

Sector Insight: Armed Forces Charities in Scotland

Scotland has a thriving community of armed forces charities, yet historically, charities registered in Scotland have not been required to provide the same level of publicly-available information as charities registered in England and Wales, an issue identified in DSC's 2014 Sector Insight: UK Armed Forces Charities Report.

This is the first report to focus specifically on armed forces charities registered in Scotland. Its purpose is to help inform Scotland's policy direction and provide information to those working within the charity sector. The report delves into the finances, purposes and functions of over 300 armed forces charities, including those that are registered and operate on both sides of the border. It focuses on how charities in Scotland are categorized, what provision they make for their beneficiaries, and offers an overview and analysis of the charities registered in Scotland.



Methodology

- In order to confirm the number of armed forces charities registered in Scotland, DSC undertook systematic searches of OSCR’s database (Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator).
- Postal enquiries were sent to charities identified as being of interest, requesting their annual reports and accounts, to request information not provided by the regulator.
- Two separate data requests were submitted to OSCR, which provided further data on Scotland’s charities.
- The final data set included 320 charities, deemed to be categorised as Armed Forces Charities, 32 of which were cross-border charities.

Key Findings

Level of Provision

There are 320 armed forces charities in Scotland, with a total income of £314million and expenditure of £294million.

DSC’s research debunks the commonly held myth that there are ‘too many’ forces charities. In fact, armed forces charities represent only 1.3% of the 23,971 charities registered and operating in Scotland.

Further analysis reveals that while 93% of charities remits were to cater for Service and Ex-Service personnel and their families, only 30% were classified as being solely Welfare charities and 60% being associations/ association branches.

Cross Border charities

32 Cross border charities (charities registered with both OSCR and CCEW) make up only 10% of armed forces charities in Scotland. Yet, they account for 82% of all annual income and 81% of all annual expenditure.

Cross-border charities can potentially skew the financial size of the sector as they do not provide income and expenditure figures reliably attributed to Scotland. DSC estimates that as little as 3% of cross-border charities’ total expenditure is spent on activities in Scotland.



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¹ Deloitte (2016) Veterans’ Work: Recognising the potential of ex-Service personnel, London.
² Charity Commission for England and Wales, Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.
³ Conservative estimate based on DSC’s own findings, See Doherty R., Cole s. & Robson A., (2017) Armed Forces Charities Education and Employment Provision; DSC, London.

Types of charities

There are 229 tri-services charities in comparison to 51 Army charities, 32 RAF charities and 8 Royal Navy charities operating in Scotland.

Associations are most common type of armed forces charity, with 184 operating in total, followed by welfare charities (91). Other less common categories of forces charities included museums (11); memorial charities (9) and a mix of the above (19).

The most common object of armed forces charities was to provide 'relief in need' according to 248 charities. A further 47 charities made provision for health and wellbeing, while 39 made [provision for education and employment. Advice and advocacy services were delivered by 37 charities and 19 offered housing support.

Of charities making provision for education, over half (53.8%) do so for employment and career services. Health provision is most commonly made to support respite and recreation (64.6%), and mental health support is provided by 37.5% of charities that make provision for health support. Heritage charities account for as little as 6.3% of all charities, of which, 80.1% of all expenditure is associated with museums.

'Charities will benefit from the clearly detailed evidence in the report. The findings will be a valuable catalyst to encourage further partnership working, collaboration and effective communication between both armed forces charities and other third sector stakeholders.'

Colonel (Retired) Martin Gibson, Obe, DL
Chair of Veterans Scotland and member of the
Cobseo Executive Committee.

Conclusions and recommendations

The report challenges the commonly held public misconception that there are 'too many' armed forces charities, as did the 2014 UK Sector Insight report that covered England and Wales.

The total number of armed forces charities registered in Scotland is 320, accounting for just 1.3% of the 23,971 charities registered and operating in Scotland.

Cross-border charities have been identified as financially problematic to analyse, as they serve to skew the financial size of the sector. The financial impact of cross-border charities remains an unknown quantity and there are no current means to accurately assess their income and expenditure in Scotland. .

The report suggests that as little as 3% of cross-border charities' expenditure is actually spent on activities in Scotland, although it can be argued that this percentage is reflective of the Scottish population size.

DSC recommends that cross-border charities should be required to produce separate annual reports that includes accounts detailing activities and expenditure in Scotland to signpost investment needs for charities.



About the report

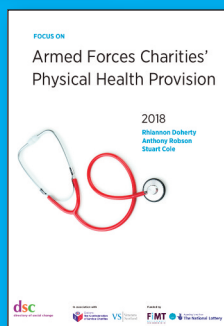
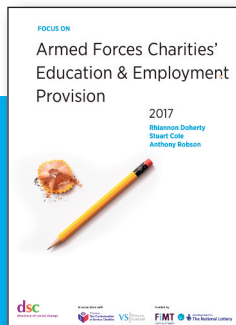
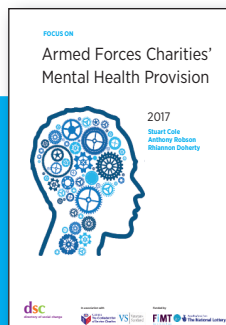
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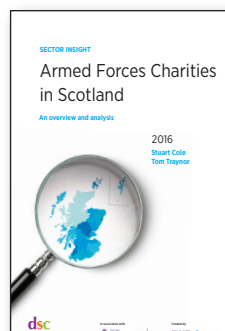
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We help independent charities, voluntary organisations and community groups to achieve their goals by:

- Providing practical tools that organisations and activists need, including publications, training courses, conferences and research
- Acting as a 'concerned citizen' in public policy debates, Leading campaigns and stimulating debate on key policy issues
- Carrying out research and providing information to influence policymakers

This publication is the first of six thematic reports, to be delivered during 2017-2019 as part of DSC's Focus On series, which illuminates the armed forces charity sector.

The series follows on from DSC's two Sector Insight reports, UK Armed Forces Charities, 2014 and Armed Forces Charities in Scotland, 2016.



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