

Rutland Armed Forces Health and Wellbeing Survey

For Rutland County Council

21.06.2023



Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Aims & Objectives	5
3.	Methodology	6
4.	Key findings	8
5.	Conclusions	35
6.	References	37
7.	Appendix 1	38

1. Introduction

Qa Research undertook research for Rutland County Council aimed at better understanding health, community, and wellbeing needs of the Armed Forces community located in Rutland as well as those arriving there in 2023.

Rutland, having several army bases, is a local area with a high proportion of current or ex- military personnel and their families. Indeed, 6.9% of adult population are veterans¹ and Rutland has one of the highest shares of regular forces and MOD civil servants of the total population compared to other local authorities (in 2015 the percentage was 3.7%²). While military personnel tend to be more physically fit than the average population due to intense physical training, prerequisites to join, as well as access to health care and social support networks, there is some evidence that they exhibit negative health behaviours more often. One study found that around 32% of army men and 22% of army women smoked in 2015³. Other evidence suggests that alcohol consumption is also greater within the armed forces.

While public perceptions of mental health among military personnel can centre on combat related trauma, for example PTSD, the prevalence of it is not significant among British troops – it has been recorded at only 6% amid combat troops⁴. A study by Hunt et al. found that their mental health issues are broader and include depression, anxiety, and alcohol-induced problems⁵. Another article suggests that around 20% of military personnel suffered from common mental disorder, which according to the authors does not significantly go above general population and is almost the same between deployed personnel and reservists⁶.

However, one group that stands out is early service leavers, i.e. “those who leave prior to four years of service”, who appear to disproportionately suffer from negative health outcomes and have higher chance of developing mental health issues. Nevertheless, the causality is not clear in this case, as to whether that happens due to their past prior to the enlistment or negative experiences during the service.⁷

¹ Census 2021

² Defence Public Health Unit 2015

³ Local Government Association 2017

⁴ Hunt et al. 2014

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Fear et al. 2010

⁷ As the sampling found only one potential early leaver, we are unable to draw conclusions for that group in the context of Rutland.

Previous studies also pointed to social issues such as loneliness among veterans and generally low health literacy in the armed forces. While there is a range of support available for veterans and service leavers, such as Veterans' Gateway, specialised NHS services, and legal advice, ex-service people can still emerge from the armed forces feeling unprepared for civilian life and may struggle adapting in a number of ways.

This tapestry of issues poses a challenge for the public sector tasked with addressing their health and social needs. Due to the 1st Battalion Royal Anglian Regiment arriving at Kendrew Barracks in 2023, local partners in Rutland needed to understand what those needs are and how best they can be attended to.

2. Aims & Objectives

The overall research aim was to:

Explore the health, wellbeing and community needs of serving personnel, military spouses and families due to move into Kendrew Barracks in summer 2023, those already at Kendrew and St George's Barracks, and veterans living in Rutland and inform recommendations supporting commissioners and service providers to meet these needs.

The research looked to investigate their physical and mental health state and needs, sense of belonging and community, specific child needs, plans for the future, and what their needs and expectations of local organisations.

3. Methodology

The method used was an online survey. Qa team designed the questionnaire in collaboration with Rutland County Council and hosted it on a secure survey platform (Appendix 1).

RCC conducted distribution of the survey among personnel, families, and veterans. The activities included face-to-face briefings for soldiers and their family members of the first Battalion and distribution of newsletters and leaflets with a weblink to the survey. The Armed Forces Officer from Rutland County Council also engaged with potential respondents and explained the value of the survey at the Forces Family Forum at Kendrew Barracks and the Welfare Teams from all units based in Rutland. The veteran community in Rutland were invited to take part via emails and multiple social media channels including the local Royal British Legion, RAF Associations, and Rutland County Council's own twitter. Further, regular Veteran's Breakfasts in Oakham were utilised to promote the survey.

Some of the questions were taken from the Armed Forces Covenant survey,⁸ Armed Forces Continuous Attitude survey,⁹ and GP Patient survey¹⁰ for comparison.

To incentivize participation, a free prize draw was organised by Qa. 3 prizes of value £75, £50, £25 were given out to 3 randomly assigned winners. Qa did not pass their contact or personal data to RCC or anyone else.

The target population is all these groups located in Rutland and 1st Battalion in Cyprus due to move as well as veterans who live in Rutland. Of the population we know

- Total unit strength for 1 R Anglian Regt (Vikings): 572 soldiers (of all ranks)
- Total number of families: 171 (including single parent ones)
- Total number of dependent children: 252 (of which 93 are preschool age, and 9 in further education beyond school age)

Initially, we expected to survey 250 respondents to achieve a robust sample. There were a few challenges with reaching the right audiences and convincing to take part in it. Particularly, the survey could not be disseminated directly for the data privacy reasons. RCC did not have contact details of the service members or their families.

⁸ Armed Forces Covenant Survey for Rutland, South Kesteven and Harborough 2019

⁹ Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) 2022

¹⁰ GP Patient Survey 2022

The survey was live from 12 April to 2 June. In total, 69 participants completed the survey. The results presented are only indicative for this sample and should not be extrapolated on all the researched audiences. Moreover, serving members of the Armed Forces are a small minority of the sample (9 people or 13%), which means their views are underrepresented in overall results.

Qa carried out quality checks, coded open responses into categories where appropriate, and created data tables which show the statistical differences between subgroups, for example, location and gender. The base (i.e., the number of people answering the question) is shown in the data tables and charts included in this report.

4. Key findings

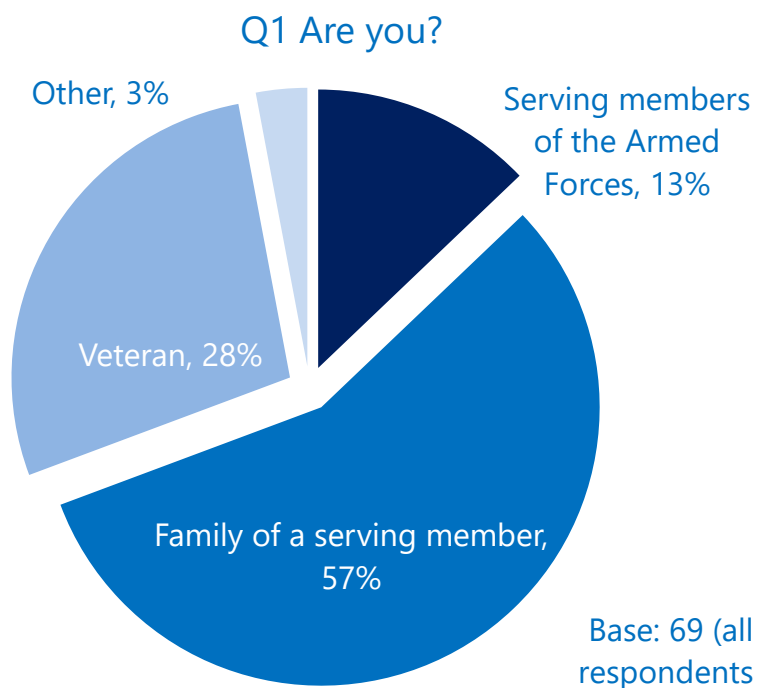
4.1 Response Profile

The demographic profile of all the respondents is presented in the table below. We received disproportionately many responses from participants with a disability or long-term condition. Indeed, 43% of sample self-describe in that way.

Table 1. Demographic profile

	Count	%
Gender		
Male	24	35%
Female	45	65%
Ethnicity		
White	64	93%
Black or Black British	3	4%
Mixed	1	1%
Asian or Asian British	1	1%
Age		
16-34	27	39%
35-64	36	52%
65+	6	9%
Disability or long-term condition status		
Yes (disability)	10	14%
Yes (Long-term condition)	17	25%
Yes (Mental health condition)	17	25%
No	35	51%
Prefer not to say	4	6%
Dependent children		
Yes	43	62%
No	26	38%
Base (all respondents):	69	

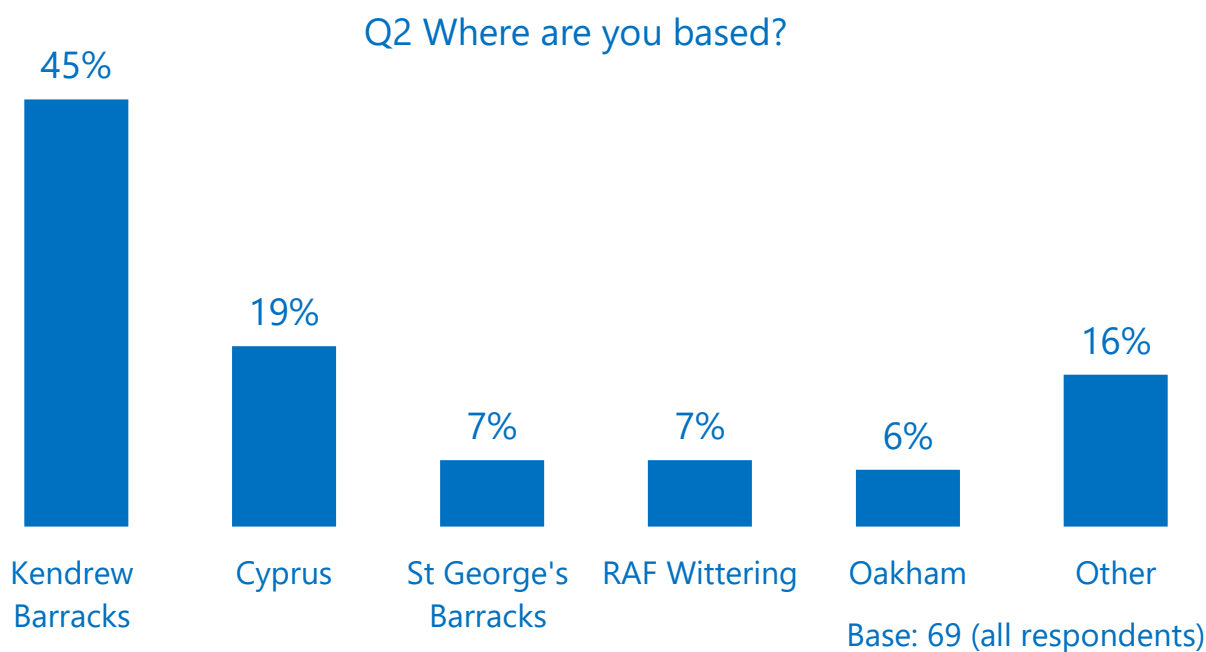
13% of participants are currently serving members of the Armed Forces, 57% are family members of serving members, 28% are veterans, and 3% (2 people) said they worked for the AF (in a different capacity than the first group). See chart overleaf.



Of the service people, 11% have 2-5 years of experience and 89% have over 5 years.

Geographically, respondents are spread as follows,

- 45% at Kendrew Barracks
- 7% at St George's Barracks
- 19% in Cyprus
- And 29% wrote in their answer (e.g. RAF Wittering, Oakham, Cottesmore, Rutland).



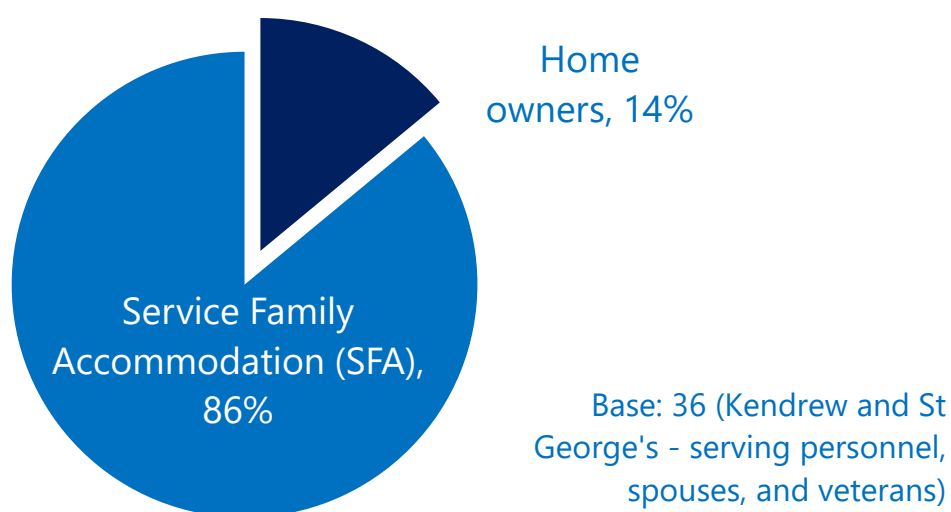
The breakdown of location by vocation can be seen below.

Table 2. Q1 & Q2 Location by vocation

	Rutland	Cyprus
Serving members	4	5
Family	31	8
Veterans	19	-
Work for the Armed Forces	2	-
Base:	56	13

86% of the respondents in Rutland live in military-provided accommodation (Service Family Accommodation) and 14% are home owners. Overall in the UK, 37% Army families are home owners and 57% live in SFA.¹¹

Q8 What kind of accommodation do you live in at present during the working week?



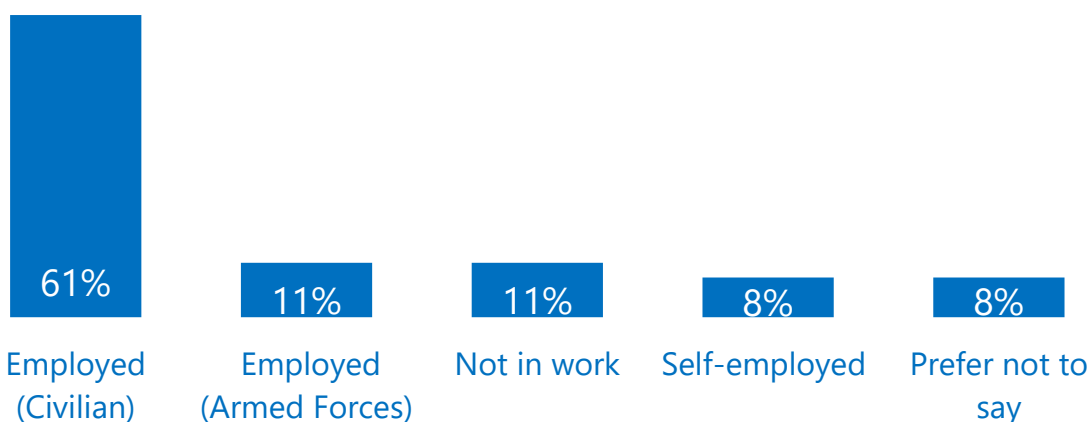
Further, 61% of them are employed in a civilian role, 11% have an Armed Forces position and 11% do not work (students, carers, and unemployed). 83% of spouses are employed, which is consistent with the UK spouses population figure of 81%.¹²

¹¹ UK Tri-Service Families Continuous Attitude Survey Results 2022

¹² Ibid.

Of the civilian employed respondents, 18 are family members and 2 are veterans.

Q9 What is your current employment status?



Base: 36 (Kendrew and St George's - serving personnel, spouses, and veterans)

As for the plans of the participants in service, the table below shows their intentions. The reactions are mixed: some are planning to stay indefinitely, while others want to leave soon. However, the base size is small, so it is difficult to draw conclusions.

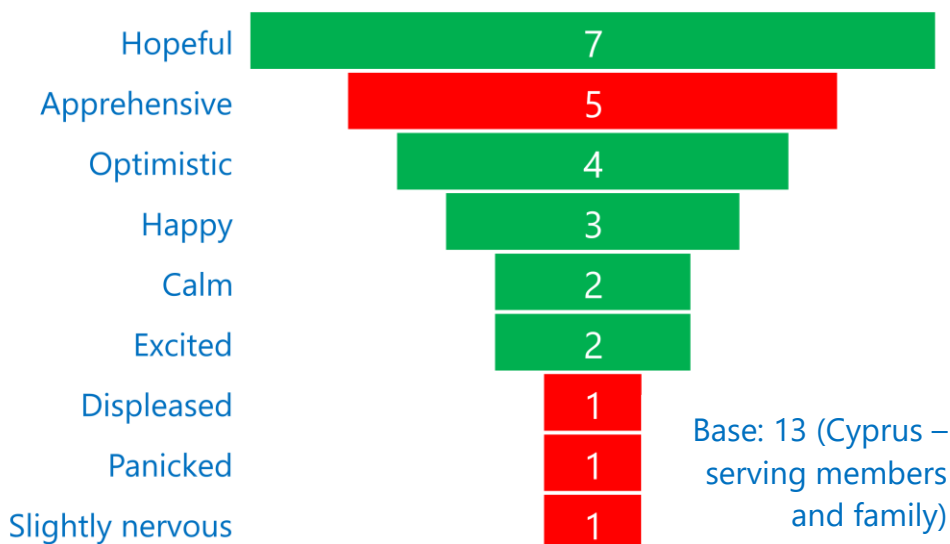
Table 3. Q11

What are your plans for the future?	Count	%
To stay serving as long as I can	4	44%
To stay serving to the end of my current engagement/commission	2	22%
To leave the Army before the end of my current engagement/commission	2	22%
I have put in my notice to leave	1	11%
I leave the Army as soon as I can	-	-
Don't know	-	-
Prefer not to say	-	-
Base (Kendrew and St George's - serving members):	9	

4.2 Move from Cyprus

First, we asked all the respondents from Cyprus about their feelings toward the move to Rutland (multiple choice). As the graph below shows, the opinions are split, with some feeling more positive than others. Yet still the majority of the feelings are on the good side.

Q38. How are you feeling about moving to Rutland?

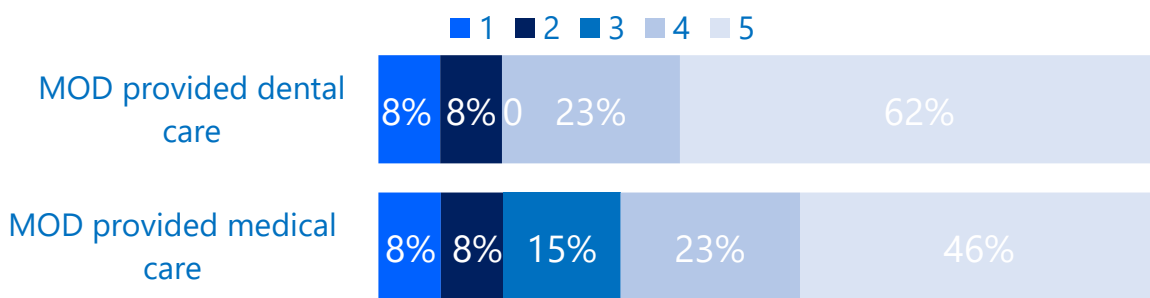


After arriving, 85% want to live in Service Family Accommodation, 8% (1 person) wish to be a home owner, and 8% want to live in social / council housing. This follows the existing situation in Rutland to some extent.

Of the family members in Cyprus (8 respondents)

- 4 are going to be looking for full-time work
- 2 will search for part-time work
- 1 plans to pursue formal education
- 1 person said 'none of these'

At the moment, Cyprus respondents have largely positive views of their **access** to the medical services. 62% rated the dental care at 5 out of 5 (excellent) and 46% gave the score of 5 out of 5 to the general medical care. Only one respondent rated them at 1 (very poor).



Base: 13 (Cyprus – serving members and family)

Finally, we asked respondents how best they can be supported in the transition to living in Rutland and if they have any specific concerns. We received ten answers:

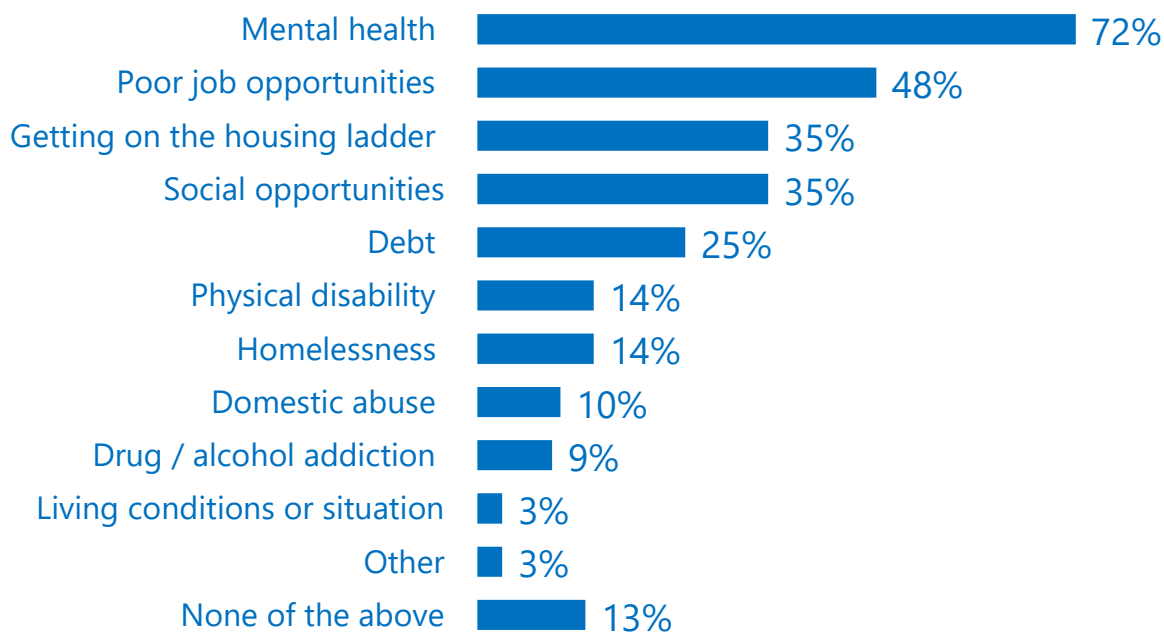
- 1 *"By receiving open, honest and non-judgemental communication from staff across the board." (Family member)*
- 2 *"Child with disability – ToD access will be required when starting nursery in April. Better MOD housing options." (Family member)*
- 3 *"Concerned about **no NHS dentist**." (Family member)*
- 4 *"Education given en masse to the local opportunities to **allow maximum engagement with any clubs, groups, charities etc.**" (Serving member)*
- 5 *"For the change." (Serving member)*
- 6 *"**Locating a dentist with availability.**" (Family member)*
- 7 *"**Medical and dental.** Career for my family (dependants)." (Serving member)*
- 8 *"Notices of **things to do around the local area**, best places to visit." (Family member)*
- 9 *"To be kept informed and have information well communicated. Have more access to services and information online as once I move I will be working full time and unable to easily pop in to e.g. welfare etc. like I am able to now." (Family member)*
- 10 *"**Wives meet ups and toddler children groups.**" (Family member)*

Two main themes emerge here: some respondents are particularly concerned about having access to a dentist, others will benefit with social support after moving – integrating into the community is important for them.

4.3 Health Behaviours

Second, the survey asked all the respondents (both in Cyprus and Rutland) whether the Armed Forces negatively affect any of the following (multiple-choice question). An overwhelming majority of 72% said their mental health is influenced. Interestingly, for participants serving in the Armed Forces the percentage goes down to 33%. Another 33% of soldiers said life in the Armed Forces does not impact any of these areas. 79% of veterans think their mental health is influenced by having served in the Armed Forces. Also, respondents aged 16-34 are more likely to say their mental health is affected than participants older than 35. Other popular responses are more related to finances than health: poor job opportunities, getting on the housing ladder and social opportunities.

Q12. Which, if any, of the following areas does life in the Armed Forces negatively impact?



Base: 69 (all respondents)

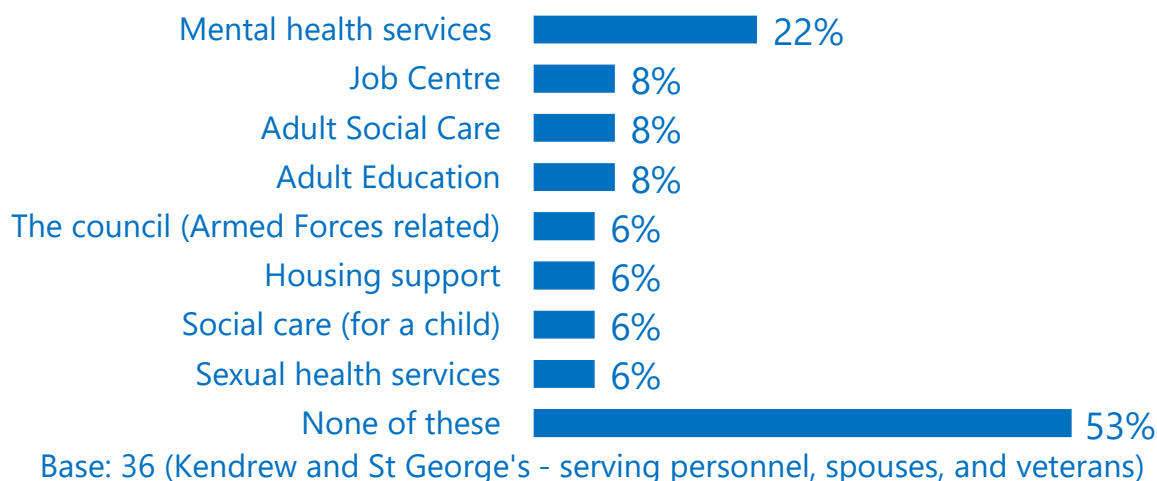
67% of family members said they had poor job opportunities as a result, which compares to 56% of spouses in the UK who think the service life has a negative effect on their career.¹³ However, in the Covenant survey more than half said their life had not been affected in any way.¹⁴

¹³ UK Tri-Service Families Continuous Attitude Survey Results 2022

¹⁴ Armed Forces Covenant Survey for Rutland, South Kesteven and Harborough 2019

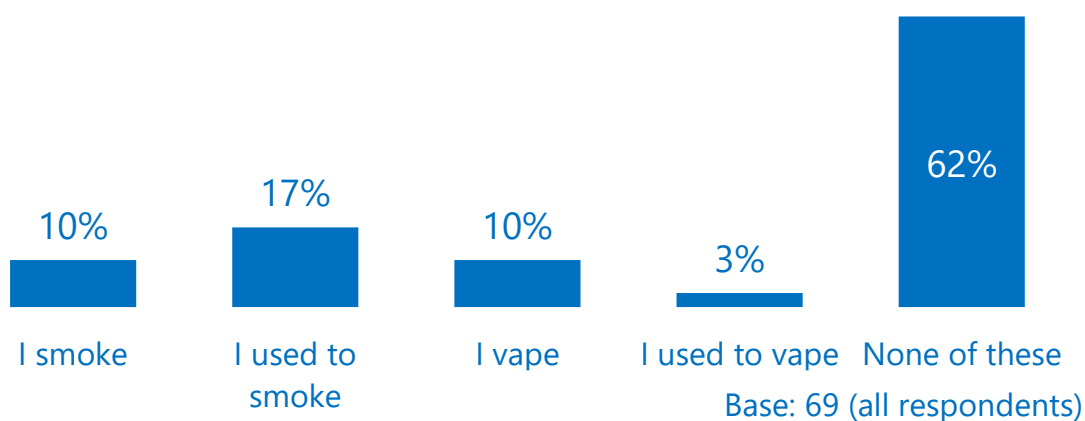
Just below half of the respondents in Kendrew and St George's have accessed any specialised services in the past year in Rutland, with the most common being mental health services (22%). This is higher than in the Covenant survey: only 31% of respondents of that research accessed any of these services.¹⁵

Q14. Which services have you accessed in the past 12 months?



The majority of all respondents (62%) do not smoke or vape. Of the 7 respondents who smoke, 4 said they would like to reduce the amount they smoke and 3 rejected that.

Q15 Do you smoke or use a vape/e-cigarette?

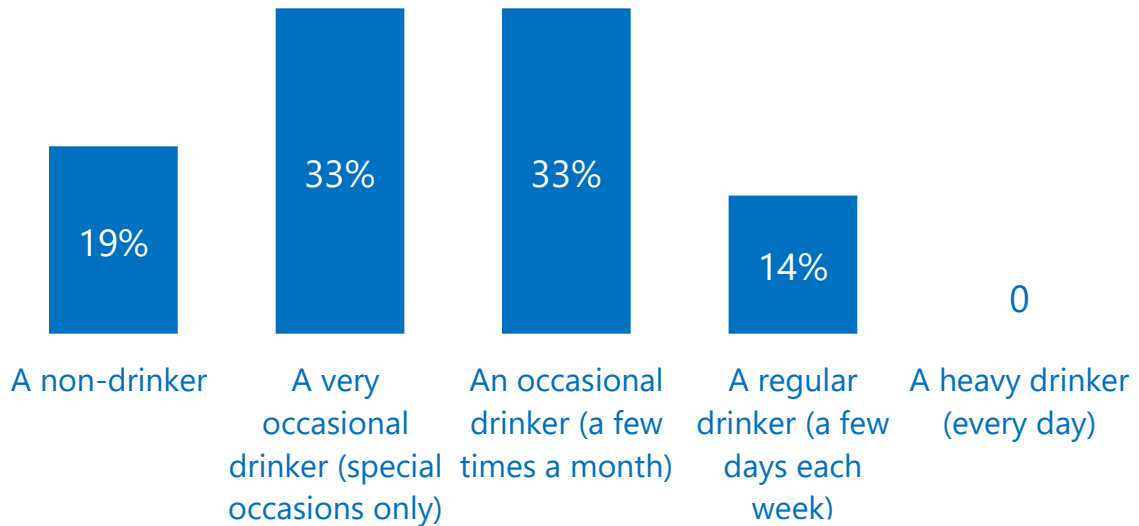


Drinking, however, is much more widespread. Less than a fifth reported they did not drink (19%). Nevertheless, the survey also did not find any heavy drinkers. Of the ten regular drinkers, two would like to reduce that amount and eight would not. Drinking

¹⁵ Armed Forces Covenant Survey for Rutland, South Kesteven and Harborough 2019

is also more common in the Armed Forces: only 10% of family members are regular drinkers, while 33% of serving people are regular drinkers among those surveyed.

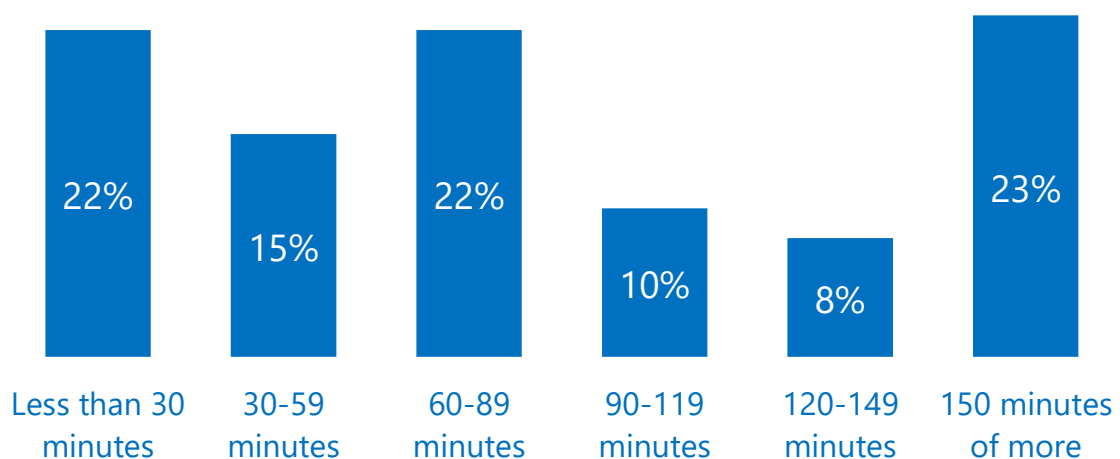
Q17. Would you describe yourself as



Base: 69 (all respondents)

Furthermore, we asked non-service members how many minutes of recreational physical activity they had done in the past week. The results show activity levels were mixed with around a fifth (22%) doing less than 30 minutes of exercise a week and same proportion (23%) doing more than 150 minutes. This is significantly less than in the general population of the UK. Indeed, 63% of adults achieved over 150 minutes of activity a week in 2022.¹⁶

Q19 In the past week, how many minutes of physical activity have you done in total?

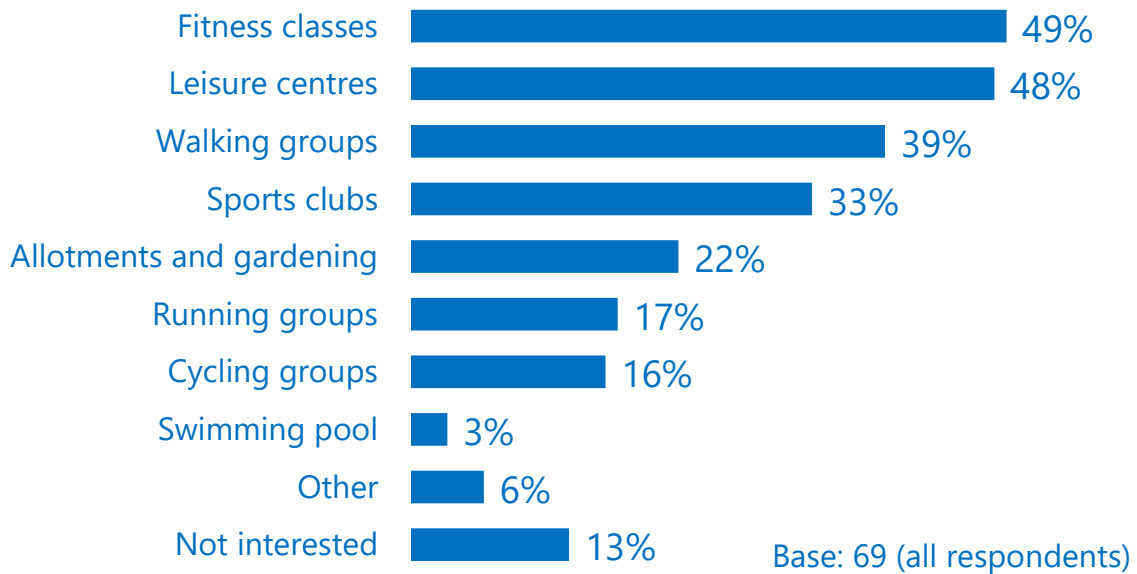


Base: 60 (Rutland and Cyprus - non-service members)

¹⁶ Sport England 2023

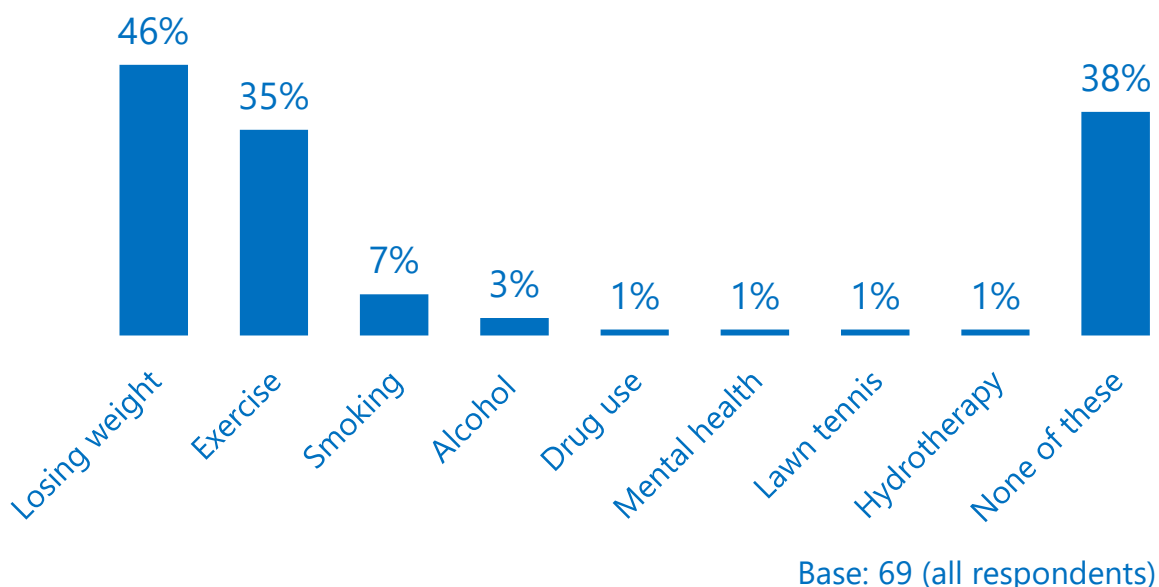
There is also demand for a wide range of different activities that RCC could provide to respondents, with fitness classes and leisure centres interesting half of all respondents. For the serving personnel, the top options were sports clubs (67%) and cycling groups (44%). **Other** include walking, tennis, and *"I struggle to attend any well timed groups as I have no child care"*.

Q20 If you want to increase your physical activity, which of the following would interest you?



As for behaviour support services, respondents would be interested in losing weight and something related to exercise. A significant proportion (38%) are not interested in any of the options.

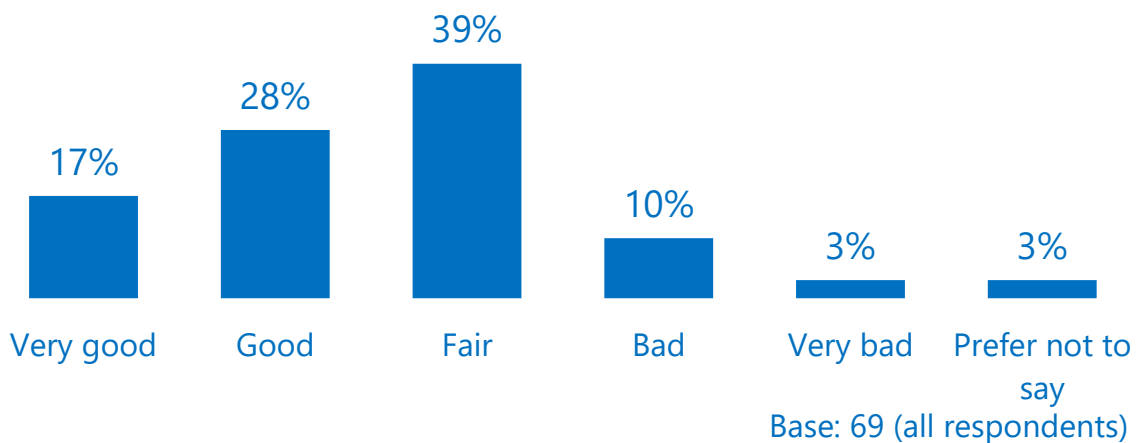
Q21 Would you be interested in support services for any of the following being available at Rutland?



4.4 Physical Health

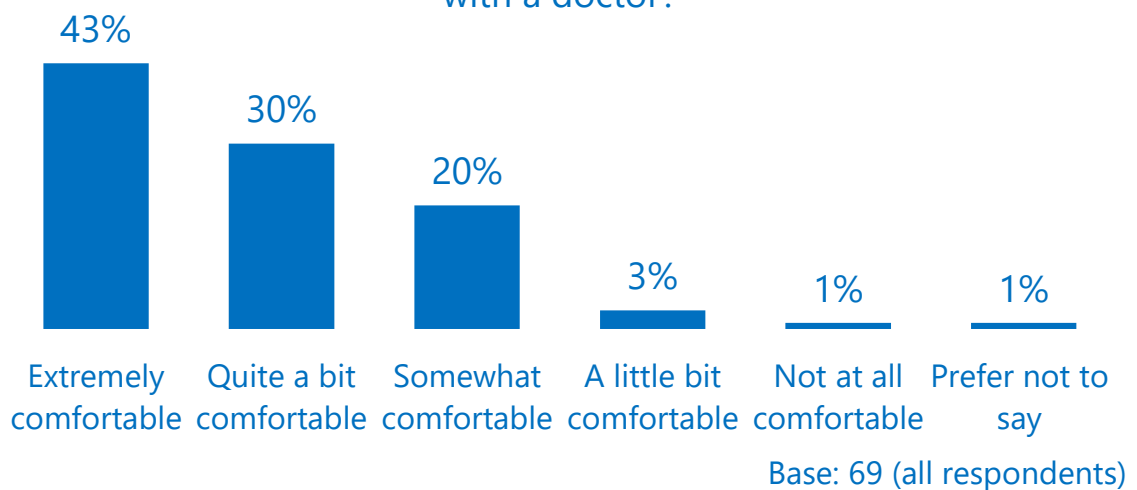
In this section, we asked all the respondents about their physical health. Generally, they describe it as good or fair. 13% of respondents (8 people) reported having bad or very bad health. Understandably, all of them also have a long-term condition or disability. These figures differ significantly with those of the general population of Rutland. Census 2021 reports that 53% have very good health, 34% describe it as good and 11% have fair health, while just over 3% claim bad or very bad health.¹⁷

Q22 How would you describe your physical health in general?



Health literacy among the respondents can be characterised as fair. Most respondents have little problem filling out medical forms and having conversations with their doctor (73% picked extremely/quite a bit comfortable).

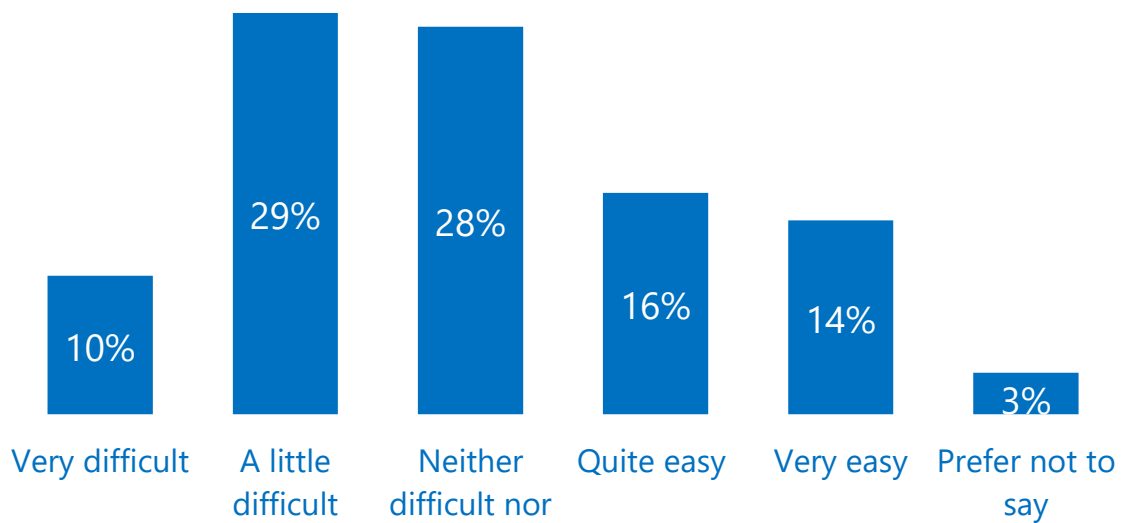
Q23 How comfortable are you filling out medical forms by yourself and having conversations about your health with a doctor?



¹⁷ Census 2021

However, another aspect of the literacy – finding medical support by themselves is much harder for respondents. Only 30% said it was quite/very easy for them to find that support. This is particularly true for the veterans: 5% (1 person) reported it being easy, while 63% found it difficult. 22% of serving members said it was easy and 67% claimed it being difficult. When it comes to family members, the difficulty was less pronounced, as an equal amount found it easy or difficult to find medical support – 33% for easy and 33% for difficult.

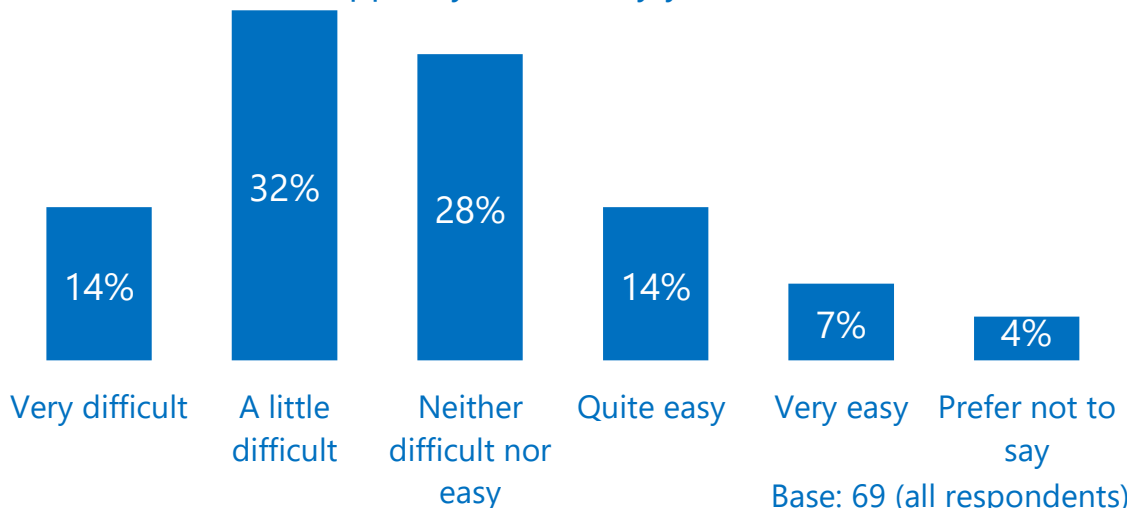
Q24 How easy is it to find the medical/healthcare support you need by yourself?



Base: 69 (all respondents)

Similarly, searching for wellbeing and community support can be problematic for many respondents. Indeed, nearly half found it difficult and 21% think it is easy.

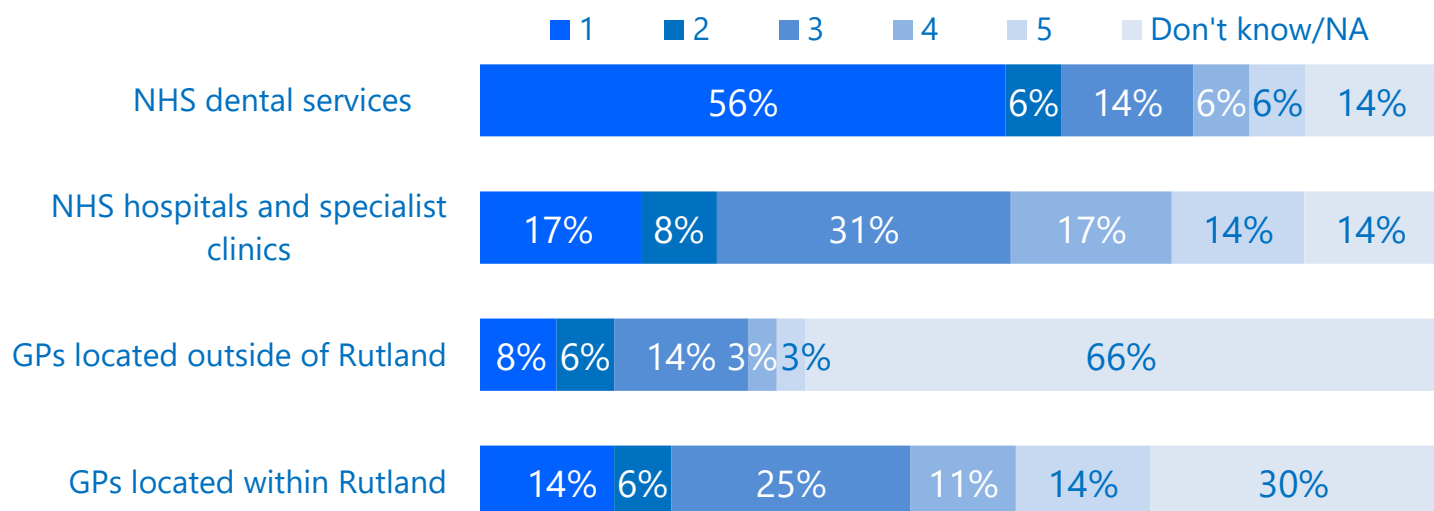
Q25 How easy is it to find the wellbeing/community support you need by yourself?



Base: 69 (all respondents)

Next, we asked respondents in Rutland how they rate access to these health services. 1 is very poor and 5 is excellent on the scale. The worst rated were dental services, with over half giving them 1 out of 5 (mean = 1.8 excluding those who said DN/NA). The best rated were GPs within Rutland (mean = 3.1), followed by NHS hospitals and specialist clinics (= 3.0), and GPs outside of Rutland (= 2.6).

Q26. How would you rate the ACCESS to these services on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good?



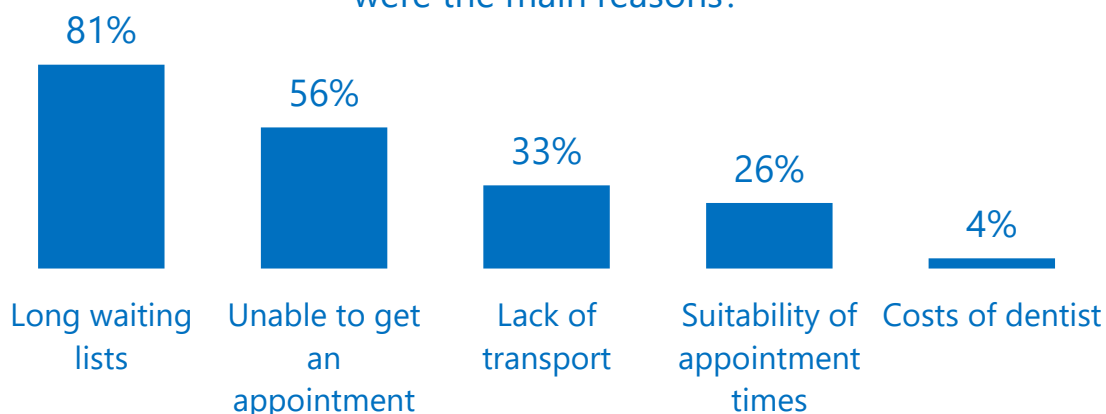
Base: 36 (Kendrew and St George's - serving personnel, spouses, and veterans)

To compare, Tri-Service 2022 survey shows that 35% of families in the UK were able to access dental treatment without difficulties, 58% had no problems with access to hospitals and specialist services, 65% to GPs, and 39% accessed mental health services without difficulties.¹⁸

Respondents chose from four reasons (multiple choice) to explain why they had found access to the services difficult (one person wrote in 'costs of dentist'). More than 80% of respondents reported having to overcome long waiting lists. See chart overleaf.

¹⁸ UK Tri-Service Families Continuous Attitude Survey Results 2022

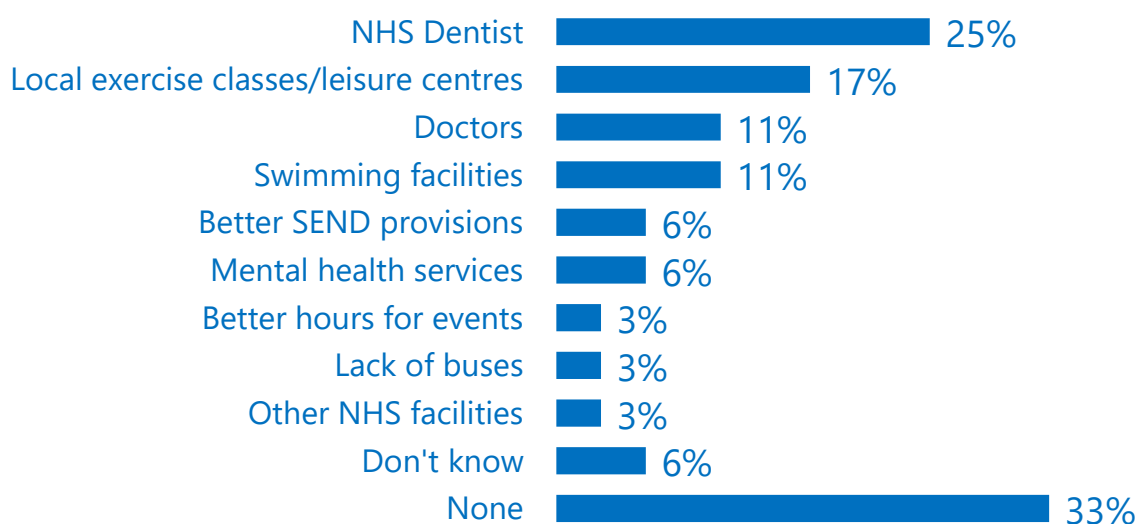
Q27 For the services you found difficult to access, what were the main reasons?



Base: 27 (all who rated 1-2 any of the options above)

Further, in an open-ended question we asked Rutland respondents what health and wellbeing services they lack. Similarly, NHS dentists were the most popular answer for those who left a comment, followed by exercise classes and leisure centres. A third of respondents did not give an example of such service.

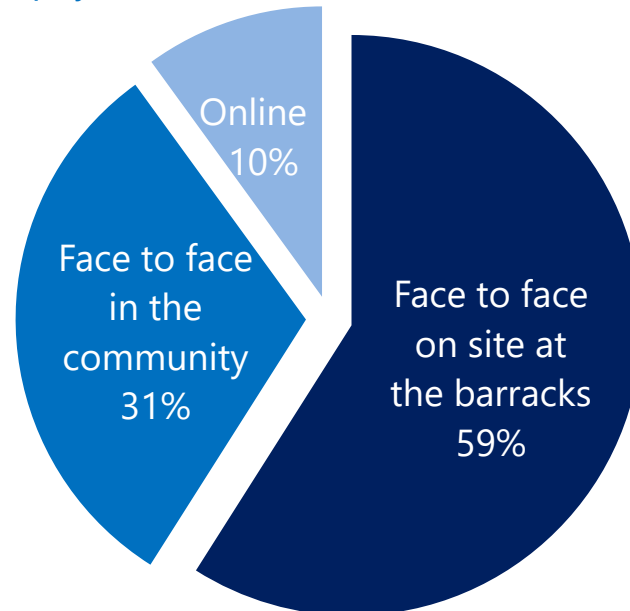
Q29. Which health and wellbeing services do you lack in Rutland at the moment?



Base: 36 (Kendrew and St George's - serving personnel, spouses, and veterans)

If given a choice, a higher proportion of family members would prefer accessing physical health services on site at the barracks (59%) than in the community (31%). A small minority chose online services.

Q30. How would you prefer to access physical health services within Rutland?

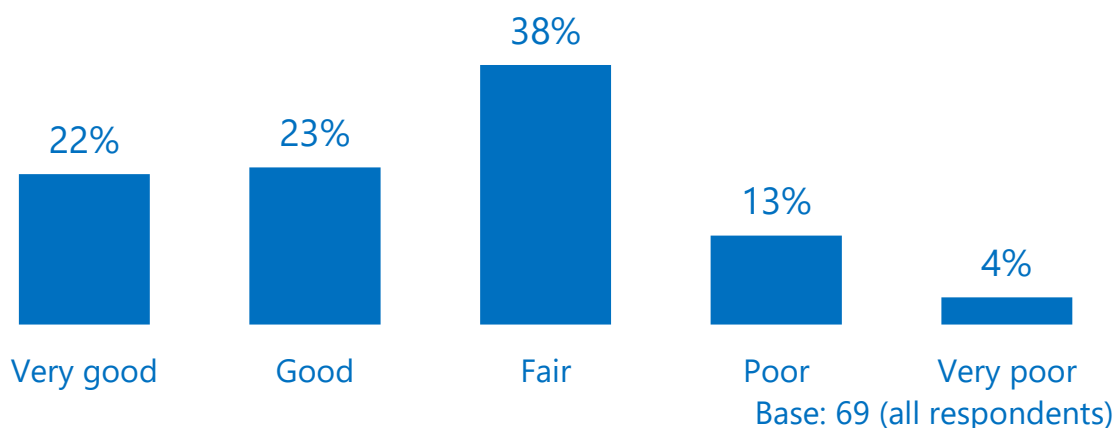


Base: 39 (Rutland and Cyprus - family members)

4.5 Mental Health

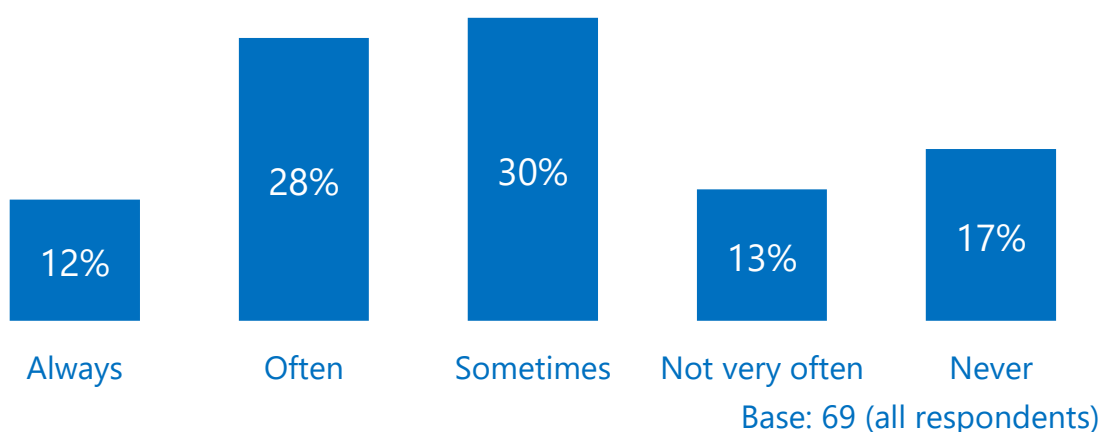
This section concerns respondents' mental health and services they would need in Rutland. When self-describing mental health, respondents gave very similar figures to physical health. 17% of them reported having poor or very poor mental health.

Q31 Generally speaking, how would you describe your mental health?



Loneliness is an important predictor for mental health and social interconnectedness. Generally, we have a mixed group of people who do and do not feel lonely. 40% said they are always or often lonely, while 30% are never or not very often feeling lonely.

Q32 How often do you feel lonely?



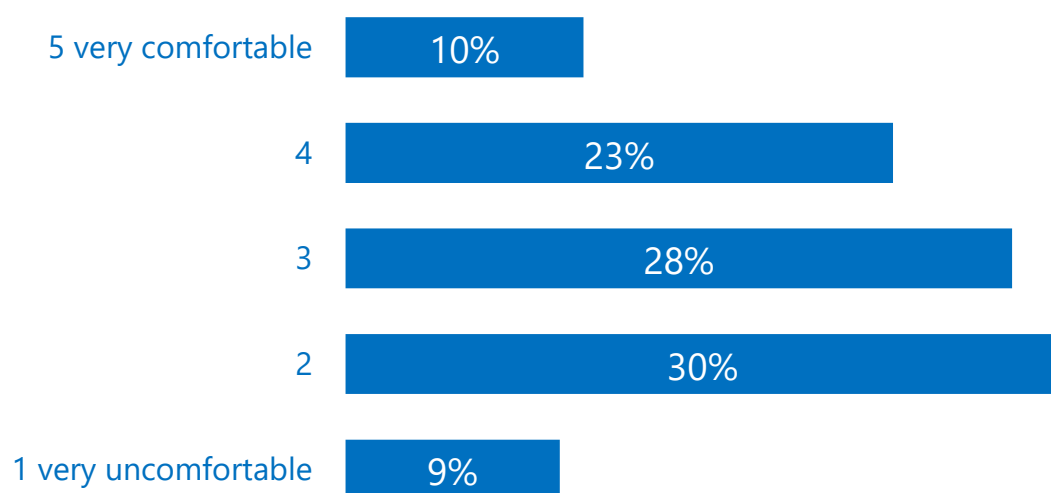
51% of family members feel lonely often/always in our sample (which is a big jump compared to serving members), but only 18% overall in the UK.¹⁹ The Covenant survey reported 29% of spouses felt lonely always or often. *"I feel depressed*

¹⁹ UK Tri-Service Families Continuous Attitude Survey Results 2022

*constantly and isolated and it's impossible to make friends as nothing is run on camp.*²⁰

However, there is a significant proportion of respondents who would not be comfortable accessing mental health services if needed. Only 10% said they would be very comfortable doing that.

Q33 How comfortable would you be accessing mental health services if you needed to?

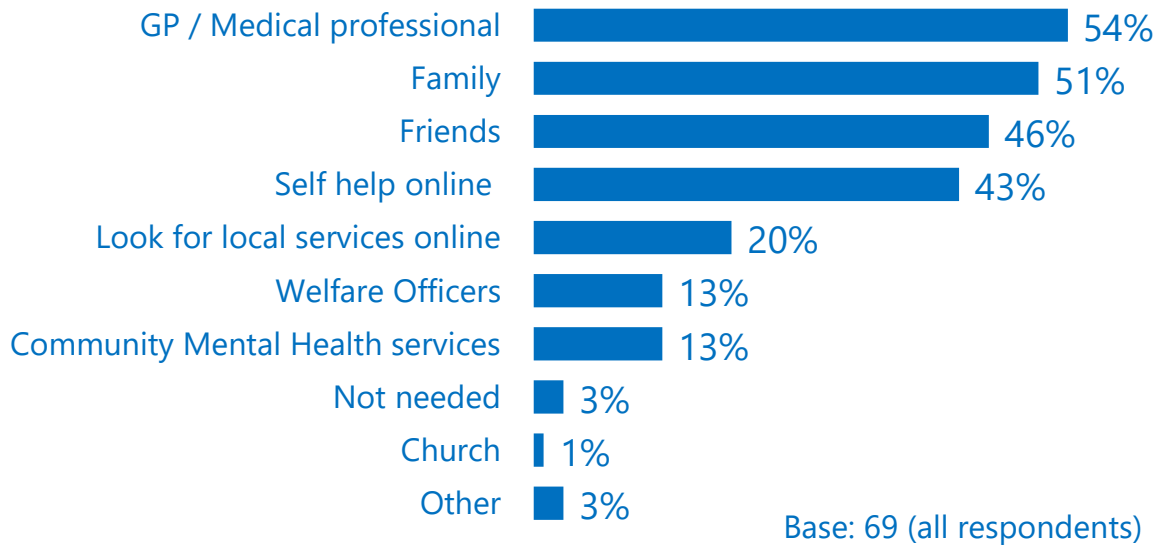


Base: 69 (all respondents)

Respondents selected a few different alternatives of where they would go to get support with mental health, seen in the chart overleaf. GP or a medical professional is the most popular option, with over half respondents selecting it, followed by family and friends. Around 43% of them would look for self-help. Armed Forces welfare officers and community services were two of the less sought after options, which may be an issue that could be addressed by local partners. Respondents in the age group 35-64 are more likely to contact a GP than those aged 16-34 (69% and 37% respectively). Participants based in Cyprus are more inclined to go to their friends and family for support (77% each) compared to those living in Rutland. See chart overleaf for overall figures.

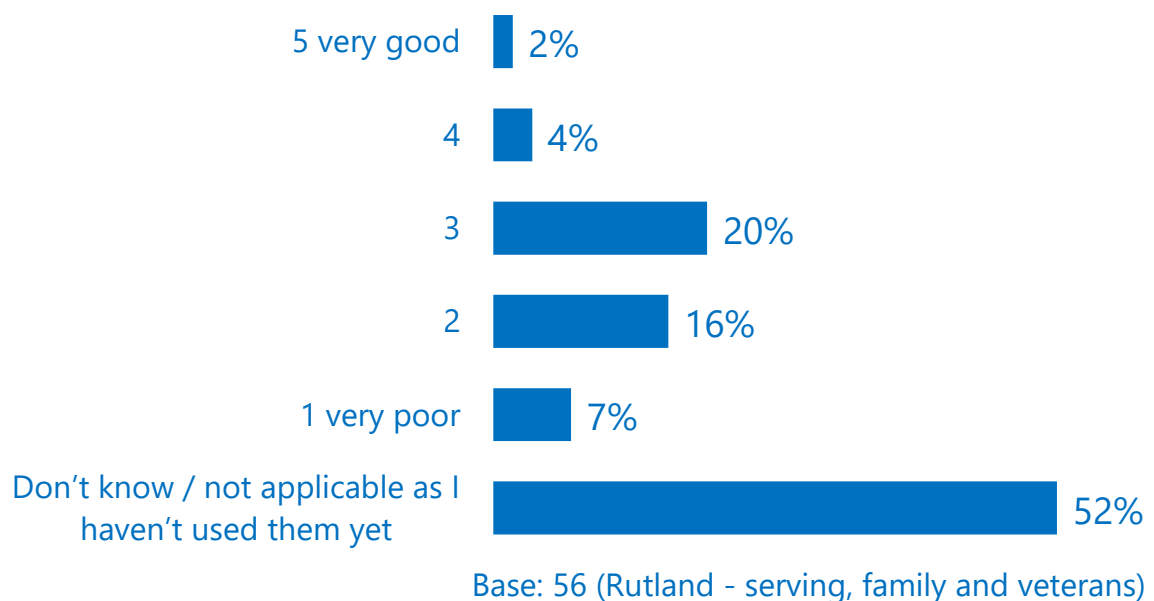
²⁰ Armed Forces Covenant Survey for Rutland, South Kesteven and Harborough 2019

Q34 Where would you go for support with your mental health?



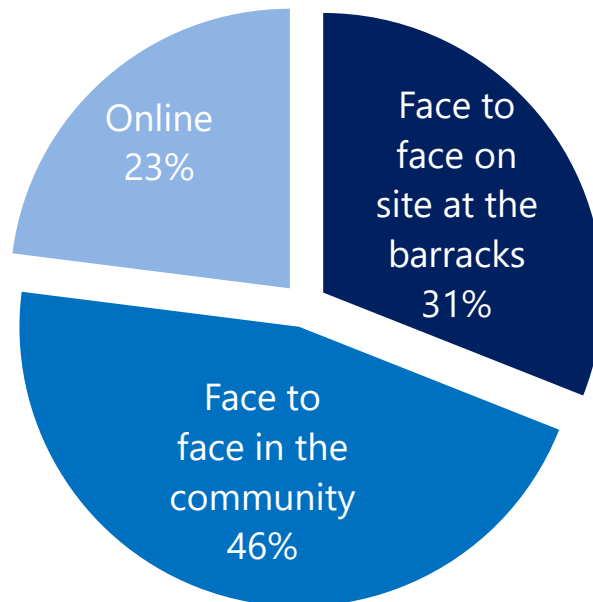
Nevertheless, almost half of respondents based in Rutland have not used formal mental health support. Of those who did give a rating, more answers were negative than positive.

Q35 How would you rate the mental health support available to you on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good?



Most family members would prefer to have their mental health services in the community in Rutland (55%).

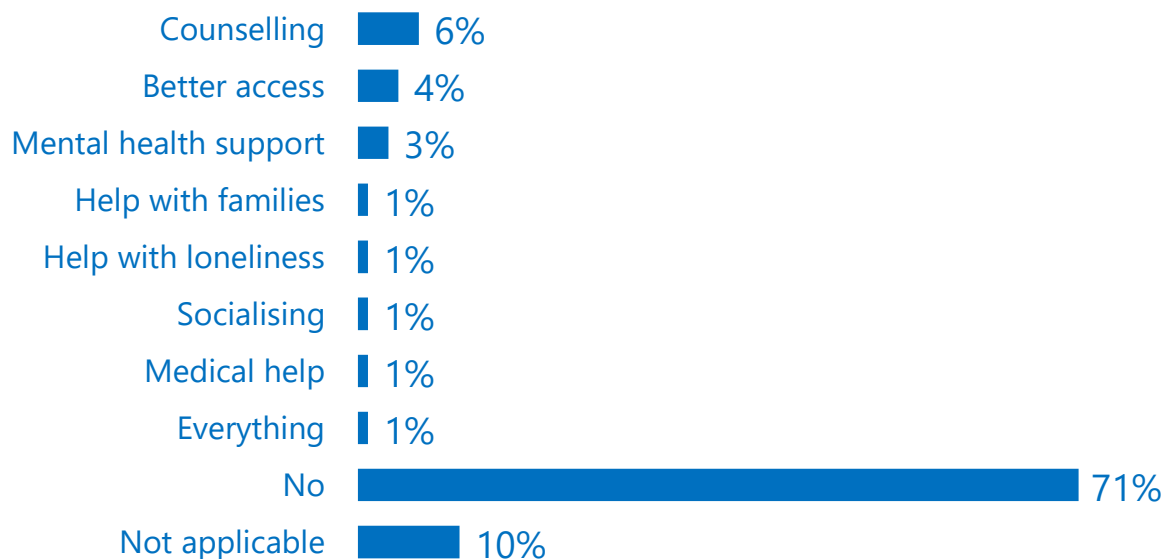
Q36 How would you prefer to access mental health services within Rutland?



Base: 56 (Rutland and Cyprus - family members)

When asked whether they have any specific mental health needs at Kendrew or St George's, respondents did not have much to say or could not name any needs (open text question). 4 respondents said counselling is something they would benefit from.

Q37. Are there any specific mental health needs you'd like to see available at Kendrew and St George's?

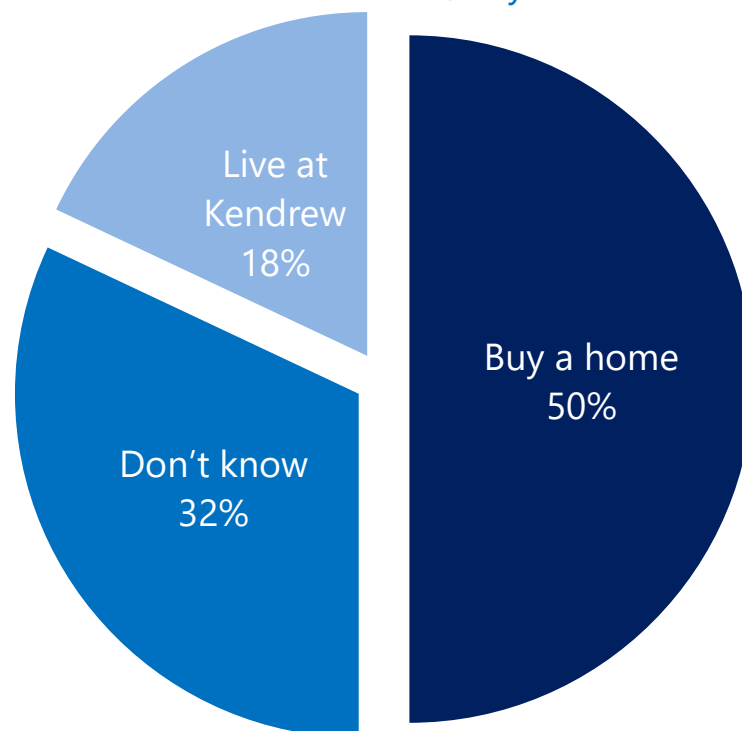


Base: 69 (all respondents)

4.6 Community

In this section, the survey asked about respondents' plans for the future and how involved they are in the community. In the next 5 years, around half of soldiers and their family members plan to buy a home, 18% continue living at Kendrew, and 32% did not know at that moment. No one wishes to rent a home in the long term.

Q40. In the long term (5+ years), do you intend to live at Kendrew or rent/buy a home?

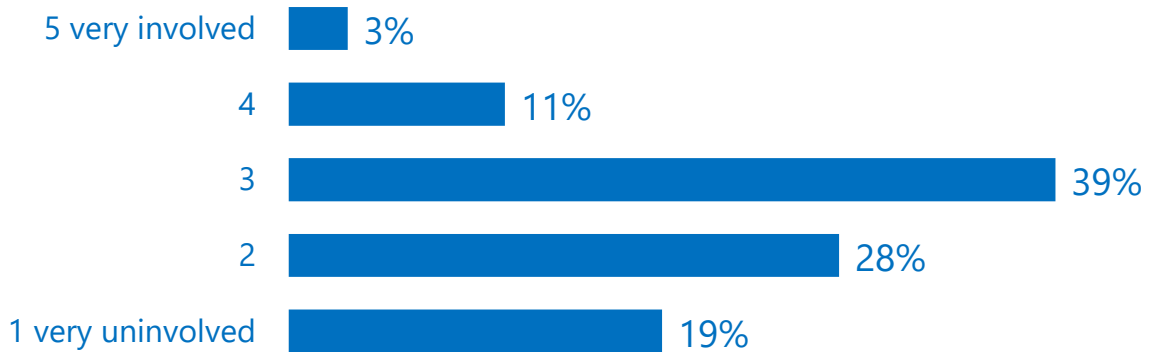


Base: 50 (Rutland and Cyprus - serving personnel and family members)

We asked respondents to explain their answer (*Why is this?*). 22% will be moving soon (primarily related to the service person changing the station or leaving the Army). 16% feel that they are settled somewhere (e.g. Rutland). Some respondents want to get on the property ladder and give their children some stability (16%). Others also pointed to the low quality of MOD accommodation in comparison to the private market, so they see SFA as a temporary option.

In terms of their involvement into the wider community of Rutland, respondents do not appear to feel like they belong. Mean score is 2.45 out of 5. Out of 4 currently serving members in Rutland all 4 do not feel involved.

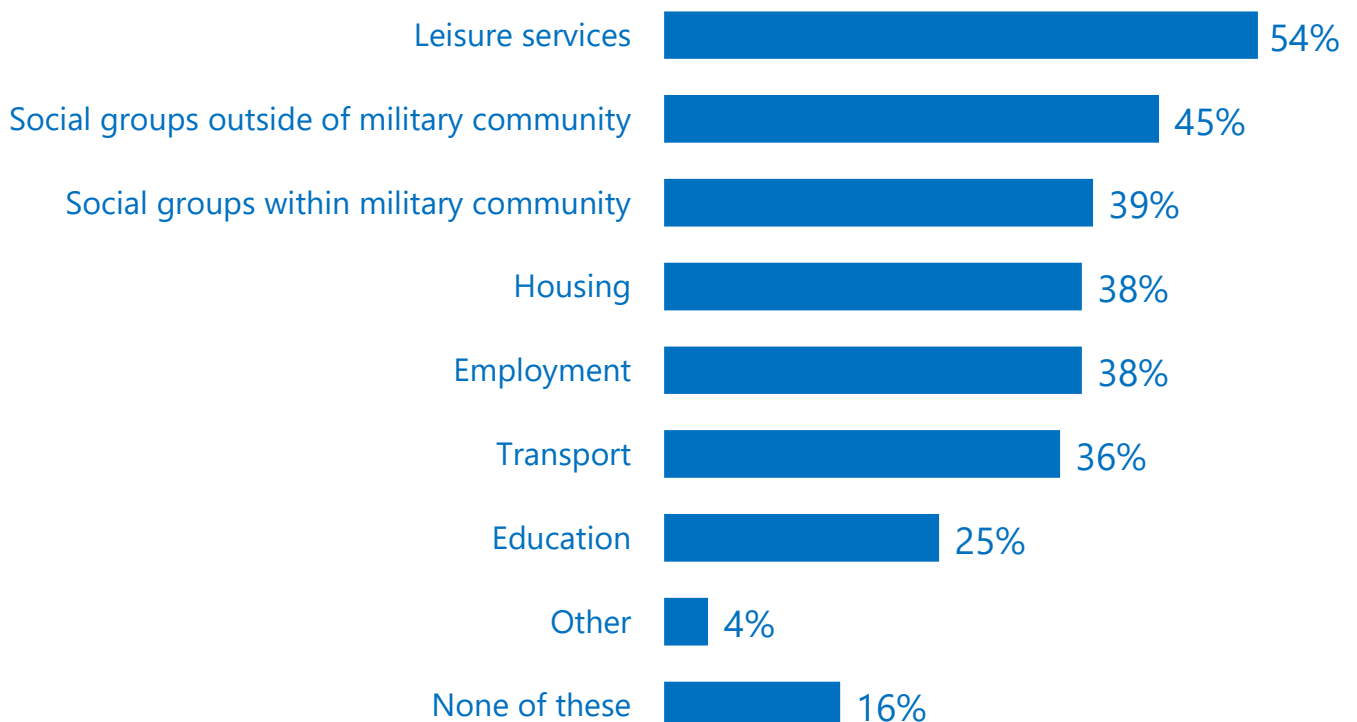
Q42. How involved do you feel with the wider community of Rutland?



Base: 36 (Kendrew and St George's - serving personnel, spouses, and veterans)

Specifically, respondents would need help accessing leisure services and social groups within and outside the barracks. Only 16% said they didn't need support with any of these. Participants with children are more interested in employment (49%) and education (35%) services.

Q43 Which of these would you like support accessing in Rutland?



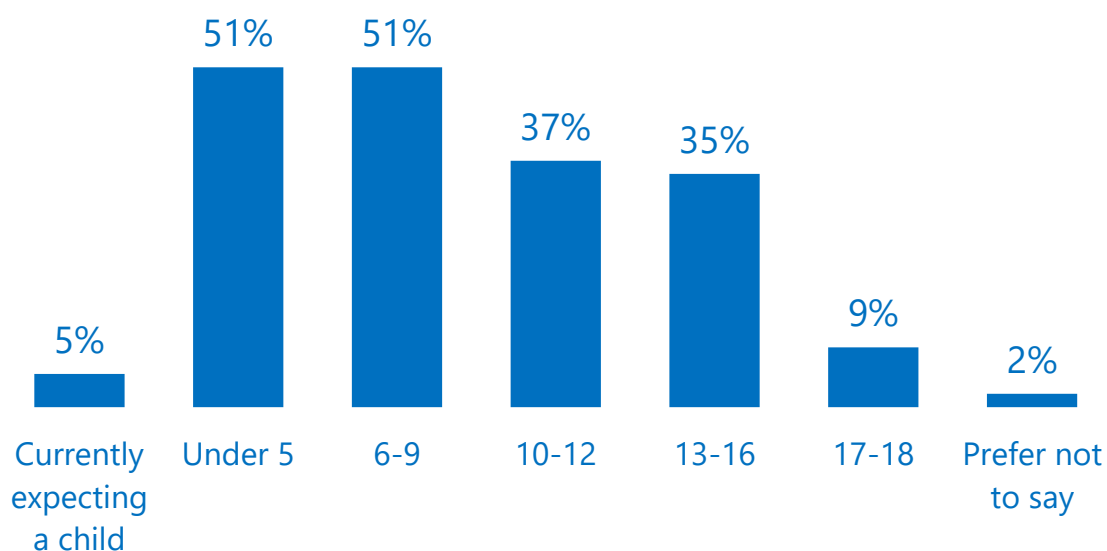
Base: 69 (all respondents)

4.7 Children and family support

This section reports on respondents who have underage children ($n = 43$), their needs and access to specialised services. To compare, 78% of service families have children according to the Tri-Service Survey 2022.

51% of respondents reported having a child under 5. According to the most recent survey, 33% of all service families in the UK have at least one child aged under 5²¹ – these figures are not directly comparable as we do not know how many families are in the sample (e.g. 1 or 2 people from the same household could take the survey).

Q45 How old are your children? Select all age brackets that apply

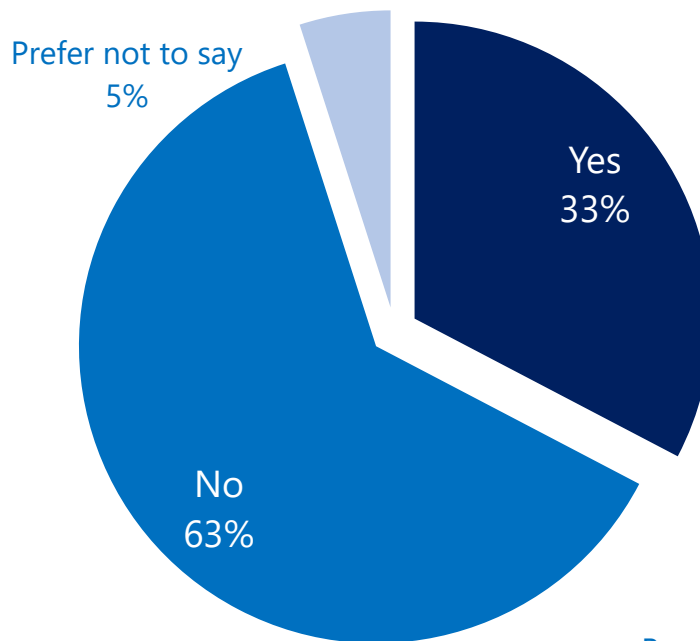


Base: 43 (all with children)

²¹ UK Tri-Service Families Continuous Attitude Survey Results 2022

33% (14 respondents) have kids with SEND, which is much more than in general population. According to the School Census 2022, there are 17% of pupils with SEN in the UK.²²

Q46. Do any of your children have any Special Educational Needs or Disabilities?

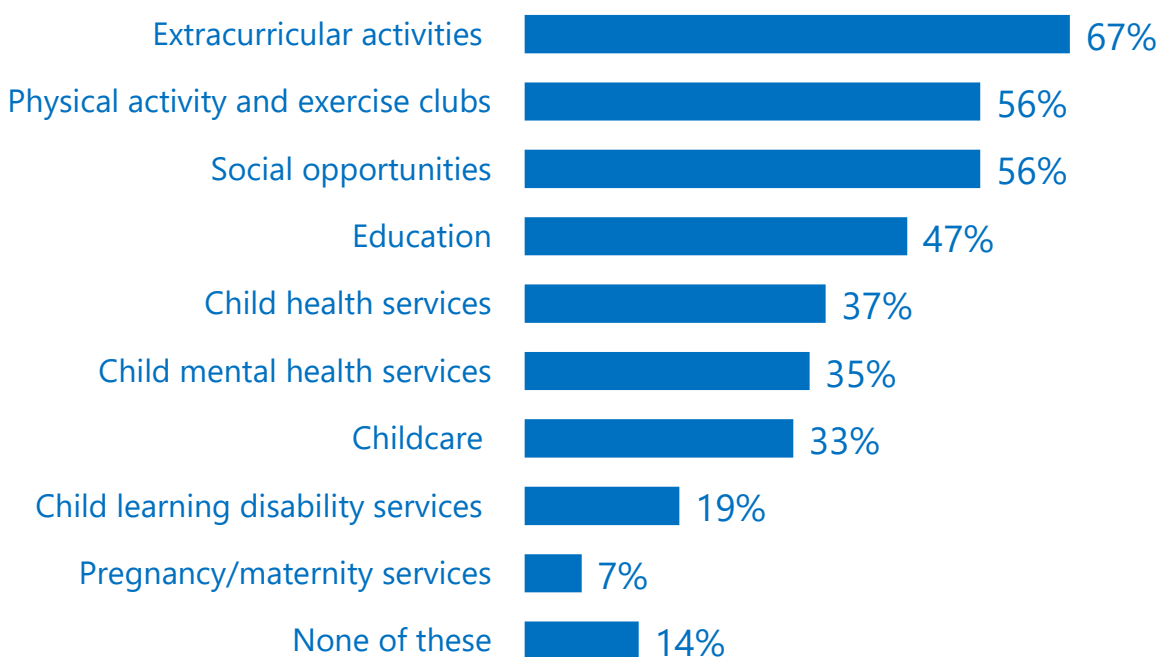


Base: 43 (all with children)

Additionally, respondents report much need for different children services in Rutland. Top 3 services are extracurricular activities, physical activities, and social opportunities. They show the need for local partners to engage more at the barracks as well as in the community. See chart overleaf.

²² Department of Education 2022

Q47 Which of the following services relating to children would you like support with in Rutland?



Base: 43 (all with children)

Half of respondents would prefer to access child support services face-to-face in the community and another half face-to-face at the barracks.

Finally, we asked to comment if you have any additional requests or require more information regarding children support and received nine answers. They particularly demonstrate issues with access to SEND support.

1. *"Being able to use the funding the schools receive from the Army for forces children to fund such things as **dyslexia assessments as after 3 years of the school saying they will do it to now saying they aren't funding the assessment anymore and us having to find £400 to do it privately!!! Also waiting lists for diagnosis of SEND etc is horrendous.**" (Family member, Kendrew)*
2. *"Clubs for younger children." (Family member, Kendrew)*
3. *"Collages." (Family member, RAF Wittering)*
4. *"Community free sports centres." (Works for the Army, Kendrew)*
5. *"Disability and health care support – GP in Cyprus missing health records when have referred over to UK for services. I have been essentially his medical secretary." (Family member, Cyprus)*
6. *"**My child is currently undergoing SEN assessment. He also struggles with big changes.**" (Serving member, Cyprus)*
7. *"**Support for Autism.**" (Family member, St George's)*

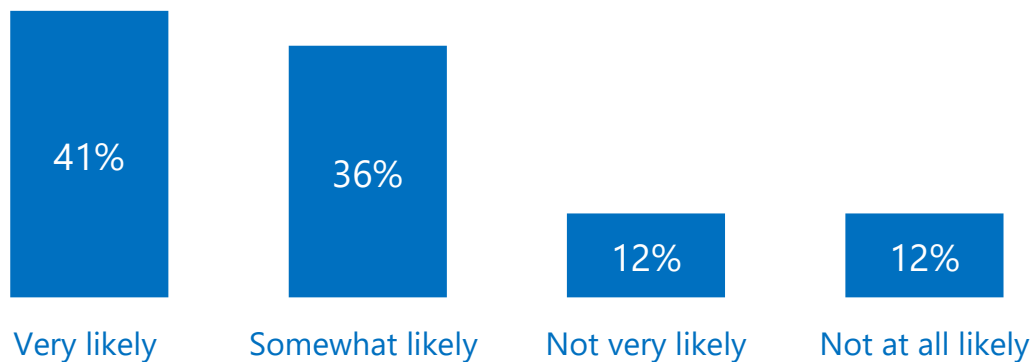
8. *"Support on how to get the schools to feed healthy dinners." (Family member, St George's)*
9. *"What my teenage son can do to socialise. Apart from getting the train to Peterborough or Leicester. He is stuck on camp most of the time and all him and his friends do is walk around. This is not providing him with different experiences and certainly not adding to and decoupling his social or cultural capital. I do not feel comfortable letting him getting the train further afield. Also, transport into Oakham ceases to exist after around 6, so if he did go there, he can't get back. But he says there's nothing to do in Oakham anyway. I worry about my children's social development. Within Rutland, this cannot be a normal way to develop being so isolated from social activities and friends. I worry this will lead to them becoming recluses and affect their mental health." (Family member, Kendrew)*

4.8 Access and single point of contact

Final section asked respondents about a potential development of a single point of contact, specifically for the Armed Forces. "The Single Point of Contact will provide the Armed Forces community with one place to navigate local health services and direct you to the support and guidance you need."

Generally, respondents view this idea positively and 77% of them would be very likely or somewhat likely to use it in the future.

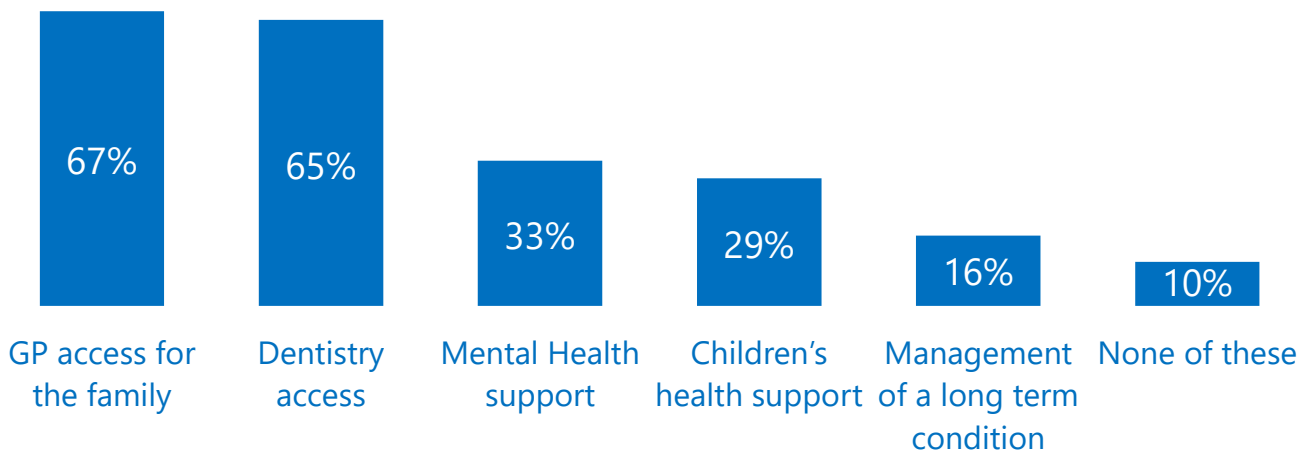
Q50 How likely are you to use the single point of contact to help you navigate the support you and your family needs?



Base: 69 (all respondents)

Respondents would most likely use this contact for getting help with GP (67%) and dentist access (65%).

Q51 What support and guidance are you most likely to require from the single point of contact? Pick up to three areas.



Base: 69 (all respondents)

Finally, we asked separately respondents in Cyprus and in Rutland whether the Council can help them in any other way. One person in Cyprus requested 'better MOD housing options'. Respondents in Rutland mentioned the following as something that would help them and their family:

- Better NHS services
- Better public transport
- More housing opportunities
- Opportunities to socialise
- General support
- Places for children to socialise ("like lane 7 in Leicester")

5. Conclusions

Rutland County Council commissioned a survey of the members of the Armed Forces to understand how local partners could support them in their relocation from Cyprus as well as what can be done for those who already live in Rutland to improve their health and wellbeing.

While the results are only indicative, some of the figures compare or are similar to the ones from the Tri-Service Continuous Attitude Survey from 2022 among family members of the service people. This may suggest that the issues and needs of all the Army members and families are also true for those in Rutland and Cyprus.

1. Life in the armed forces affects many aspects of participants' lives, particularly spouses. Their mental health and job opportunities are especially impacted. This observation may suggest that the relatives of service members endure greater challenges compared to those directly serving in the military, and particular attention should be given them from the RCC.
2. Many respondents pointed to challenges with accessing NHS services, especially dental and GP in Rutland. They reported long waiting lists or issues making an appointment, as well as poor transport connectivity in the area. Nevertheless, the physical health of respondents overall can be described as good, based on self-description and health behaviours (smoking, drinking, exercise). Around a third of participants would be interested in specialised services for losing weight and exercise in Rutland. Cyprus respondents rated their services much higher in comparison and are worried that after the relocation, they will struggle with access to those services.
3. While many respondents had issues with mental health, only 22% accessed those services in Rutland, and just 10% would feel very comfortable doing so. That suggests that mental health services should be linked into GP and other channels that they would feel comfortable accessing. 6% of all participants would like to see counselling available directly at Kendrew and St George's.
4. Results suggest respondents do not feel very involved in the Rutland community. Indeed, only 3% of respondents already there said they were 'very involved' in the local area. There is great demand from serving members, families and veterans for different social and exercise groups. Respondents are particularly interested in fitness classes, leisure centres, and sports clubs. They mentioned that often there is little for them to do for leisure in the barracks and Rutland as a whole.

5. The majority of respondents had at least one child, and one in five have three or more children, so the family support was another key priority. Similarly to adults, respondents feel that their children lack appropriate leisure opportunities. Indeed, one person mentioned his/her child regularly going to Leicester to meet with friends rather than stay local. More than half would like some support in accessing extracurricular and physical activities as well as social opportunities for children in Rutland. Notably, the survey received many responses from parents with SEND children. They mentioned that assessments can take a long time, and one person had to pay for them privately. Further, big changes such as moving from Cyprus to England can be especially difficult for such children, and they are likely need additional support adjusting.
6. The development of a single point of contact was welcomed, with respondents stating they will be very interested in having that support (77% very likely or somewhat likely) and asking to help accessing various services (GP, dentist, and mental health support).
7. For all the support services, respondents would like to access them overwhelmingly face-to-face (at the barracks or in Rutland). Serving people and spouses do not have a significant preference between barracks and Rutland itself, but all the veterans want to access them in the community of Rutland

6 References

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7 Appendix 1

Questionnaire

Rutland Army Health Survey

Introduction

Qa Research has been commissioned by Rutland County Council to do a survey with members of the armed forces and their families. The goal is to understand the health and wellbeing needs of the community and how organisations can improve its support for the Armed Forces. The more responses we receive, the better we will understand what specific support is required.

We would really appreciate if you could answer these questions. It should take 10-12 minutes. If you take part, you will be invited at the end of the interview to take part in a draw to win a share of £150 cash – there are 3 prizes on offer.

This research will be carried out according to the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct. Any information you provide will be treated in absolute confidence and your answers will remain anonymous. We will not share any personal data or individual responses with Rutland County Council or other members of the Armed Forces, including your commander.

The interview will include questions about your health and wellbeing. If you don't wish to answer any of the questions, select Prefer not to say option.

Taking part is voluntary and if you change your mind, you can withdraw from the research by contacting Qa Research at DPO@qaresearch.co.uk and any personal data held about you will be deleted from any research study or research database in which you are identifiable.

The data controller for this research is Rutland County Council. To see how Qa Research will use your data go to <https://www.qaresearch.co.uk/privacy/>

Please finish the survey by 14 May.

Ask all

Section 1: About you

Q1 Are you?

Singlecode

Currently a serving member of the Armed Forces

Married to a serving member of the British Armed Forces

In a relationship with a serving member of the British Armed forces

Veteran

Other (please specify)

Q2 Where are you based?

Singlecode

Kendrew Barracks

St George's Barracks

Cyprus

Other (please specify)

Ask if a serving member at Q1

Q3 What is your length of service in years? Please put 0 if less than a year.

Numeric

Ask all

Q4 What is your gender?

Singlecode

Male

Female

Identify in another way

Prefer not to say

Q5 How old are you?

Singlecode

Under 16

Thank and close

16-17

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

65-74

75-84

85 or over

Q6 Do you have any dependent children? (under 18)

Singlecode

Yes (If so, how many?)

Type in

No

Q7 How would you describe your ethnic origin?

Singlecode

White

Mixed

Asian or Asian British

Black or Black British

Other (Please specify)

Prefer not to say

Ask if in Rutland (Kendrew or St George's) at Q2

Q8 What kind of accommodation do you live in at present during the working week?

Singlecode

Private rental

Home owner

Living with family

Social housing / council house

Homeless

Service Family Accommodation (SFA)

Substitute Service Family Accommodation (SSFA)

Single Living Accommodation (SLA)

Substitute Service Single Accommodation (SSSA) (Formerly SSLA)

Other (please specify)

Ask if in Rutland (Kendrew or St George's) Q2 – If Service member Q1 show only Armed forces option, if not a service member Q1 show all others

Q9 What is your current employment status?

Singlecode – multicode for student and volunteer

Employed full-time (civilian)

Employed part-time (civilian)

Employed full-time (Armed Forces)

Employed part-time (Armed Forces)

Self-employed

Looking for work

Long-term unemployed

Student

Retired

Full-time carer / parent

Volunteer

Prefer not to say

Ask if in Cyprus Q2 AND not a service member Q1

Q10 After arriving in Rutland, will you be looking for...

Singlecode

Full time work

Part time work

Formal education

None of these

Prefer not to say

Ask all serving members Q1

Q11 What are your plans for the future? (Tick one box only).

Singlecode

To stay serving as long as I can

To stay serving to the end of my current engagement/commission

To leave the Army before the end of my current engagement/commission
 I leave the Army as soon as I can
 I have put in my notice to leave
 Don't know
 Prefer not to say

Ask all

Section 2 - Health behaviours

Ask all serving members Q1

Q12 Which, if any, of the following areas does life in the Armed Forces negatively impact?

Multicode

Mental health
 Debt
 Poor job opportunities
 Drug / alcohol addiction
 Physical disability
 Getting on the housing ladder
 Homelessness
 Social opportunities
 Domestic abuse
 Other (please specify)
 None of the above

Ask all

Q13 Do you have any long-term physical or mental health conditions, disabilities, or illnesses? By long term, we mean anything lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more.

Multicode between yes options

Yes (disability)
 Yes (Long-term condition)
 Yes (Mental health condition)
 No
 Prefer not to say

Ask all those already in Rutland (Kendrew or St George's) Q2

Q14 Which services have you accessed in the past (12 months)?

Multicode

The council (Armed Forces related)
 Housing support
 Job Centre
 Adult Social Care
 Adult Education
 Social care (for a child)
 Domestic abuse services
 Sexual health services
 Alcohol support services
 Drug support services
 Mental health services
 Other (please specify)

Ask all**Q15 Do you smoke or use a vape / e-cigarette?****Multicode between smoke/vape responses**

- I smoke
- I used to smoke
- I vape
- I used to vape
- None of these
- Prefer not to say

Ask if currently smoke Q15**Q16 Would you like to reduce the amount you smoke?****Singlecode**

- Yes
- No

Ask all

The next 2 questions are about drinking alcohol, including beer, wine, spirits and any other alcoholic drink.

Q17 Would you describe yourself as**Singlecode**

- A non-drinker
- A very occasional drinker (special occasions only)
- An occasional drinker (a few times a month)
- A regular drinker (a few days each week)
- A heavy drinker (every day)

If a "heavy" or "regular" drinker in Q17:**Q18 Would you like to reduce the amount that you drink?****Singlecode**

- Yes
- No

Ask all non service member Q1

Q19 In the past week, how many minutes of physical activity have you done in total, which was enough to raise your breathing rate? Please include sport, fitness and recreation activities, and brisk walking or cycling, but do not include physical activity that is part of your work.

- 150 minutes of more
- 120-149 minutes
- 90-119 minutes
- 60-89 minutes
- 30-59 minutes
- Less than 30 minutes

Ask all

Q20 If you want to increase your physical activity, which of the following would interest you?

- Walking groups
- Cycling groups
- Running groups
- Leisure centres
- Fitness classes
- Sports clubs
- Allotments and gardening
- Other (please specify)
- Not interested in increasing physical activity

Ask all

Q21 Would you be interested in support services for any of the following being available at Rutland?

Multicode - randomise

- Exercise
- Alcohol
- Smoking
- Drug use
- Losing weight
- Other (please specify)
- None of these

Ask all

Section 3 - Physical health

Q22 How would you describe your physical health in general?

Singlecode

- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Bad
- Very bad
- Prefer not to say

Q23 How comfortable are you filling out medical forms by yourself and having conversations about your health with a doctor?

Singlecode

- Not at all
- A little bit
- Somewhat
- Quite a bit
- Extremely
- Prefer not to say

Q24 How easy is it to find the medical/healthcare support you need by yourself?

Singlecode

Very difficult
 A little difficult
 Neither difficult nor easy
 Quite easy
 Very easy
 Prefer not to say

Q25 How easy is it to find the wellbeing/community support you need by yourself?

Singlecode

Very difficult
 A little difficult
 Neither difficult nor easy
 Quite easy
 Very easy
 Prefer not to say

Ask all in Rutland Q2

Q26 How would you rate the ACCESS to these services on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good?

Singlecode

1 very poor
 2
 3
 4
 5 very good
 Don't know
 Not applicable / haven't used this one

Loop

GPs located within Rutland
 GPs located outside of Rutland
 NHS hospitals and specialist clinics
 NHS dental services

End loop

Only ask if 1-2 for any of the options Q26

Q27 For the services you found difficult to access, what were the main reasons? Tick all appropriate.

Multicode

Lack of transport
 Unable to get an appointment
 Suitability of appointment times
 Long waiting lists
 Other (please specify)

Ask all in Cyprus Q2

Q28 How would you rate the ACCESS to these services on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good?

Singlecode

1 very poor
 2
 3

4
 5 very good
 Don't know
 Not applicable / haven't used this one

Loop

MOD provided medical care

MOD provided dental care

End loop

Ask all in Rutland Q2

Q29 Which health and wellbeing services do you lack in Rutland at the moment?

Type in

None

Ask all

Q30 How would you prefer to access physical health services within Rutland?

Singlecode

Face to face on site at the barracks

Face to face in the community

Online

Ask all

Section 4 - Mental health

Q31 Generally speaking, how would you describe your mental health?

Singlecode

Very poor

Good

Fair

Poor

Very good

Q32 How often do you feel lonely?

Singlecode

Always

Often

Sometimes

Not very often

Never

Prefer not to say

Q33 How comfortable would you be accessing mental health services if you needed to? Please answer on a scale of 1 (very uncomfortable) to 5 (very comfortable).

Singlecode

1 very uncomfortable

- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 very comfortable

Q34 Where would you go for support with your mental health?

Multicode

- Friends
- Family
- Welfare Officers
- Community Mental Health services
- GP / Medical professional
- Look for local services online
- Self help online
- Other (please specify)

Q35 How would you rate the mental health support available to you on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very poor and 5 is very good?

Singlecode

- 1 very poor
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 very good
- Don't know / not applicable as I haven't used them yet

Q36 How would you prefer to access mental health services within Rutland?

Singlecode

- Face to face on site at the barracks
- Face to face in the community
- Online

Q37 Are there any specific mental health needs you'd like to see available at Kendrew and St George's?

Type in

No

Ask all

Section 5 - Community

Ask all in Cyprus Q2

Q38 How are you feeling about moving to Rutland?

Multicode

randomise

- Apprehensive
- Calm
- Displeased

Excited
 Happy
 Hopeful
 Indifferent
 Optimistic
 Panicked
 Pessimistic
 Puzzled
 Other (please specify)

Ask all in Cyprus Q2

Q39 What kind of accommodation do you want to live in when arriving in Rutland?

Singlecode

Private rental
 Home owner
 Living with family
 Social housing / council house
 Service Family Accommodation (SFA)
 Substitute Service Family Accommodation (SSFA)
 Single Living Accommodation (SLA)
 Substitute Service Single Accommodation (SSSA) (Formerly SSLA)
 Other (please specify)

Ask all

Q40 In the long term (5+ years), do you intend to live at Kendrew or rent/buy a home?

Singlecode

Live at Kendrew
 Rent
 Buy a home
 Don't know

Q41 Why is this?

Type in

Ask all who live in Rutland Q2

Q42 How involved do you feel with the wider community of Rutland?
 Please answer on a scale of 1 (very uninvolved) to 5 (very involved).

Singlecode

1 very uninvolved
 2
 3
 4
 5 very involved

Ask all

Q43 Which of these would you like support accessing in Rutland?

Singlecode

Housing
 Employment
 Education
 Social groups within military community
 Social groups outside of military community
 Transport
 Leisure services
 Other (please specify)

Ask if live in Cyprus Q2:

Q44 How can you be best supported in the transition to living in Rutland? Do you have any specific concerns?

Open text

Only ask this section if have children Q6**Section 6 – Children and family support**

Q45 How old are your children? Select all age brackets that apply

multicode

Currently expecting a child
 Under 5
 6-9
 10-12
 12-16
 17-18
 Prefer not to say

Q46 Do any of your children have any Special Educational Needs or Disabilities?

Singlecode

Yes
 No
 Prefer not to say

Q47 Which of the following services relating to children would you like support with in Rutland?

Multicode

Pregnancy/maternity services
 Education
 Extracurricular activities
 Physical activity and exercise clubs
 Social opportunities
 Childcare
 Child health services
 Child mental health services
 Child learning disability services

None of these

If any response, except none Q47

Q48 How would you prefer to access child support services within Rutland?

Singlecode

Face to face on site at the barracks

Face to face in the community

Online

Q49 If you would like to tell us more about what information/support regarding children would be useful, please do so here.

Type in

Nothing to add

Ask all

Section 7 - Access

Locally, health partners are currently developing a pilot Single Point of Contact for the Armed Forces community. The Single Point of Contact will provide the Armed Forces community with one place to navigate local health services and direct you to the support and guidance you need.

Q50 How likely are you to use the single point of contact to help you navigate the support you and your family needs?

Singlecode

Very likely

Somewhat likely

Not very likely

Not at all likely

Q51 What support and guidance are you most likely to require from the single point of contact? Pick up to three areas.

Multicode up to 3

GP access for the family

Mental Health support

Children's health support

Dentistry access

Management of a long term condition (please specify)

Other (please specify)

None of these

Ask all in Cyprus Q2

Q52 Do you have any further requests on what would help you and your family settle into Rutland?

Open text

No

Ask all in Rutland Q2

Q53 Do you have any further requests on what would help you and your family's life in Rutland?

Open text

No

Show to all

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Finally, would you like to be entered into a free prize draw where you could win £75?

The draw will be administered by Qa Research.

We are asking for your contact details so Qa Research can contact you if you win; your details will not be used for any other purpose, and they will NOT be passed back to Rutland County Council or anyone in the armed forces. Your name will NOT be linked to your survey responses. The winner will be drawn at random and notified by email/phone.

Yes, I consent to being entered into the draw

No

IF NO, skip

Terms and Conditions of Rutland Army Health Survey prize draw:

1. The closing date is 22 May 2023. Late entries will not be accepted.
2. Only one entry per person.
3. Entrants must be 18 years or older to enter.
4. There are three cash prizes of £75, £50 and £25
5. The prize can only be awarded to the confirmed winner and three winners will be chosen at random.
6. Winners will be contacted by Qa Research within one month of the closing date and notified by the contact details provided.

Full terms and conditions can be found at qaresearch.co.uk

Please provide the contact details below so you can be contacted if you win

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Rutland County Council may do further research on this subject in the next 6 months. Would you be happy for Qa to keep your details so that we can contact you and invite you to take part in future research?

Name:

Date: (automatic time stamp)
Telephone:
Email address:

If entered prize draw:

Can we use the same contact details as you entered for the prize draw?

Yes

Otherwise correct

Name:
Date: (automatic time stamp)
Telephone:
Email address:

Show all

If you'd like to find out about the support available within the local community, you can access the Rutland Information Service

<https://www.rutland.gov.uk/rutland-information-service>

A new pilot Single Point of Contact (SPOC) service is being developed across Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland. The SPOC will provide a single point of contact for the Armed Forces community to help navigate the health support you need. There are a range of questions in this survey to enable and support its development to meet local needs of the Armed Forces community in the future.

Your responses will help to ensure the service is developed in accordance with the Armed Forces community needs. Our plan is for the SPOC to become operational in the Summer of 2023. More information will be made available and shared with you nearer the time.

Project details

Project number HEALT01-9248

Location [https://qaresearch.sharepoint.com/sites/QaData/S-ProjectFiles/Shared%20Documents/ProjectFiles/R/Rutland County Council/HEALT01-9248 Rutland Army Health Survey/Reports/Rutland army report v3.docx](https://qaresearch.sharepoint.com/sites/QaData/S-ProjectFiles/Shared%20Documents/ProjectFiles/R/Rutland%20County%20Council/HEALT01-9248%20Rutland%20Army%20Health%20Survey/Reports/Rutland%20army%20report%20v3.docx)

Date 21.06.2023

Report status Final

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This research has been carried out in compliance with the International standard ISO 20252, (the International Standard for Market and Social research), The Market Research Society's Code of Conduct and UK Data Protection law.

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