they are entitled, debt written off or rescheduled or charitable grants received. Client financial gain recorded over the year was £3,410,587, which amounts to £5.19 for every £1 of funding for the 2019/20 year.
- > A total of 1,131 clients benefited from a financial gain; the average financial gain per client was £3,015. This amounts to £5.19 for every £1

From the start of the service on 1 July 2010 to 30 September 2020, ASAP has supported a total of 17,103 individual clients with around 94,200 pieces of advice. The client financial gain since the start of ASAP is £18.5 million.



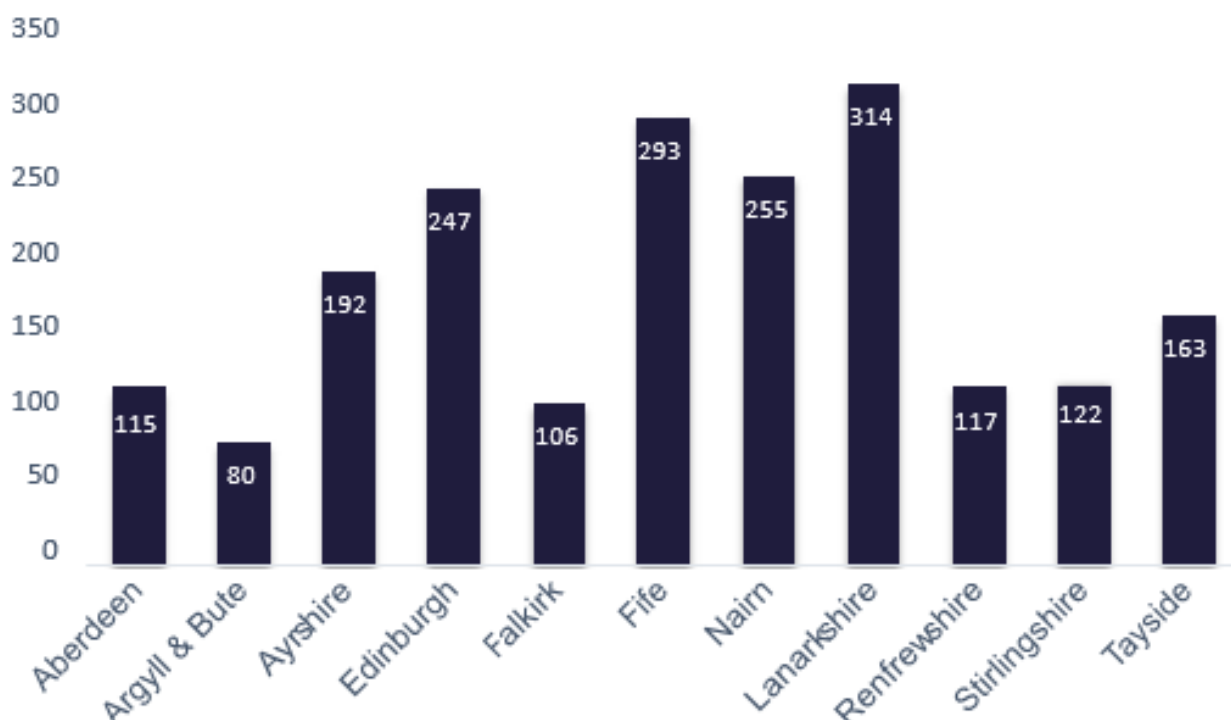


# Face to face ASAP area performance

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the vast majority of Citizens Advice network advice is being provided by telephone and email, with a few bureaux providing limited face to face appointments for urgent welfare support that cannot be provided remotely. To continue to support their clients, ASAP advisers are working from home, providing support to fewer clients but with more complex queries by telephone and email. The helpline continues to support clients during the usual opening hours. This has reduced the number of clients supported especially, as organisations which refer to ASAP have reduced or ceased service provision, reducing the number of clients accessing ASAP via these routes.

In addition to this, CAS is gradually standardising the way in which clients and issues are counted and reported to ensure statistics are comparable across all CAB services. For ASAP, this will mean a slight alteration in statistics. While this may reduce the overall client totals, it is evident from the financial gain reported, that the level of advice is relatively consistent with previous years.

Figure 1: Individual clients supported in face-to-face ASAP areas over the 12-month period





## Face to face ASAP area performance continued

It should be noted that the geographic areas are dissimilar in nature, covering different numbers of bureaux. The ease of access for clients to the bureau is a large factor, with a wider population spread in more rural areas making access to bureaux, outreach and home visits more challenging. Typically, ASAP client numbers are lower in more rural areas.

Table 1: Quarterly number of clients in each face-to-face ASAP area

Region	Oct – Dec 2019	Jan – March 2020	Apr – June 2020	July – Sept 2020	Total across 4 quarters
Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire	59	56	31	50	196
Argyll and Bute	21	21	32	31	105
Ayrshire	64	71	117	72	324
Edinburgh and Lothians	83	114	49	71	317
Falkirk	53	52	47	42	194
Fife	161	157	116	133	567
Inverness, Moray and Nairn	98	125	85	81	389
Lanarkshire	155	166	140	134	595
Renfrewshire	62	50	36	38	186
Stirlingshire and Clackmannanshire	26	56	56	51	189
Tayside (Dundee, Angus, Perth)	92	78	77	60	436
<b>Total</b>	<b>874</b>	<b>946</b>	<b>786</b>	<b>763</b>	<b>3369</b>

### Notes:

- > The service in the Falkirk area is jointly funded by Falkirk Council and the ASAP funding partnership.
- > Stirling CAB moved to a new recording system in April; the figures shown to December 2019 are a partial count of work undertaken due to incomplete recording on the new system.
- > The figures are for the number of clients seen in each quarter, counting each client once no matter how many times they are seen in the quarter.
- > As our clients have complex support needs, advisers tend to see them for multiple appointments which can be spread out over many months. This means that a client may be seen in more than one quarter. If this is the case, they will be counted in each quarter and added into the total figure.



# Helpline performance

As the ASAP is fully integrated within the CAB network, clients are recorded on their local CAB site. Where the helpline supports a client in an ASAP area, the statistics are included in the total for the region, while clients supported by the helpline outside ASAP areas are shown as separate helpline clients.

Table 2: Number of helpline clients

	Oct – Dec 2019	Jan – March 2020	Apr – June 2020	July – Sept 2020	Total across 4 quarters
Helpline clients recorded in ASAP regions	52	68	47	63	230
Helpline clients recorded outside ASAP regions	7	12	6	15	40
<b>Total helpline clients</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>270</b>

The helpline has fully supported clients accessing this service, without the need for referrals for face-to-face support, demonstrating that the experienced helpline adviser is potentially providing comprehensive support for complex issues.

Table 3: The ASAP Helpline supported 214 clients with 256 cases in the year

ASAP Area	Cases	Non-ASAP Area	Cases
Aberdeen	16	Central Borders	1
Argyll & Bute	7	DAGCAS	1
Ayrshire	22	East Dunbartonshire	3
Edinburgh	39	Glasgow	18
Falkirk	9	Lochaber	3
Fife	30	Peebles	1
Nairn	26	Roxburgh	3
Lanarkshire	44	Skye and Lochalsh	2
Renfrewshire	15	West Dunbartonshire	8
Stirlingshire	15	<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>
Tayside	33		
<b>Total</b>	<b>256</b>		

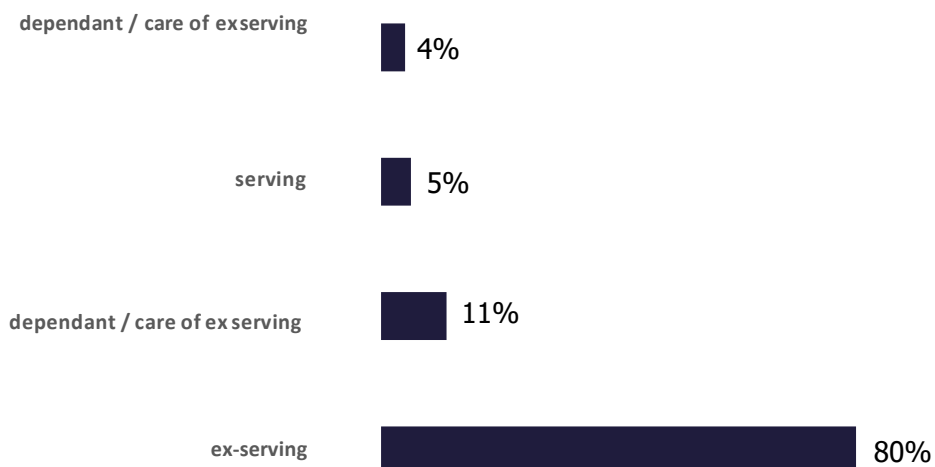


# Our clients

The service background of people seen varies between regions, depending on the proximity of bases and where veterans settle. Nationally, the proportion of clients has remained the same.



Figure 2: Service status of clients

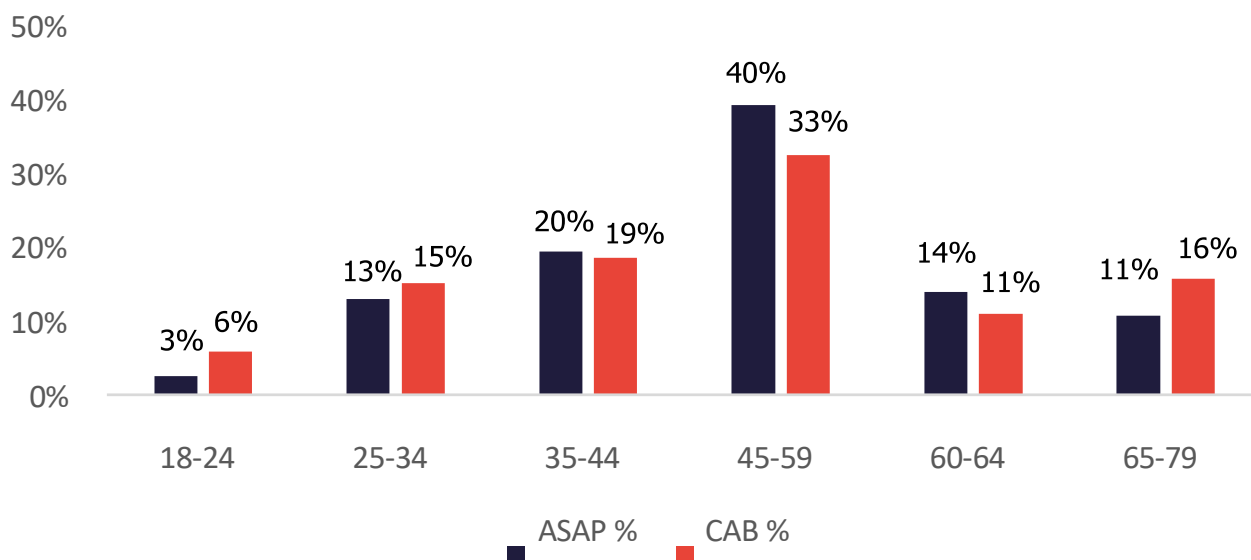


The proportion of clients in each group is broadly similar to previous years.



## Our clients continued

Figure 3: Age range of clients



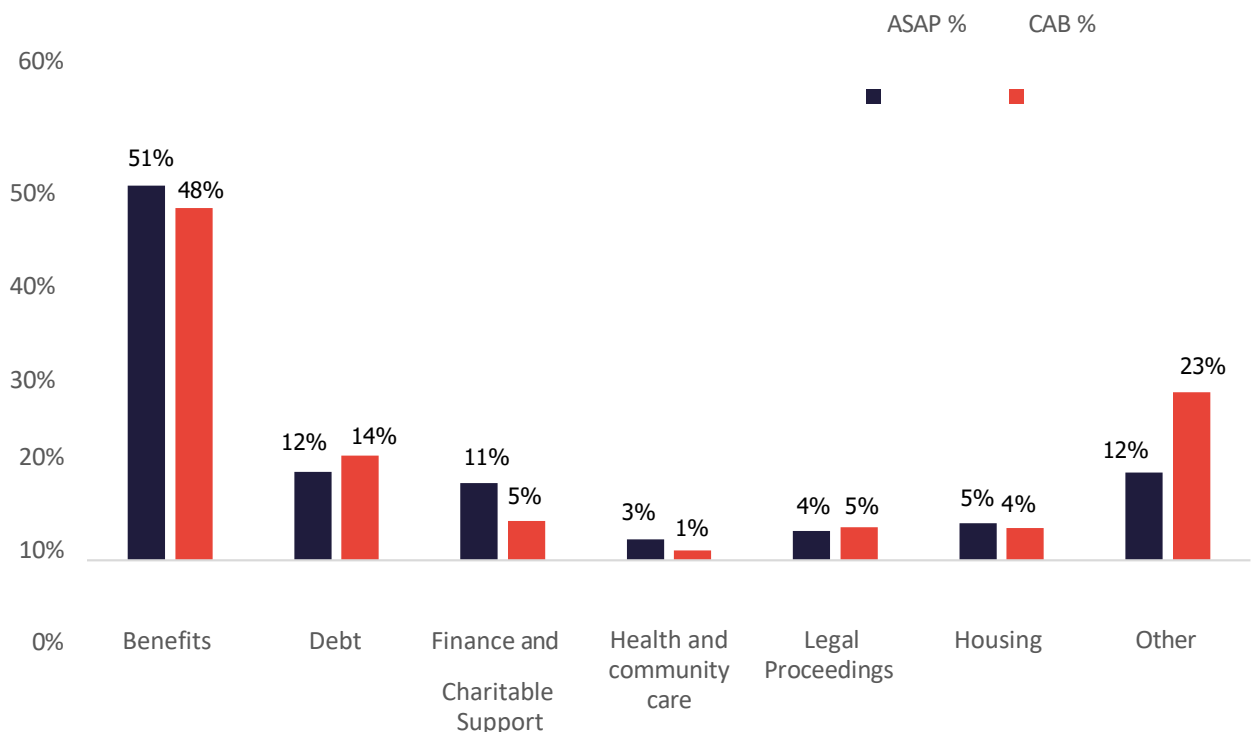
Compared with the bureau average, ASAP supports fewer younger people, and proportionately more in the 45-59 age range. Older clients, age 65 plus, have also been supported via Unforgotten Forces, and reported separately. From 1 October 2020 all clients will be supported by ASAP.



# Advice needs of ASAP clients

The number of times an ASAP client accesses advice is significantly higher than the bureau average of 2.6 issues per client, indicating that ASAP continues to offer valuable support to vulnerable people who present with multiple problems. Feedback from advisers indicates that the complexity of cases is increasing as people present with greater crisis, hardship and immediate need than previously.

Figure 4: Advice was given 11,600 times

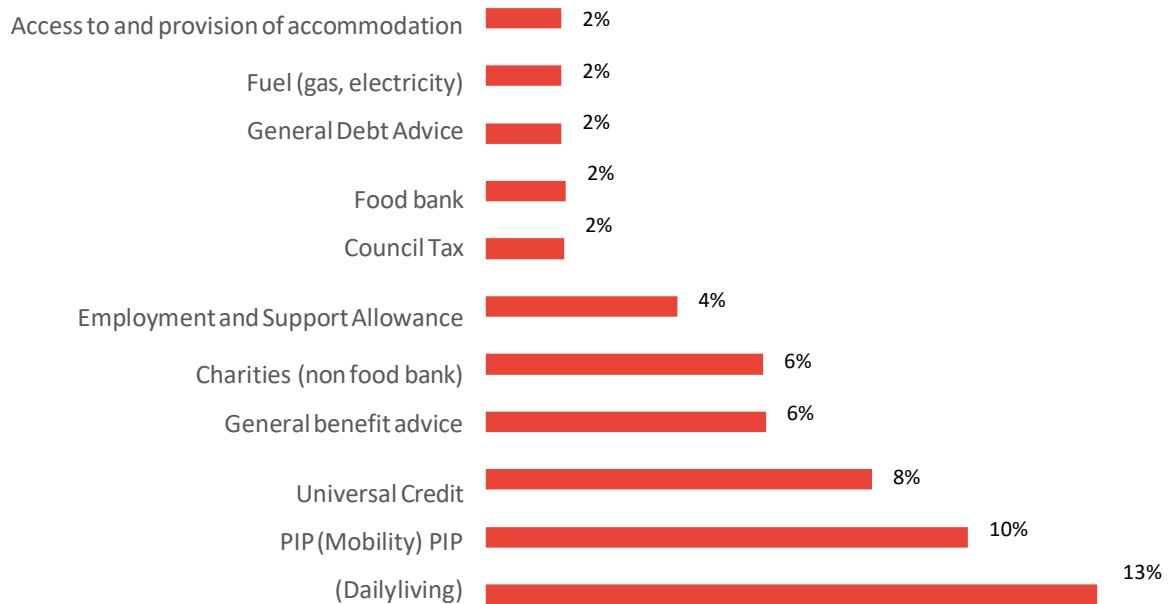


The proportion of benefits issues recorded by ASAP has increased slightly over the year, while the proportion of the other main issues has remained the same. ASAP clients raise proportionately more benefits and health issues than general bureau clients, giving an indication of the particular support needs of ASAP clients. The finance category includes charitable applications, and the high proportion of advice in this area compared with the bureau average is indicative of our close working relationship with Poppyscotland and SSAFA for access to charitable support. The 'Other' category is a combination of consumer, NHS concern, relationship, tax, travel and utilities – all ranging between 1% and 2% of advice given.



## Advice needs of ASAP clients continued

Figure 5: Top 10 advice issues



The proportion of benefits issues relating to ill-health has increased slightly compared with last year, while the roll-out of Universal Credit (UC) has seen the proportion of issues increase significantly. The bureaux network now offers a Help to Claim service for people making their UC claim. Support for access to charities and food banks indicates the level of need of the clients supported. Issues relating to access and provision of accommodation and fuel are now within the top 10 advice issues.



# Who we've worked with

ASAP is an integral part of the support network for the Armed Forces community in Scotland. Our strength lies in our ability to work with a wide range of organisations to support our clients, whether Service related, statutory or voluntary, bridging the gap between the Service experience of our clients and the civilian world.

For the last six months our work has been overshadowed by the impact of lockdown, which meant that many of the services we work with were unable to operate or had to significantly change the way they support clients. ASAP advisers have continued to work with other organisations on a remote basis where this was possible through technology, for example, in joint video or phone calls to clients.

Lockdown also meant that some planned initiatives were put on hold as organisations redeployed resources. This was the case for the refresh of the Police Scotland referral scheme, started in November 2019 with a meeting of new Veterans Champions for both local policing and custody. As the Police saw fewer people face to face the number of referrals fell, and officers were moved to COVID response teams. More engagement with Police Veterans' Champions is now planned for later in the year.

Advisers can record referrals into and out of ASAP when working with other organisations to support clients. Referrals are not routinely recorded for every client, so the data below indicates the range of organisations we work with rather than representing the complete picture.

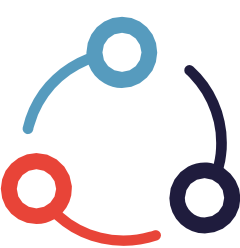


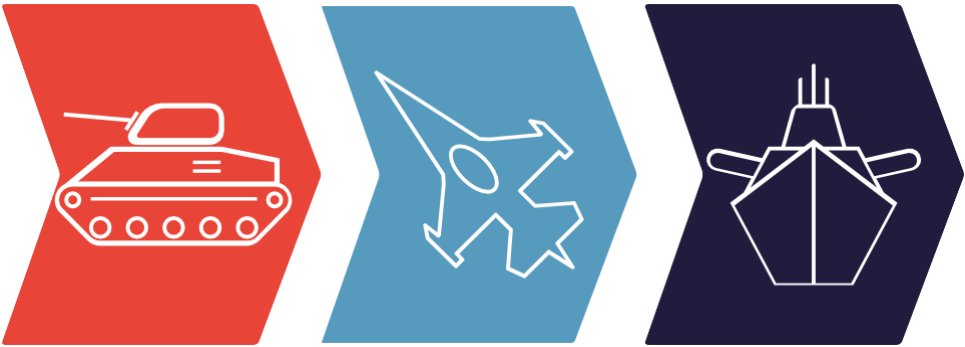
Self-referral / family / friend	31%	Other service-related charity	2%
Veterans First Point	12%	Other Bureaux Service	3%
SSAFA	6%	Military Welfare Service	2%
Poppyscotland	6%		



## Who we've worked with continued

The bureau network provides many specialist services, for example debt, energy or housing advice, and tribunal representation. Some of this is provided directly by ASAP advisers, and in other cases ASAP facilitates access to these services.

	SSAFA	12%	Local Authority Service	3%
	Veterans UK	10%	Fares 4 Free	3%
	Other bureaux service	8%	Legion Scotland	2%
	Other Service Related Charity	6%	Veterans First Point	2%
	Poppyscotland	5%		





# The impact of COVID-19

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ASAP advisers have been unable to offer face to face appointments since the beginning of lockdown, and have moved to supporting their clients remotely, utilising phone, email and video call technology. Advisers proactively contacted existing clients for a welfare check, including emergency food parcel requirements, provision of support for ongoing issues and reassurance of their continued availability.

Examples of advice provided via the phone and email:

- > Benefits applications completed via calls; completed information sent to the client to sign or copy
- > Proactive notification of legislative or benefits changes and assistance with claims
- > Support with benefit appeals / mandatory reconsideration process and written submission / case reviews, including requests for medical evidence
- > Representation at phone tribunals run by Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service, with all case preparation completed remotely
- > Phone appointments for new and existing clients
- > Provision of information on changed debt recovery processes and ongoing debt advice
- > Provision of information for employed / self-employed clients and access to COVID-19 related support, plus ongoing employment casework
- > Assistance to source local support
- > 'Listening ear', particularly for clients with poor mental health, and onwards referrals

The change to remote advice has presented challenges for both the advisers and their clients. It can take much longer to gather the information required over the phone, with some clients unable to undertake long phone calls. Clients aren't always comfortable using technology, or do not have access to it. Non-verbal clues to the situation are missed, which is a particular concern, for example, for benefits tribunals held over the phone or where the adviser is trying to assess the client's situation, so support needs may be unidentified.

Many clients rely on home visits to access support, and there is also a concern that the more vulnerable clients who would drop into the bureaux when they felt able will be excluding themselves from accessing advice remotely and may not respond to the proactive contact from advisers. Despite this, however, Advisers have generally adapted well to new ways of working under short timescales and unprecedented circumstances.





# Unforgotten Forces

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ASAP has been part of the Unforgotten Forces Consortium for the entire length of the project, working closely with partners including the Defence Medical Welfare Service and Age Scotland to support mutual clients. ASAP provides support for older veterans across the regions and through the helpline, with outreach in local hospitals and centres for older people.

From 1 October 2020, ASAP will continue as an unfunded partner, with ASAP advisers providing support to clients of all ages.

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## Training our advisers

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ASAP advisers are dealing with a particularly vulnerable client group, which means that they need a specialist skill set and a detailed knowledge of matters relating to the Armed Forces in addition to general advice skills. Following lockdown, Citizens Advice Scotland has moved to the remote provision of training courses so advisers can continue to access this.

The Citizens Advice Scotland e-modules providing an overview of the advice needs of the Armed Forces community and the support available are on the ASAP website [www.adviceasap.org.uk](http://www.adviceasap.org.uk)



# What we've done for clients

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The helpline has been providing increased levels of support to clients:

*An RAF veteran living alone who was furloughed, contacted the helpline to check their benefit entitlement. A benefit check showed potential entitlement to Universal Credit, which required further clarification due to the Service Attributable Pension, so the adviser contacted CPAG for further information. The adviser was then able to give the client information about the claims process and CAS Help to Claim phone number for additional support, if required. The client usually accessed local support for mental health issues, which is currently unavailable, therefore the adviser gave them details of RAFA support and their Helpline, which the client was interested in.*

COVID-19 has further complicated the situation of many people, and made it more difficult to access support:

*The ASAP adviser supported the client, the wife of a serving soldier, with a PIP application, awaiting decision. The client, a mother of a young child, has been on long term sick*

*leave due to multiple health conditions, and statutory sick pay has been exhausted. The family's lifestyle is based on both parents working. The client was uncertain about her employment position, as she has received conflicting medical advice about her ability to return to work. The ASAP adviser is assisting the client with the employment aspect of her case, supporting her to negotiate with her employer to see if they will agree to have her furloughed until after the Covid situation is resolved. If this is not possible, the adviser will assist the client with a further benefits claim.*

In some cases COVID-19 lockdowns and concerns led to unanticipated problems:

*A Navy veteran lives on benefits and a war pension. They choose to winter abroad due to a health condition and have done so for years. Their Personal Independence Payment mobility component is only exportable for the first 13 weeks of a temporary absence from the UK. The client has been unable to travel due to the Covid 19 pandemic as they*

*are in the shielded group, so flying home would be very dangerous. Following discussions with DWP exportability department, they have agreed to reinstate the Client's mobility component from the day they should have returned to UK, even though they will not be able to return until the situation is safe for them to travel.*



## What we've done for clients continued

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Cases this year have highlighted the importance of support with mental health:

*A client (Widow of ex-RAF) has received ongoing support from ASAP for a few years now. Since Dec 2019, ASAP has assisted this client in clearing housing debt, support with mental health issues, and procuring information about housing by contacting and referring to other councils (England – client would like to move from Scotland), veteran champions, and Royal Air Force Association (RAFA). ASAP Adviser has been in touch with client during lock down since March as client lives alone and is vulnerable. During a recent follow up contact it came to our knowledge that the client had started online gambling due to isolation. The ASAP Adviser has referred to gambling services in the local area (CAS Gambling Support Service) as the client would like support with the issue.*

*A client's health conditions included PTSD, severe depression, anxiety and stress, and chronic pain. The client was in receipt of a war pension (included mobility component), service attributable pension and enhanced rate PIP daily living. The client was referred by Money advice who have been assisting the client with a Debt Arrangement Scheme (DAS) as the client had debt of approximately £24,000. A benefit check was completed*

*for the client which showed an initial award of £409.89 Universal Credit (UC) per month*

*– this could potentially increase by a further £341.92 if the client is assessed to have Limited Capability for Work Related Activities (LCWRA). The client felt very isolated due to mental health and requirement to shield – they had no medical intervention for their mental health. A referral was made to Veterans First Point for possible psychological intervention and veteran peer support. A referral was also made to veteran's service at Pain Association*

*Scotland who run self-help management groups and one to one support to manage chronic pain. A referral to the Help to Claim team was also made to support the UC claim.*



# Promoting ASAP

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The focus has been on ensuring that other agencies and clients are aware that ASAP continues to be available. The CAS ASAP Coordinator contacted national partner organisations and provides updates for other organisation's newsletters. On-line information reflects current service provision. The ASAP helpline is included in the Helplines Partnership 'Find a Helpline' tool, which they have been promoting heavily on social media. The CAS Communications Team created a Facebook campaign to raise awareness of ASAP and the helpline to a relevant audience during the coronavirus crisis during April and May.

Bureaux also undertook promotional activity, including social media, weekly tweets, use of CAB Facebook pages, sharing with others including local councillors and elected members; bureau adverts in local papers; ASAP advisers proactively contacting all organisations they work with; inclusion of service availability in local organisation newsletters such as V1P Dundee. In Nairn, the bureau linked to the Nairn Taskforce, a large group of volunteers who are providing street by street support to anyone who wants help. They have leafleted every household in Nairn with details of a link person in their street who can then contact the bureau or arrange for shopping/medication/dog walking etc.

ASAP celebrated its 10th anniversary in August, with activity aimed to increase awareness of the support we offer as well as achievements in the last 10 years. The 10-year impact report is available on the CAS website <https://www.cas.org.uk/publications/10-years-armed-services-advice-project>. The anniversary was promoted through social media, national and local press, local radio, as well as a motion in the Scottish Parliament congratulating ASAP on this achievement.

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## October 2020

Contact: [ailsa.moorhead@cas.org.uk](mailto:ailsa.moorhead@cas.org.uk)

Armed Services Advice Project Co-ordinator, Citizens Advice Scotland For advice:

[ASAP@cas.org.uk](mailto:ASAP@cas.org.uk) Freephone 0808 800 1007

[www.adviceasap.org.uk](http://www.adviceasap.org.uk) | [www.cas.org.uk](http://www.cas.org.uk)

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**With thanks to the following for their ongoing funding support for ASAP:**



The Scottish Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux - Citizens Advice Scotland. Scottish charity (SC016637) and company limited by guarantee (89892)





# Employ//Able

ANNUAL REPORT - OCTOBER 19/20

DELIVERED BY

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# Introduction

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We have completed year eight of Employ-Able, and part of this year has been working through a Global Pandemic. Firstly, we would like to recognise that this year has brought the team many changes, challenges, and adversities. However, the Employ-Able team have worked tirelessly, with enthusiasm, and adapted to a new way of home working, all whilst maintaining excellent support for the clients on the programme. This year has brought some sad news to the Employ-Able team, with the passing of our beloved Employment Solutions Manager, and friend, Tamara Wilson-Chalmers. We therefore wish to dedicate this report to her, to honour her hard and trusted work on the programme, as well as her fantastic skills, knowledge, patience, and poise that she brought to the team. She is sorely missed.

This has been a busy year for the service. The number of referrals received this year has been slightly lower than last year, however this is still very high considering that many of our partnership services had went into a full lockdown. Referral figures are a true reflection of the demand for the service and excellent maintenance of partnerships. Once again, most referrals have come from Veteran's 1st Point services, mostly the Lothian service as this is where we find our highest number of referrals geographically. We have maintained ongoing contact with partner services, using virtual platforms. We have managed to open the service up to four additional referral sources this year.

At Employ-Able, we are very focused on the client's vocational goals. We are aware that there may be additional barriers which prevent clients sustaining goals, and we use our signposting knowledge to help them access relevant support. We consider the basic needs of clients referred. If we establish that they are in homeless accommodation, debt, or experiencing health or family issues, then we work together with specialist support services to address these issues, whilst simultaneously progressing towards their vocational goal. This year, we have focused on recording the referrals we make to external partners, to ensure that we are utilising all relevant support accessible to our clients.

With a team of extensively trained and enthusiastic advisers, clients receive support on a 1-1 basis, where advisers provide information on what Employ-Able can offer and individual goals are discussed. When the client completes the induction process on Employ-Able, they and the adviser make a joint action plan to empower and enable them to reach their goals and promote independence, as well as building their confidence along the way. The adviser supports the client towards their vocational goal, regardless of diagnosed mental health problem, and works at the client's pace. Employability Advisers are skilled to provide support, coaching, CV development, interview training, assisted job search, and in work support; to reach the best outcome for the client at the end of their journey.



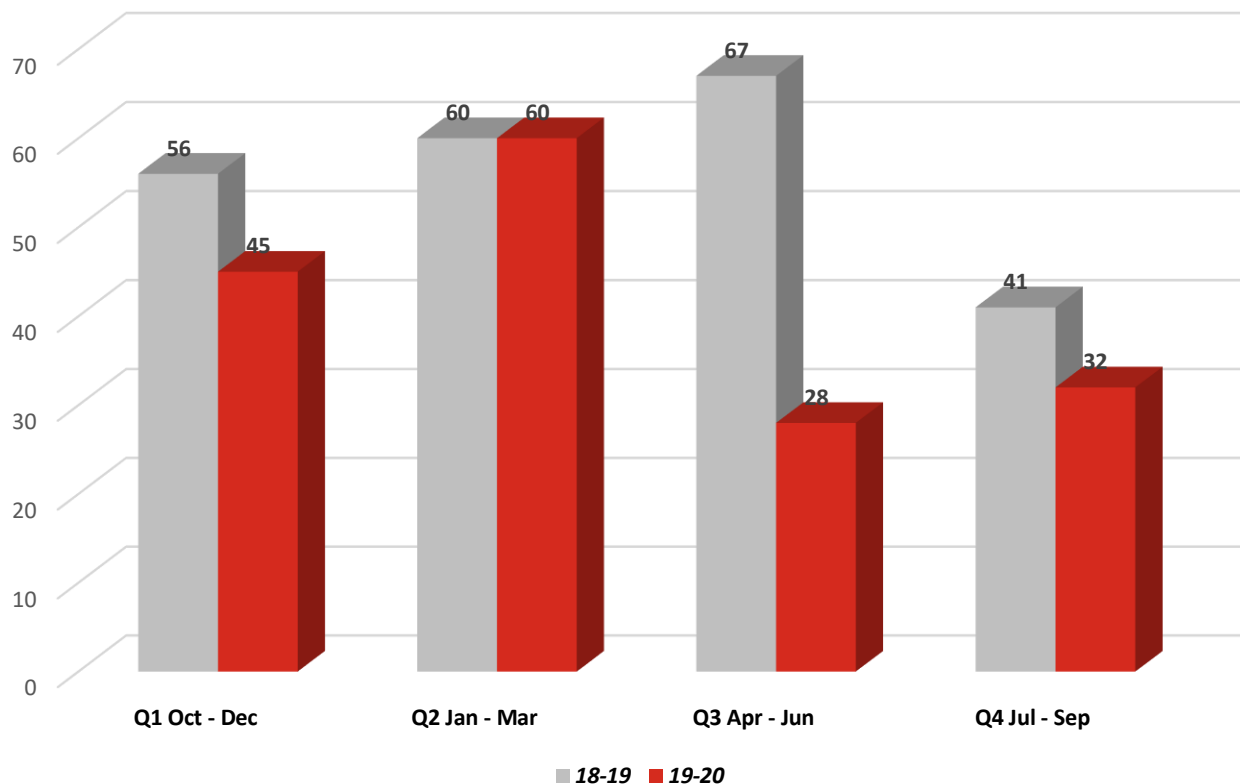
Halfway through this year, we were faced with a whole new way of working, which vastly changed Employ-Able's delivery model. As a dynamic and robust team, extensive time and preparation went into developing a new way of 'home working', which meant that our clients still felt supported from our team of dedicated advisers. Home working meant that advisers were able to offer telephone support to all clients. As developments progressed, the team have offered WhatsApp video calling, as well as Zoom video calling, however this has not been a popular choice from the clients so far. We will continuously strive to ensure our clients feel supported in reaching their vocational goals. Although there has been a period this year where access to training, education and employment opportunities have been paused, as can be seen from the below figures, advisers have still exceeded their annual targets and have worked tremendously hard in doing so.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the team for another year of hard work, dedication and support for all of our clients and each other. We will continue our way of working, following government guidelines, until such times as face to face support resumes.

*The information collated for this report is based on the last financial year 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020. There will be comparisons to year 7 (1<sup>st</sup> Oct 2018 until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019).*



## Number of referrals from Oct 2018 – Sept 2019, and Oct 2019 – Sept 2020



*\*The table above demonstrates the comparison in referrals from 2018 -2019 & 2019-2020. The total number of referrals received this year was 165 (224 in Y7). We have successfully sustained relationships with our biggest referral sources, as well as developed relationships with new referral sources.*

This level of consistency is due to the maintenance of relationships with referrers, as well as marketing to new services. 2% of referrals have come from 4 new referral sources, as can be seen below.



## Referrals

Referral source	2018 - 2019	2019 - 2020
Self	36	40
Combat Stress	8	4
Armed Services Advice Project	6	11
Job Centre Plus	4	0
RFEA	14	9
Veteran's F1rst Point	99	68
SSAFA	7	1
SAMH	10	5
Poppyscotland	17	11
SACRO	6	10
NHS	0	1
Lothian Veterans Centre	2	1
Shoulder to Shoulder/Timebank	1	1
Venture Trust	2	0
RAMH	1	0
Wheatley Group	6	0
SPS Castle Huntly	2	0
Skills Development Scotland	1	0
Community Renewal	1	0
Scotland's Bravest Manufacturing Co.	1	0
Next Steps	0	1
Thistle Foundation	0	1
Routes to Work	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>165</b>

*The highest number of referrals has come from V1P, accounting for 41% of referrals.*

*57% increase in referrals from Regular Forces Employment Association (RFEA) this year.*

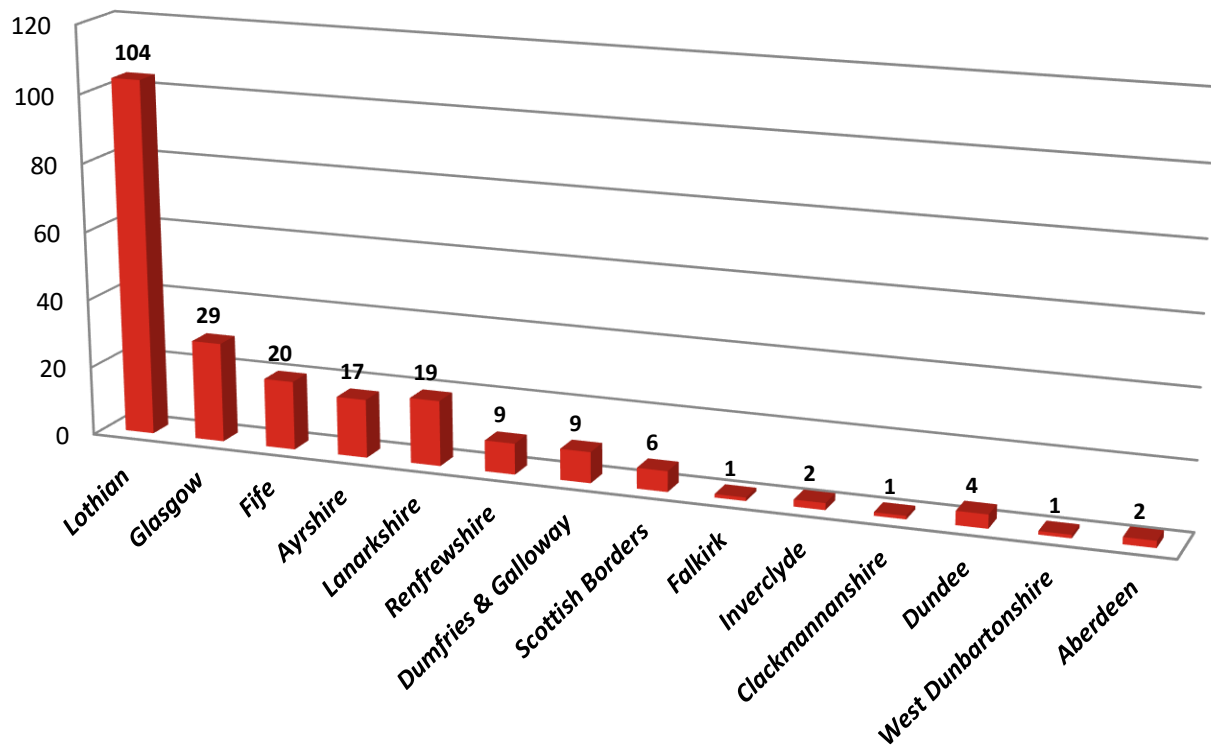
*From the previous year, there has been 4 new referral sources accounting for 2% of the referrals to the service.*

*Self-referrals have risen by 10% this year, generally from Veterans finding out about Employ Able through networking events.*

*Referrals from ASAP have increased by 45% from the previous year.*



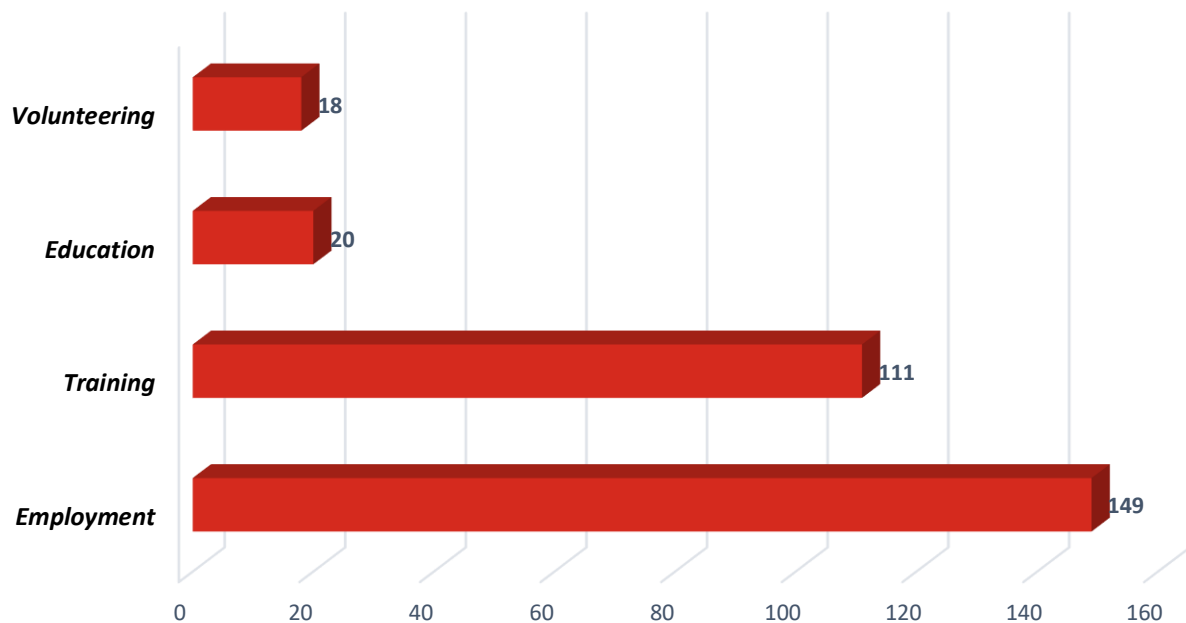
## Geography of Referrals Received



*\*The table above demonstrates the geographical locations of all referrals received from Year 8, 2019-2020.*



## Support Requirements



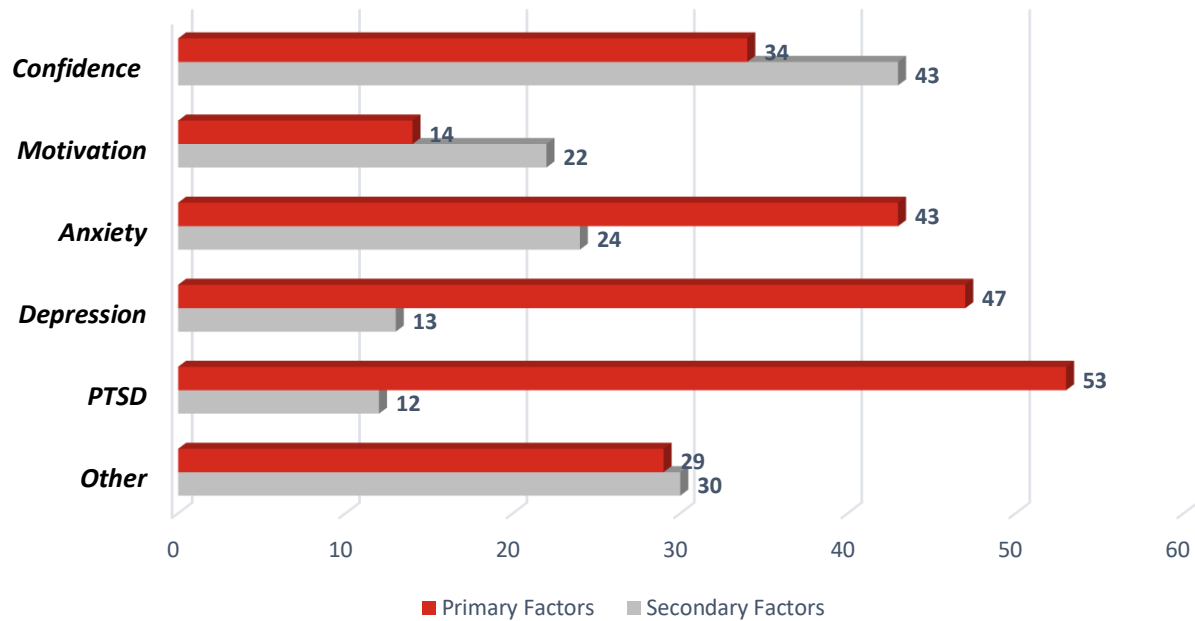
*\*The table above outlines client support needs identified at referral stage only.*

Most clients upon initial engagement consider their goal and support needs to be employment focused. However, goals and support are continuously altered, as clients reveal more information about themselves and their personal circumstances.

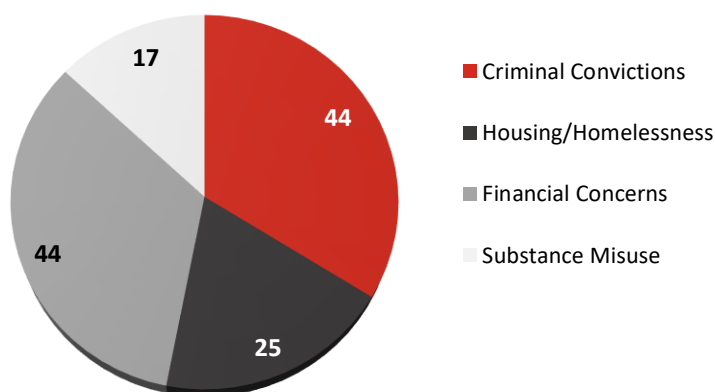
Fail to attend appointments (FTA) generally are our biggest challenge; and we work hard to reduce these. If clients cannot attend appointments, we offer them telephone support to sustain engagement. However, this year we have not focused on FTA figures. As we are working from home and unable to meet with clients, we have offered a more flexible approach towards telephone appointments, whereby clients are able to call advisers at any time, and client appointments are only booked as a guideline. This has proven very beneficial for both clients and advisers. It has also significantly reduced lack of engagement issues.



## Additional Support Needs



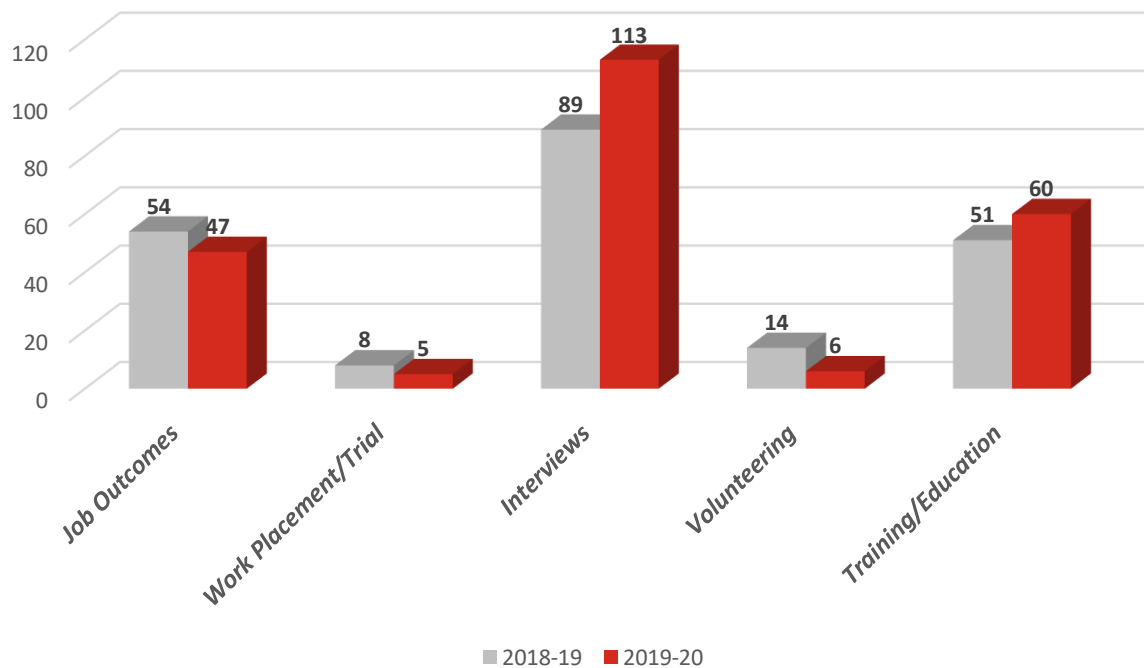
Our referral form captures Primary Factors, Secondary Factors, and Additional Factors in relation to client needs. The graph on the left demonstrates the comparison between primary and secondary factors that all referrals have identified they require additional support with. It is compulsory for all clients to choose a Primary Factor, however not necessary to choose a Secondary or Additional factor. Additional Factors generate discussion with the clients and allow advisers to signpost clients to supporting organisations.



The Pie Chart on the left demonstrates Additional Factors which are barriers to employment for clients. There has been a significant increase in clients with criminal convictions and financial issues, however employment has remained highly consistent.



## Client Outcomes

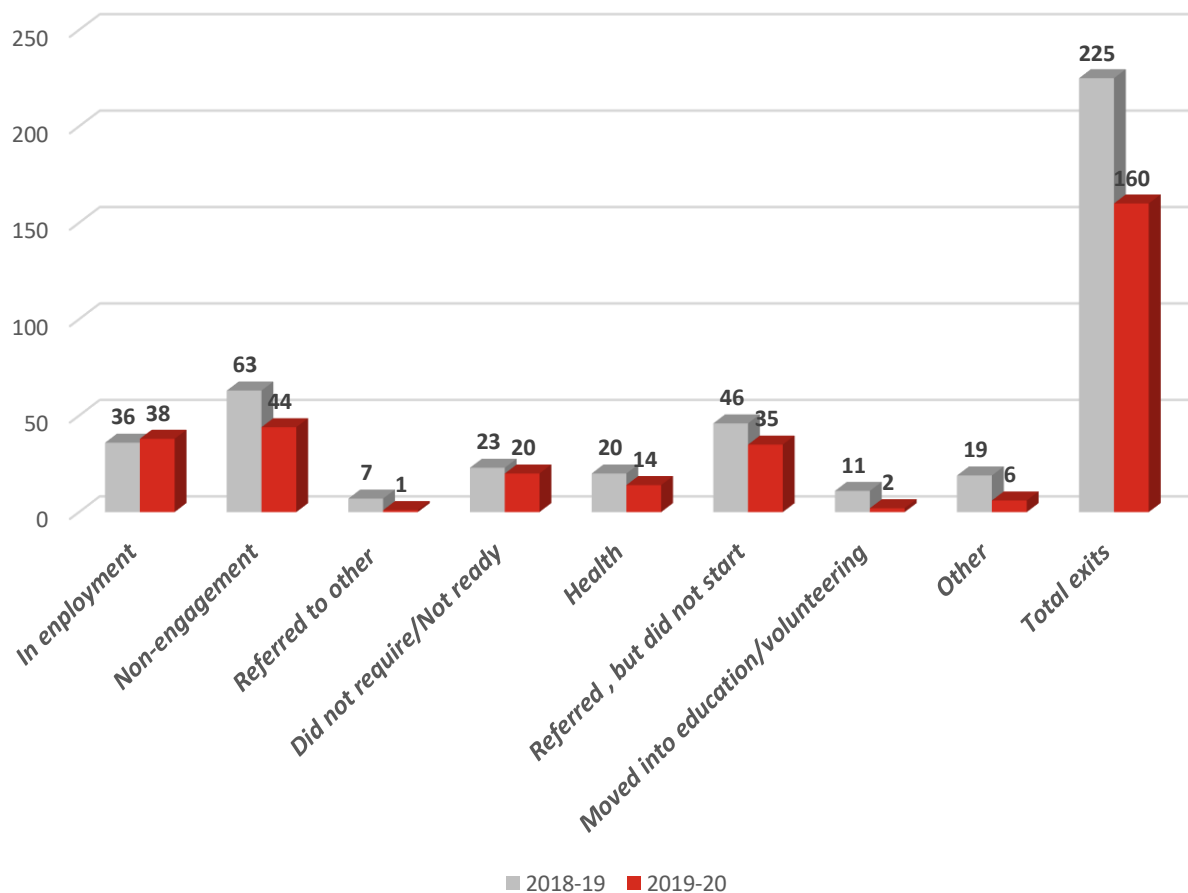


38% of clients have moved into work, 48% into training and education, 5% moved into volunteering and 90% have secured interviews. Work placement/trial has also been recorded this year, which 4% of clients this year successfully completed.

*\*The above information is based on 125 who started the programme. 35 clients who were referred but did not start the programme were not included in the calculations. Referrals that started the programme and only engaged once before they were exited, due to non-engagement, are included in the calculations.*



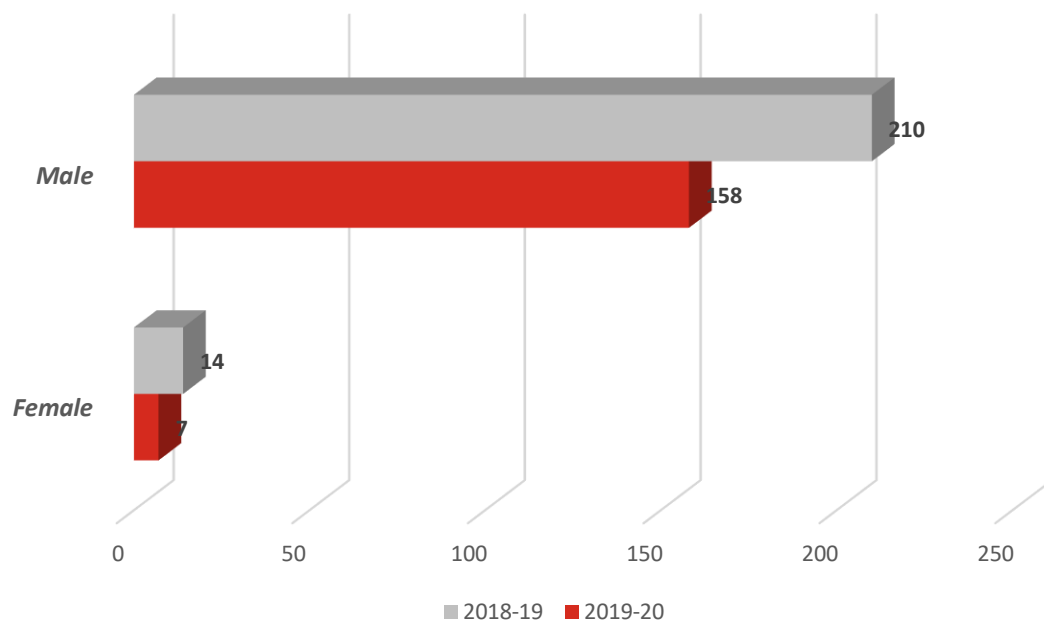
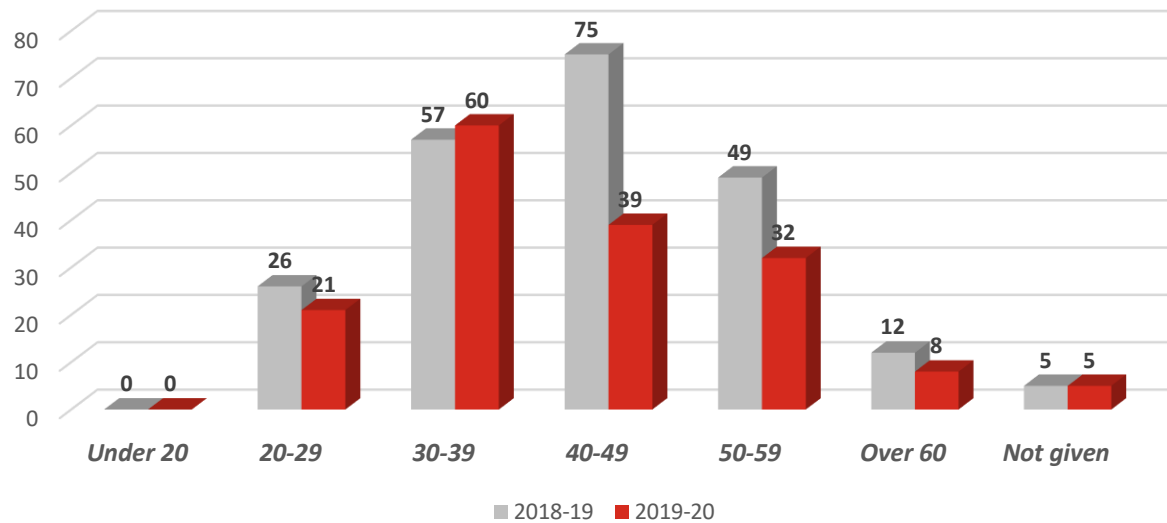
## Closed Cases



There has been a slight increase in clients exiting due to being in employment, which considering the lack of employment opportunities available within this year, is extremely positive. Non-engagement continues to be the reason for the highest number of exited clients, and we believe that this is predominantly in relation to the lockdown circumstances of this year. Other reasons have significantly decreased from last year, and this may mean that clients are unobtainable. We utilise various methods of communication before disengaging with clients who have not been reachable, as well as getting in touch with the referral sources for reassurance of the client's welfare. Although clients may not have engaged with the service at this time, we ensure that when a client is ready and wants to be re-referred, it is a smooth and quick process for them.



## Age and Gender Profiles



The average client age group remains at 30-49, making up 60% of our referrals. Referrals within the over 60's age group have only just slightly decreased, suggesting that a wider variety of Veterans are still accessing support. This age profile is made up from initial referral forms, therefore where age is not given this is then collected by the adviser at the initial induction meeting. The total amount of female referrals has halved from last year. We continue to support diversity and inclusion within the service.



## Partnership Referrals

Signposting Organisations	
Action on Hearing Loss	1
ASAP	10
Business Gateway	1
Combat Stress	1
Crisis Counselling	3
Edinburgh Council Housing	1
Fares4Free	3
Grassmarket Project	1
LVC	1
Money Matters	1
Poppyscotland	5
Poppyscotland Welfare	4
RFEA	2
Rock to Recovery	1
SACRO	6
SDS	7
Shoulder to Shoulder	1
SLC Social Work	1
SSAFA	18
Step Together	7
Thistle Foundation	7
Timebank	2
V1P	7
Venture Trust	1
Veterans UK	5
Virtue Recruitment	2
Who Dares Cares	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>110</b>

Although partnership working has always been a huge focus and success for Employ-Able, this year it was decided that all partnership referrals would be recorded in more depth. This was captured in adviser weekly reports, to ensure no information was missed. The table to the left demonstrates the organisations that advisers have referred clients onto for additional support. This can happen at any stage of the clients support journey, depending on their needs.

Over the course of this year, there have been 110 referrals made by advisers, for a variety of reasons including: financial, housing, further employability and training support. Partnerships are maintained throughout our geographical locations. Building and maintaining these relationships are hugely important.



## Life after Employ-Able ...

### Anonymous, Aged 39

#### How did you discover Employ-Able?

"I was working in a facilities role and I was facing redundancy and my mental health had really gone downhill. I got in touch with V1P and during a support appointment for my PTSD they asked if I wanted help with getting other employment or training, and they told me about SAMH and Employ-Able and I was happy to be referred."

#### What difference did the service make to your life?

"The support I received made a big difference to me, especially having someone to help with applications and CV making and having someone to listen to my anxieties about getting work/interviews/starting new work among a host of other things was very helpful to me."

#### What was your goal?

"My goal was to find suitable guaranteed employment that paid enough to keep my family and myself but also didn't put me under pressure or judge me."

#### Did we help you achieve your goal?

"My adviser was really good and discussed all my skills and previous work. I wanted to do something different and we looked at where I could transfer my skills, she also made me a new CV and covering letters. She job searched for me and she completed applications with me, and also called or emailed if she spotted something useful that might suit me."

#### Where is your life at now?

I am in full time work and have just passed my 6-month probationary period. I am working as a Care Worker, I have found my niche, I'm extremely happy with my job."



## Feedback ...

### Alexander Hunter

“When I started on Employ-Able I was unemployed and living in homeless accommodation. While on Employ-Able my adviser motivated me and supported me with looking for employment, she created a new CV and applied for jobs for me and phoned me whenever she seen something new that would be suitable. During the pandemic I went into work at Burtons Biscuits but wanted to move locations. My adviser continued to support me applying for HGV jobs in the south and I am now down south working for DHL and have accommodation in Portsmouth. SAMH Employ-Able have given me great support and I would definitely recommend them to everyone.

### Scott Morrison

“When I first came to Employ-Able I was in a real mess, I had court issues, debt issues, housing issues and relationship problems. I came to Employ-Able for help with training and was supported with all my problems. If my adviser couldn’t help, then she found me someone that could.

I am now in full time work, self-employed but with enough work to last me into the middle of next year. I completed my CSCS and I am currently doing my NVQ along with my work, as my adviser arranged this with Pinnacle Training, and I should have my skilled card by the Spring. Everything is looking up and forward for me now. Thank you”.

### An Adviser perspective

“Thank you, I don’t know where I’d be without your help”, these are the words that you hear and remember at the end of a busy day and make you roll out of bed each morning buzzing to start all over again and do better each day. I am an Employ-Able adviser, I started almost 2 years ago. I’ve worked in employability for many years previous to Employ-Able but never with Veterans. I work with a very person- centred approach with our Veterans, building trust, and gauging our Veterans’ support needs is imperative as no two Veterans are the same. Veterans attend Employ-Able for help in gaining Employment, Training or Education, but there can be many issues that are preventing them moving forward, such as homelessness, mental health or other barriers (of which there are sometimes many) and these can vary throughout their journey with Employ-Able. Luckily, we have excellent partnerships and third-party organisations we can refer to that can help address a lot of these barriers. We also have a great team with a wealth of information and ideas that we can share with each other to help our clients. I love my job and there is no better feeling in the world than going through a client’s journey, seeing them overcome their barriers, watching their confidence and self-esteem grow and eventually reaching their goal.



## Focus Next Year ...

1. Ensure we are accessible to provide support to clients Scotland wide referred to Employ-Able- whether this is telephone, email, or face to face support.
2. Continue to market the service and build new relationships with potential referral sources. Maintain our excellent relationship with our partners, including V1P as our highest referral source to date.
3. Continue to promote Employ-Able by producing a quarterly newsletter and increase the number of relevant recipients.
4. Continuously update our knowledge on the labour market, as well as training, volunteering, and education settings during ongoing global changes to the economy.
5. Discuss Tools for Living (both face to face and virtual delivery) with clients and the benefits of engaging in a group setting and connecting with peers, after a lengthy period of time isolating; should social distancing guidelines permit.
6. Gather good news stories with clients both on the programme to maintain relationships and follow up support, with a focus on 'Life After Employ-Able'.
7. Focus on clients that have been on Employ-Able for over 1 year and discuss their ongoing vocational goals.
8. Continue to build on our community mapping and networking to increase awareness of all local services that will benefit our clients, especially in our high areas of engagement (Lothian and Lanarkshire).
9. Continuously explore new ways of working under social distancing guidelines that ensures clients are supported and able to reach their vocational goals.

For Tamara 1980-2020



# Employ//Able