

# WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE CADET FORCES IN SCOTLAND?

Research commissioned by Lowland and Highland  
Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations



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# Introduction

This report was commissioned by the Chief Executives (CEs) of Lowland and Highland Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations (RFCA) in December 2021. The terms of reference set by the CEs were to identify the impacts and outcomes of the operation of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) sponsored Cadet Forces in Scotland in order to provide a common lexicon that could be used by the Cadet Forces in Scotland to inform policy makers, educational leaders, employers, current and future adult volunteers, and parents/guardians of current and future Cadets of these impacts and outcomes.

The report is a logical and needed follow up to the report 'What is the social impact and return on investment resulting from expenditure on the Cadet Forces in the UK?'<sup>1</sup>. This latter report, published in May 2021 was commissioned in 2016 when on behalf of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and CVQO<sup>2</sup>, the Combined Cadet Force Association contracted with the Institute for Social Innovation and Impact (ISII) at the University of Northampton to undertake a four-year longitudinal research project. The research project was designed to help understand the social impact and return on investment resulting from the MOD's expenditure on Cadets and the Cadet Expansion

Programme (CEP), as well as the benefits of the qualifications provided by CVQO. The project team produced interim reports in 2017, 2018 and 2019. However, the 2021 report had, as its terms of reference, to take a UK-wide perspective. Therefore, it was unable to examine all aspects of the unique circumstances that prevail in Scotland, nor did it examine how the outcomes achieved by the Cadet Forces were relevant to the policy initiatives of the Scottish Government. This current report addresses this gap<sup>3</sup>.

This report will examine the impacts of the Cadet Forces in Scotland on both young people (the Cadets) and the adult volunteers that enable the Cadet Forces to operate. It will particularly examine Cadet Force outcomes on education, employability, communities and health and well-being in Scotland. Under each of these headings, relevant Scottish Government policies that are supported by the Cadet Forces will be identified.

The report is written by Professors Simon Denny and Richard Hazenberg of the Institute for Social Innovation and Impact<sup>4</sup> at the University of Northampton.

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01. See, <https://www.northampton.ac.uk/research/research-institutes-and-centres/institute-for-social-innovation-and-impact/social-impact-resulting-from-expenditure-on-cadets/>

02. The Cadet Vocational Qualification Organisation (CVQO) is an education charity, providing vocational qualifications to youth group members and the adult volunteers who devote their time to running them, see <https://cvqo.org/>.

03. It should be noted that the aim of the report is not to compare the Cadet Forces with other uniformed youth organisations.

04. Professor Hazenberg is the leader of the Institute and Professor Denny, since he retired from the University of Northampton in 2018, is an external associate of the Institute.

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# The Cadet Forces – Aims, Mission and Vision

The Cadet Forces have multifaceted aims, including providing young people with interesting and challenging activities and invaluable life skills, as well as raising awareness of careers in Defence and the Armed Forces. However, it should be stressed that the Cadet Forces are not recruiting organisations and are not regarded as such by His Majesty’s Forces. Indeed, the MOD recognises them as non-military youth organisations committed<sup>5</sup> to promoting UK prosperity and civil society, a key objective of the MOD’s Single Departmental Plan. The MOD’s commitment to the Cadet Forces should be seen in the context that spending on youth services throughout the UK has fallen<sup>6</sup>, despite acknowledgment that young people’s services are invaluable and some recent post-COVID-19 initiatives that have sought to tackle specific issues such as the Young People’s Guarantee<sup>7</sup>.

The Cadet Forces’ Mission is ‘To prepare Cadets for success in their chosen way of life,

increasing their awareness and understanding of the Armed Forces and their role in society by delivering enjoyable, well-organised, military-themed activities in a challenging and safely-managed environment’; and their Vision is ‘Providing a challenging and stimulating contemporary Cadet experience that develops and inspires young people within a safe environment’<sup>8</sup>.

It should be noted that the Mission and Vision do not include producing a positive return on investment, tackling social problems, increasing educational achievement or improving well-being. However, this report shows that the Cadet Forces in Scotland, as in the rest of the UK, have a significant and positive impact on the lives of the young people and adults that make up the ‘Cadets’, and this impact is directly relevant to delivering a number of key policies of the Scottish Government, and also results in financial and non-financial benefits to the taxpayer and society.

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05. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ministry-of-defence-single-departmental-plan/ministry-of-defence-single-departmental-plan-may-2018>

06. <https://ukyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/UK-Youth-State-of-the-Membership-2018.pdf> and <https://www.sayfc.org/youthlink-warning/>

07. See <https://childreninscotland.org.uk/magazine-news-additional-4-million-announced-to-help-young-people-find-work/>

08. Mission and Vision are extracted from Joint Service Publication 814 – Policy and Regulations for Ministry of Defence Sponsored Cadet Forces.

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# Methodology

In producing a report on the impact of the Cadet Forces in Scotland it is necessary to have a relevant conceptual framework. Social impact can be defined as ‘The reflection of social outcomes as measurements, both long-term and short-term, adjusted for the effects achieved by others (alternative attribution), for effects that would have happened anyway (deadweight), for negative consequences (displacement), and for effects declining over time (drop-off)<sup>9</sup>. Put simply, it relates to the effect on people and communities that happens as a result of an action or inaction, an activity, project, programme or policy. Therefore, researching the social impact of the Cadet Forces involves identifying the effect(s) that they have on individuals, communities and organisations, such as schools.

When engaging in social impact research there are a number of recommended approaches for a study to be considered as ‘best practice’ (GECES<sup>10</sup>, 2014). These include the identification of ‘measures’ commonly known as outputs, outcomes and impacts and their measurement either directly through research or indirectly through proxies. These measures should be embedded within a ‘theory of change’, which seeks to provide a theoretical explanation of the changes in the measures identified and hence the impact delivered (GECES, 2014). In the frame of this study, this theory of change was expressed in the notion that Cadet Forces achieve social impact through the development and improvement of individuals’ abilities in the areas of communication, leadership, resilience, teamwork, social skills and confidence<sup>11</sup>. This theory of change underpinned the selection and design of the research methods used to gather

data for both the 2021 study and this report, as it informed the questions asked in the interviews and the survey used to gather primary data.

In standard financial practice, Return on Investment (ROI) is a performance measure used to evaluate the efficiency of an investment or compare the efficiency of a number of different investments. This research project does not seek to compare whether the investment in the Cadet Forces is more or less efficient than other investments in young people. However, by using measures of financial value or cost developed by the UK Government, national institutions (such as the NHS), and relevant published academic studies, we give an indication of how some of the impacts of the Cadet Forces can be expressed in financial terms. The Unit Cost Database, developed and updated by the GMCA Research Team (Greater Manchester), with further support from MHCLG and other government departments, provides cost data for the UK crime, education and skills, employment and the economy, fire and health services, housing and social services. For the research into the Cadet Forces, the secondary data on education and skills, and employment has been particularly relevant. In addition, the work of Fujiwara<sup>12</sup> has been used to calculate the wellbeing benefits young people get from participation in the Cadet Forces, and the value Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs) get from their regular volunteering; while the work of Hayward et al.<sup>13</sup>, published by the Department for Education in Westminster, has been used to calculate the potential value of vocational qualifications for disadvantaged Cadets.

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# Methodology (Continued)

The data for the 2021 study was gathered from young people in the Cadet Forces, CFAVs, parents, teachers, school governors, serving and retired members of HM Forces (both Regular and Reserve), members of the police force, social workers, and employers. Over 640 semi-structured interviews were conducted (38 interviews were conducted with Scottish respondents, including CFAVs); and over 5,500 structured questionnaires were completed (either online or hard copy, of which 458 were completed by Scottish Cadets<sup>14</sup>). In addition, the 2021 study reviewed data from the CVQO, Westminster<sup>15</sup> and Bader<sup>16</sup> Cadet Management Information Systems. The authors also worked closely with a number of Cadet Expansion Programme schools to identify relevant data from school records. Finally, they reviewed literature which was identified as relevant to the study. In addition to analysing data using qualitative and quantitative methods, the 2021 study carried out economic analyses using primary and secondary data to calculate the returns on investment of the Cadet Forces.

In order to carry out the Scottish study, data from the 2021 report was examined and that provided by Scottish respondents was extracted and examined. *It was concluded that there were no significant differences in the Scottish data (i.e. that provided by Cadets and CFAVs) to the rest of the data (i.e. that provided by respondents in England, Northern Ireland and Wales), whether gathered by interview or survey.* Therefore, the key findings of the 2021 report are relevant to Scotland. However, new primary data was gathered for the Scottish report from head teachers, teachers, police officers, employers, members of the Cadet Forces in Scotland, and a Lord-Lieutenant (and ex-senior local government official) (n = 31). Interview data was transcribed and analysed to identify new information for this report. Finally, Scottish Government policies were examined to identify whether Cadet Force outcomes had any relevance to their goals.

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09. <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/12966/attachments/5/translations/en/renditions/pdf>

10. GECES is the European Commission's sub-committee on social impact measurement. Full reference if required: Clifford, J., Hehenberger, L., & Fantini, M., (2014), Proposed Approaches to Social Impact Measurement in European Commission legislation and in practice relating to: EuSEFs and the EaSI, European Commission Report 140605 (June 2014), available online at <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/12966/attachments/5/translations/en/renditions/pdf>

11. All these abilities are, of course, highly valued by employers.

12. Ex-senior economist at Cabinet Office, the lead on cost-benefit analysis at DWP, now at LSE

13. Hayward, H., Hunt, E. and Lord. A. (2014) The economic value of key intermediate qualifications: estimating the returns and lifetime productivity gains to GCSEs, A levels and apprenticeships, Department for Education. Table 4 on page 35 is a particularly interesting and has informed this study.

14. Thus c. 8.3% of survey respondents were Scottish cadets. The Scottish cadets represent c. 6.2% of all Cadets in the UK so were slightly over-represented in the data.

15. Westminster is the software programme on which data about Army and Sea Cadet Forces is recorded.

16. Bader is the software programme on which data about the Air cadets is recorded.





# The Cadet Forces in Scotland

Cadet Force	Male Cadet	Female Cadet	Male Adult	Female Adult
Air Training Corps	1,255	460	550	195
Army Cadet Force	2,235	1,045	620	285
Sea Cadets	660	390	245	125
Volunteer Cadet Corps <sup>18</sup>	14	7	5	1
Combined Cadet Force <sup>19</sup>	1,155	920	70	50
Total	5,319	2,822	1,490	656

Table 1: Numbers of Cadets and Adult Volunteers in Scotland in April 2021 (approximate figures)

On 1 April 2021 there were approximately 8,140 young people aged between 10 – 18 years old taking part in Cadet Force activities in Scotland. These youngsters were supported by approximately 2,140 adult volunteers<sup>17</sup>. The Cadet Forces are organized into the Air Training Corps, the Army Cadet Force, the Sea Cadets, the Volunteer Cadet Corps and the Combined Cadet Force, see table 1.

The Cadet Forces in Scotland operate from more than 300 locations, in all areas of Scotland, including some of the most disadvantaged<sup>20</sup>. As will be discussed below, having detachments of the Cadet Forces operating in areas of deprivation is particularly impactful.

The Cadet Forces are supported by the Lowland and Highland Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations, Cadet Training Teams from the Regular and Reserve Forces, and the Ministry of Defence.

The Ministry of Defence provides funding for the Cadet Forces. Although it does not break down the amount of funds provided for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, based on the number of detachments, Cadets and adult volunteers it is estimated that the Cadet Forces in Scotland<sup>21</sup> receive funding of at least £17,000,000 p.a.

17. Figures supplied by the Ministry of Defence. It should be noted that the number of Cadets and adult volunteers in April 2021 was c. 12% lower in April 2021 than it was in April 2019. The fall in numbers is due to Cadet units not being able to parade as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is reported that since Cadet units began parading in late 2021 the numbers of cadets and adult volunteers have increased. However, the figure for April 2022 is not yet available.

18. There is one Volunteer Cadet Corps unit in Scotland, based in Arbroath.

19. There are 14 independent schools and one state school with a Combined Cadet Force.

20. For example, the Army Cadet Force detachment in Saltcoats is in an area ranked as the 23rd most deprived in Scotland, the ACF detachment in Easterhouses, Glasgow is in an area ranked as the 52nd most deprived area (where 1 = most deprived and 6,976 = least deprived). Source <https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020/>

21. Scotland has approximately 6.2% of the Cadets and 7.3% of the adult volunteers in the UK.

# The Impact of the Cadet Forces – Key Finding

*‘Being a Cadet has massively developed my communication and interpersonal skills, my time-keeping and leadership ability, boosted my confidence and self-esteem and helped me to become a more resilient and capable young woman.’ Cadet Sergeant, Saltcoats*

The key finding of the 2021 research project was that participation in the Cadet Forces has significant positive impacts on young people, increasing their performance at school and improving their employment and career prospects. *The impact was particularly strong for those Cadets that suffer economic and other disadvantages.* This finding is based on quantitative data gathered from c. 5,500 Cadets (458 of which were Scottish Cadets) on their level of self-efficacy as well as qualitative data. Self-efficacy is a concept that relates to an individual’s confidence, motivation and self-esteem and their belief in their ability to exert control over their environment<sup>22</sup>. A high level of self-efficacy is significantly correlated with educational and employability performance and motivation<sup>23</sup>. Throughout the UK, young people eligible for Free School Meals<sup>24</sup> (eFSM) score lower on measures of self-efficacy than other young people. *However, our longitudinal data showed no statistically significant differences between eFSM Cadets and non-eFSM Cadets.* It was hypothesized that Cadets

that are eFSM have improved self-efficacy because of the activities they undertake in the Cadet Forces. The implications of this finding, which the 2021 study named ‘The Cadet Force effect’ (see Figure 1), are important for policy makers in all parts of the UK, perhaps especially so in Scotland given the high number of children that are classed as eFSM<sup>25</sup>. Given that higher levels of self-efficacy are correlated with being more resilient, doing better at school and getting a job, it is very possible that being a Cadet is, for a young person from an economically disadvantaged background (such as the Cadet Sergeant from Saltcoats<sup>26</sup> quoted above), a key factor that helps them to achieve positive life outcomes. When policy makers and the Cadet Forces in Scotland plan the allocation of scarce resources, investing in Cadet detachments in areas and schools with higher levels of deprivation should, perhaps, be seriously considered. This observation is explored in more detail in the section on the impact of the Cadet Forces on education in Scotland.

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22. Judge, T. A., Locke, E. A. and Durham, C. C. (1997). The dispositional causes of job satisfaction: a core evaluation approach. *Research in organisational behaviour*, 19: 151-188; Bandura, A. (1986) The explanatory and predictive scope of self-efficacy theory, *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 4:3, pp. 359 – 373.
  23. Zimmerman, B. (1995). Self-efficacy and educational development. In A. Bandura (Ed.), *Self-Efficacy in Changing Societies* (pp. 202-231). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Meyers, R. and Houssemand, C. (2010) Socio-professional and Psychological Variables that Predict Job Finding, *Revue Européenne de Psychologie Appliquée*, 60:201–219.
  24. In the study we use eligibility for Free School Meals as a proxy for economic disadvantage.
  25. The Scottish Government notes that in 2020, 38.1 per cent of its total school roll was registered for free school meals, slightly higher than the 38.0 per cent registered in 2019 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/school-healthy-living-survey-statistics-2020/pages/2/> In 2020 – 2021 20.8 per cent of children in England were eligible for free school meals <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics>. The authors of this report note that using eFSM is an imperfect measure of deprivation.
  26. This young woman was 6 years old when she became the nominated carer for her elder brother. She gained a full scholarship to an independent school where she gained nine Grade A National 5 awards. She is now in the third year of a medical degree at Glasgow University having won a further scholarship award. She is an outstandingly impressive person.

# The Impact of the Cadet Forces – Key Finding (Continued)

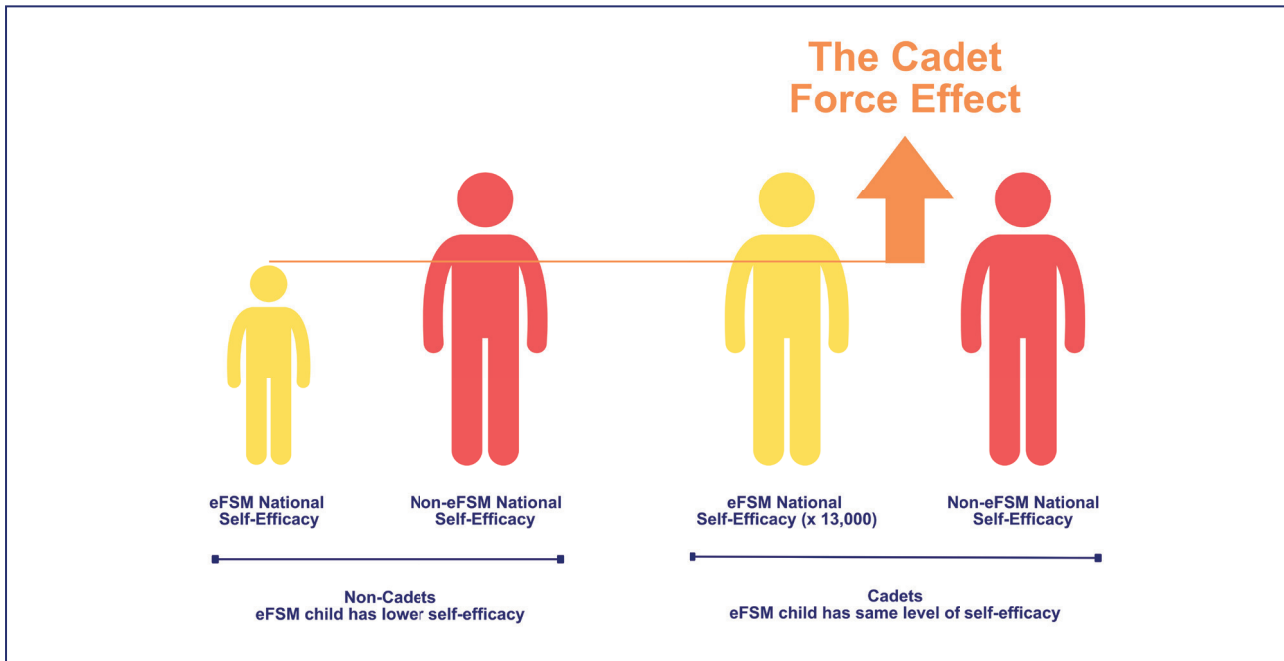


Figure 1: Diagram illustrating the Cadet Force effect

This key finding strongly suggests that the Cadet Forces are making a significant contribution to the Attainment Challenge<sup>27</sup>, a key policy of the Scottish Government. As the Scottish Government notes, ‘the Scottish education system works well for most children and young people, who make good progress in their learning. However, there is still a gap between the progress which is made between those living in Scotland’s least and most deprived areas. Many children and young people living in our most deprived communities do significantly worse at all levels of the education system than those from our least deprived communities.’

The impact of the Cadet Forces in closing the self-efficacy gap between children from deprived areas and those that are more fortunate, directly addresses this Attainment Gap. This is an important observation. As noted above, the National and

Scottish data show that children who are eFSM score lower in measures of self-esteem and self-efficacy, which correlates to poorer academic performance<sup>28</sup>, with c. 70% of eFSM children not meeting expected standards at age 16. Moreover, children that are eFSM are four times more likely to be excluded from school than their non-eFSM peers and being excluded from school often leads to a young person failing to secure employment or enter further or higher education or training<sup>29</sup>. In England the DfE (2017) stated that only 1% of young people who had been excluded achieved five good GCSEs, including English and Mathematics<sup>30</sup>. The Institute of Public Policy Research estimated in 2017 that the lifetime cost of exclusion for UK children is around £392,000 per individual, adjusted to 2019 costs. Data from Cadet detachments and the 2021 study showed that a significant minority (~10%) of Cadets are eFSM<sup>31</sup>.

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# The Impact of the Cadet Forces – Key Finding (Continued)

In the 2021 report it was noted that 97% of CFAVs that were teachers, social workers or members of the police force and who responded to our survey believe that participation in the Cadet Forces is particularly beneficial for disadvantaged youngsters. Interestingly, all the relevant

respondents interviewed for this Scottish report said the same thing. It is clear that there is a widespread belief among CFAVs that are involved with children as part of their jobs that being a member of the Cadet Forces is valuable for a child that suffers from economic deprivation.



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27. <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/scottish-attainment-challenge/>
  28. See, for example: Deputy Prime Minister's Office (March 2015) Social Mobility Indicators <https://www.gov.uk/publications/social-mobility-indicators>
  29. <https://www.jrf.org.uk/mpse-2015/free-school-meal-status-and-educational-attainment-age-16>
  30. Encouragingly the numbers of children being excluded from school in Scotland has declined recently, see <https://www.gov.scot/publications/summary-statistics-schools-scotland/pages/8/>. However, it is noted that exclusions are more common for children with an additional support need and those that live in a more deprived area.
  31. This figure is the UK average. Cadet detachments in some areas, e.g. parts of Glasgow, parts of Greater Manchester, have more than 50% of their Cadets classed as eFSM. In more affluent parts of the UK there are sometimes detachments with no Cadets that are eFSM.

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# The Outputs and Outcomes Delivered by the Cadet Forces

An analysis of the data gathered for the 2021 report, which was confirmed by the separate analysis of data gathered from Scottish respondents for this report, identified that participation<sup>32</sup> in the Cadet Forces develops a number of key attributes. These key attributes, the Cadet Force outputs, are:

- The ability to **communicate** clearly, to diverse audiences, through formal and informal presentations and in discussions and interviews,
- The ability to **lead** a group of people to achieve an objective. This key skill includes the ability to plan and to communicate that plan, as well as being able to control, motivate and drive a team to succeed,
- The **resilience** to keep going, even when things go wrong or the situation is challenging,
- The ability to work as a member of a **team**, sharing views and helping others, while being able to take instructions and orders from the team leader,
- The ability to use **social skills**, including different behaviours, to achieve positive outcomes,
- The understanding that people are not the same, and the ability to accept **diversity** and work with the different talents that people have,
- The personal **confidence** to utilise key skills in different situations and with different people.

As a result of developing and deploying these key attributes, young people and society experience positive outcomes, including:

- **Increased social mobility**<sup>33</sup>
- **Improved educational outcomes** (as a direct consequence of improved attendance and behaviour and the integration of the Cadet syllabus with SQA awards)
- **Improved mental and physical wellbeing**<sup>34</sup>
- **Enhanced employability**
- **Reduced vulnerability/increased resilience** (to bullying and to criminal and extremist organisations)
- **Inclusive community links** across ethnic, religious and socio-economic dimensions.

These outcomes are important for individuals and, crucially, both children that are Cadets and adults that are CFAVs benefit from the development of attributes and the resulting positive outcomes. Moreover, these outcomes have a financial value; a return on investment.

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32. Participation being defined as those young people that spend at least 12 months in the Cadets.

33. Those points in bold are those where the evidence is particularly strong.

34. The 2021 study found that participation in the Cadet Forces improves the health and wellbeing of cadets which produces an annual return on investment in the region of £95 million.

# The Outputs and Outcomes Delivered by the Cadet Forces (Continued)

A powerful (admittedly overly simplistic) way of looking at the potential return on investment of young peoples' participation in the Cadet Forces can be calculated by dividing the total annual cost of the Cadet Forces (c. £180 million) by the estimate produced by the Institute for Public Policy Research<sup>35</sup> (IPPR) for the lifetime cost of exclusions, which is the startling figure of £392,000 per young person in lifetime education, benefits, healthcare and criminal justice costs. Using this calculation, if every year the Cadet Forces helps c. 460 young people throughout the UK to change their life outcomes from exclusion<sup>36</sup>,

or serial absenteeism from school, and becoming young people not in Positive Destinations (a more positive term than NEET, which is often used in England), into education and work, then the annual cost of the UK Cadet Forces is covered<sup>37</sup>. Interestingly, the IPPR states that the true cost of exclusion is likely to greatly exceed the figure of £392,000!<sup>38</sup> Although this figure is indicative rather than definitive, its scale strongly indicates that (in areas where it can be calculated) there is a very large, positive return on the expenditure of taxpayers' money on the Cadet Forces in the UK. Other potential returns are cited below.



35. <https://www.ippr.org/publications/making-the-difference>

36. The data on the number of children permanently excluded from school varies. In May 2019 the DfE published the Timpson Review of School Exclusion that claimed only 0.1% of children were permanently excluded in 2016-7. However, the IPPR claims that while only 6,685 children were officially excluded in 2016-7, there were 48,000 children being educated outside mainstream education for reasons of both official and unofficial exclusion. We are not taking sides between these two expert sources, but merely using the figure of 460 to make a point; that the Cadet Forces do not have to change the life outcomes of many young people before its costs are covered.

37. This calculation is purely indicative. However, 460 is only 3.5% of those Cadets that are eFSM (based on c. 10% of Cadets being eFSM and there being c. 130,000 Cadets)

38. IPPR op. cit.

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# The Impact of the Cadet Forces on Education in Scotland

The Cadet Forces in Scotland have an impact on educational outcomes through two mechanisms, the community-based detachments (c. 5,100 Cadets) and the school-based detachments (c. 2,100 Cadets). As noted above, the 2021 report noted that the Cadet Force experience, particularly the development of self-efficacy and self-discipline, resulted in improved attendance and behaviour in school whether a child was in a community-based or school-based detachment. This effect was particularly marked for those children from more deprived backgrounds, and was observed throughout the UK. In addition, by providing Cadets and adult volunteers with the opportunity to gain Duke of Edinburgh and other awards (e.g. First Aid, CyberFirst), the Cadet Forces have been shown to support social mobility and increase personal opportunity. An important element of the impact that the Cadet Forces have on educational outcomes in Scotland has been through the integration of Cadet syllabi with SQA awards. These important, and uniquely Scottish, initiatives are discussed below.

*'If it wasn't for Cadets I would not have achieved my Duke of Edinburgh awards, which are recognised by most employers. This gave me an extra boost to my CV compared to others leaving school, along with my JCIC / SCIC, teaching and BTEC qualifications.'* Cadet, Larkhall

There have been Combined Cadet Force units in independent schools in Scotland, and the rest of the UK, for nearly 150 years<sup>39</sup>. However, in June 2012 the UK Government introduced the Cadet Expansion Programme (CEP) aimed at establishing Cadet detachments in Academy (state) schools to increase the numbers of children benefiting from being able to participate in Cadets as part of school life. The CEP and the concept of school-based Cadet activity was developed in response to demand from school leaders, with support from both the Scottish and the UK governments and local authorities. Interestingly, in 2011 Scotland had piloted the introduction of Cadet detachments into state (public) schools, a unique and early approach to the CEP. Taking a different route to the rest of the UK, in Scotland the schools offered children the opportunity to join a Linked Detachment as part of their subject choices from S3 onwards. A key feature of these Linked Detachments was pioneered by the Lowland Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association (LRFCA) which, since 2011, has been working with Education Scotland to develop a suite of recognised qualifications, which formalises the training young people receive and equips them with qualifications that are recognised and valued by education institutions and employers. As a result, children in Linked Detachments are able to gain Scottish Qualifications at National Levels 4, 5 and 6<sup>40</sup>. The achievement of credit-rated SQA-recognised qualifications boosts the education and employment prospects for Cadets, the vast majority of which pursue civilian careers. In April 2022 there were seven Linked Detachments in Scottish schools.

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39. The oldest Cadet unit in an independent Scottish school was established in 1875.

40. In the schools interviewed for this report, children in the Linked Detachment could gain National Level 4 Preparation of Uniformed and Emergency Services, National Level 5s in Leadership and Volunteering, National Level 6 Higher Leadership, a Teamwork and Citizenship Award, First Aid qualifications, and Duke of Edinburgh's awards.

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# The Impact of the Cadet Forces on Education in Scotland (Continued)

*'The detachment is valued very highly and is at the heart of our school.'* Headteacher

Pupils spend time during the school week (usually two double periods) learning the Cadet syllabus, which is delivered by a qualified Cadet Instructor, with some classroom support from a nominated member of school staff. Due to the variety and volume of the Cadet syllabus learning, pupils also attend their local Cadet detachment on evenings, weekend residentials and a fortnight residential during the summer holidays. Importantly the Cadet syllabus is strongly and deliberately aligned to the four competencies underpinning Curriculum for Excellence<sup>41</sup> – successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors – and recognises learning and attainment that takes place outside the school. The number of additional qualifications pupils are able to gain through the Linked Detachment initiative is impressive. In just one school (in the year before the COVID-19 pandemic), in addition to SQA Awards, pupils in the Linked Detachment gained 17 First Aid qualifications, 12 Duke of Edinburgh awards, and eight BTEC awards.

*'I like to help people and doing the National 4 in Uniformed and Emergency Services has inspired me to pursue a career as a paramedic.'* Cadet, Linked Detachment

The Linked Detachment initiative is unique to Scotland and, in integrating the Cadet syllabus with SQA qualifications, it overcomes one of the major problems that affects the CEP in the rest of the UK. Although the CEP is broadly held to be successful, the 2021 research revealed that some academy schools see their CCF as merely another extra-curricular activity. Moreover, the Department for Education in England has not suggested (let alone specified) any measures by which the impact of the CEP can be assessed. The work of Lowland RFCA and the SQA have overcome these issues.

*'It's an easy thing to do, it's really simple. There's help every step of the way for the SQA award. The SQA awards translate what you do in Cadets into a more readable, civilian friendly manner. It shows universities and employers and anyone else that wants to see, what experience you've had.'* Cadet, Linked Detachment

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41. <https://education.gov.scot/education-scotland/scottish-education-system/policy-for-scottish-education/policy-drivers/cfe-building-from-the-statement-appendix-incl-btc1-5/what-is-curriculum-for-excellence/>





lenovo

ROYAL  
AIR FORCE  
AIR CADETS  
the next generation  
STEM

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# The Impact of the Cadet Forces on Education in Scotland (Continued)

The headteachers and teachers who were interviewed for this report were asked why they had wanted to have a Linked Detachment in their school. All five interviewees said that they believed their Detachment would be a way of engaging those children who were not coping well with more traditional academic classes thus creating 'an equality of opportunity'. However, all the heads also stressed that the Detachments were open to all, resulting in children with a range of abilities and backgrounds being involved. Unsurprisingly, all the headteachers were very positive about the integration of the Cadet syllabus with SQA awards. Importantly, they reported that children in the Detachments had gained more awards and qualifications than they would have done otherwise, which is directly relevant to both the Scottish Attainment Challenge<sup>42</sup> and Wider Achievement<sup>43</sup>. Moreover, they saw an increase in the confidence, teamworking and leadership skills of the Cadets, and a big improvement in their behaviour and on their attendance at school with 'a massive improvement (reduction) in referrals'. As one head remarked, 'They know they need to attend other school classes in order to be allowed to take part and progress in the subject.'

Interestingly, two teachers from a school with a Linked Detachment, who are also CFAVs in a local community ACF unit, reported that the Cadets in this unit that were members of the Linked Detachment at school progressed through the ACF syllabus faster and more effectively, gaining more Cadet qualifications and promotions than their peers.

*'The benefits to society and the impact on mental health, health, positive destinations and combatting deprivation are clear from the Academy's experience with lots and lots of very positive stories. 'The most unlikely candidates are becoming house captains and returning to school as teachers/support workers or adult instructors. Several young people would have been permanently excluded had it not been for Cadets. With it being a course choice subject it has suited many young people and settled them and allowed them to succeed in subjects across the curriculum.'* Head Teacher, Academy with Linked Detachment

Headteachers were also asked what feedback they had had about the Linked Detachment from parents/guardians whose children were Cadets. They reported that all the feedback they have had from parents/guardians has been positive, usually about how much better behaved their children are, how much better mannered and respectful they are, and also about how much better they are at looking after themselves and getting themselves ready and organized for the day.

Although the headteachers interviewed were a self-selecting sample, it is encouraging to learn of the positive impacts of the Linked Detachments in Scotland. Whereas CEP schools in England and Wales reported improvements in behaviour and attendance, they were unable to report the increase in the numbers of qualifications gained that the Scottish school children benefitted from. The Linked Detachment initiative is impressive and, perhaps, a model that the CEP in the rest of the UK could learn from.

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42. <https://education.gov.scot/improvement/learning-resources/scottish-attainment-challenge/>

43. <https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/80036.html> - <https://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/64973.html>

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# The Impact of the Cadet Forces on Education in Scotland (Continued)

It is important to note that the Linked Detachments are not the only way in which the Cadet Forces in Scotland have linked Cadet syllabi with SQA awards. Cadets in both the ACF and the Air Training Corps are able to gain SQA awards as a result of the achievement in their branches of the Cadet Forces. The numbers of Cadets that gain SQAs through the ACF and ATC greatly exceeds the numbers of students in Linked Detachments.

The ACF has mapped its Cadet syllabus and CFAV training programme to existing SQA qualifications in subjects such as Personal Development, Teamwork and Citizenship, Leadership, and Training and Development. As a result, Cadets are able to gain SCQF awards at Levels 3 to 7, while CFAVs can gain awards from levels 5 to 8. Awards for Cadets are recorded on SQA certificates, along with awards they may gain through school. This is an important feature of the Cadet Forces in Scotland. A young person in the ACF that is not particularly academic, that struggles with the traditional education system, can gain SQAs as a result of their performance in the ACF, thus improving both their self-worth and the likelihood of gaining a place in continuing education or gaining employment. While on the other hand, young people that are academically gifted and are members of the ACF can gain more SQAs than their peers who are not Cadets; giving them an advantage when applying for education or employment. This 'value added' feature of the Cadet Forces is reviewed below in the section on the impact of the Cadet Forces on employability in Scotland. As at 30 April 2022 there are 914 SQA awards being completed by Cadets and CFAVs in the ACF.

While the ACF was able to map the majority of its syllabus to existing SQAs, the ATC in Scotland has taken the hugely impressive, and important, step of working with the SQA to accredit the Air Cadet syllabus with new awards. The c. 1,700 Air Cadets in Scotland gain, when they achieve the rank of 1st Class Cadet, the SCQF Level 5 award RAF Air Cadet Aviation Practice 1 (worth four SCQF credit points). When they achieve the rank of Leading Cadet, they gain the SCQF Level 6 award RAF Air Cadet Aviation Practice 2 (worth 21 SCQF credit points). These awards are recorded on the SQA certificates that are sent to children in Scotland every August; they are national awards recorded on national certificates. The numbers of Cadets gaining these awards is impressive: in 2020 (i.e. pre-COVID-19) 41 Air Cadets gained the Aviation Practice 1 award, while 337 gained the Aviation Practice 2 award<sup>44</sup>.

The initiative shown by the ACF, the ATC and the SQA is, to the authors of this report<sup>45</sup>, highly commendable. This initiative, unique to Scotland, is enabling several hundred children to gain additional national awards as a result of their participation in a voluntary uniformed youth group. The Scottish model is one that the rest of the UK could seek to learn from and, possibly, emulate. The authors note that the Muir Report published in March 2022 recommends that the SQA is replaced with a new body, Qualifications Scotland.<sup>46</sup> It is to be hoped that the Cadet Forces in Scotland will continue to be able to integrate their syllabi with any new qualification scheme that might be introduced in the future.

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44. In 2021, due to impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the operation of the Air Cadets, the numbers of Air Cadets gaining awards had dropped to 69 Level 1 and 111 Level 2. Given that Air Cadet detachments were unable to parade for most of this period, the numbers are most encouraging. However, the 2022 numbers are projected to be very healthy, at least up to 2020 levels.

45. It is worth re-iterating that the authors of this report have been researching into the impact of the Cadet Forces since 2016.

46. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/putting-learners-centre-towards-future-vision-scottish-education/pages/1/>

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# The Impact of the Cadet Forces on Employability in Scotland

*'I was offered my first real job by my OC (Officer Commanding a Cadet Force unit) as they had seen my capabilities working as a CFAV and knew I would be a fit for the role. With the skills I gained between that job and all my CFAV experience, I was successful in entering into my current career in the Civil Service. I am the youngest person in my team in a challenging role and was offered this role because of the behaviours I was able to demonstrate solely through situations from my Air Cadet work.'* Ex-Air Cadet, now CFAV, Glasgow

As noted above, participation in the Cadet Forces develops a number of key attributes. To reiterate, these key attributes are:

- The ability to **communicate** clearly, to diverse audiences, through formal and informal presentations and in discussions and interviews,
- The ability to **lead** a group of people to achieve an objective. This key skill includes the ability to plan and to communicate that plan, as well as being able to control, motivate and drive a team to succeed,
- The **resilience** to keep going, even when things go wrong or the situation is challenging,
- The ability to work as a member of a **team**, sharing views and helping others, while being able to take instructions and orders from the team leader,
- The ability to use **social skills**, including different behaviours, to achieve positive outcomes,
- The understanding that people are not the same, and the ability to accept **diversity** and work with the different talents that people have,
- The personal **confidence** to utilise key skills in different situations and with different people.

Importantly, these Cadet Force outputs cover most of the attributes that employers (including the CBI<sup>47</sup> and large recruitment websites<sup>48</sup>) state that are wanted from new employees. It can be concluded that participation in the Cadet Forces is likely to help young people achieve not only employment, but also careers. In Scotland, the attributes developed by Cadets in the ACF, ATC and in the Linked Detachments are recognized by SQA awards, thus clearly and officially differentiating these young people in the eyes of employers.

In order to compile this report, information was gathered via interviews with a selection of employers, parents, CFAVs and ex-Cadets about how the Cadet Forces had impacted on employability.

The employers, from both the public and private sectors, were remarkably positive about the value of the Cadet Force experience for potential employees. The following extracts from interview transcripts make some powerful points.

*'I think it is pretty obvious when an applicant has been a Cadet. They present themselves well, you can see the difference from non-Cadets. They have an air of pride, of self-respect. Cadets are more experienced and have a reliability and self-discipline.'* Paramedic Officer, Scottish Ambulance Service

47. <https://www.cbi.org.uk/media/1914/cbi-skills-framework.pdf>

48. See, for example: <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/resumes-cover-letters/skills-employers-look-for>

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# The Impact of the Cadet Forces on Employability in Scotland (Continued)

*'Our apprentices who are ex-Cadets are superb. They are used to hierarchy, to taking instructions and following them. Many young people are not good at doing things they don't like. The Cadets are much better, they are used to structure and that's where the magic happens. You don't drop things you don't like in Cadets, you have to do the 20 – 30% of things you don't like so much so you can do the rest that you enjoy.'* Manager, Glasgow-based construction company

Parents that were interviewed were equally positive about how participation in the Cadet Forces had helped their children.

*'My son was fast tracked into an apprenticeship with Scottish Woodland thanks to his qualifications and references that came from the ACF.'* Parent of Cadet

*'My daughter enjoyed mentoring the younger Cadets so much that she has taken up a career in childcare and she is in her HND year of becoming a nurse practitioner.'* Parent of Cadet

The Cadet Forces have made a number of important contributions towards increasing the employability of both Cadets and adult volunteers.

In addition to the integration of Cadet Force syllabi with SQA awards, one of the most important of these contributions has been the development of Cadet Curriculum Vitae<sup>49</sup> (CVs). These documents, developed by the Cadet Forces with employers and education providers, 'translate' the record of a Cadet (promotions, courses, experiences such as expeditions etc.) into language that people without any understanding of the 'Cadet Force experience' can understand. The CV provides the Cadet with a bank of words to use in interviews and is appropriate for all abilities. Feedback from employers (including Rolls Royce) and education providers (including Pearson International) has been very positive. The Cadet CV is a proven product.

It is worth mentioning in the context of this report that the work on the Air Cadet CV was led by the Regional Commandant for Scotland and Northern Ireland. Indeed, the Air Cadet CV is perhaps the most comprehensive produced by the Cadet Forces (see Appendix). It is most impressive to learn that the Air Cadets in Scotland are leading the way with a CFAV CV that will enable adult volunteers to explain the qualifications, skills and attributes they have gained in the Cadet Forces to employers.

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49. Some authorities suggest the plural of curriculum vitae is curriculum vitas, but most plump for 'vitae'.

# The Impact of the Cadet Forces on Employability in Scotland (Continued)

*'The Cadet CV will get you the interview. The Cadet attributes will get you the job' CFAV, ATC.*

In 2014 Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) was established. This flagship Youth Employment Strategy for Scotland<sup>50</sup> was created to bridge the gap between employers and young people. The evidence cited in the 2021 report into the social impact of the Cadet Forces in the UK, and that gathered for this report, strongly suggest that the Cadet Forces are making a significant contribution to the delivery of DYW strategy and youth employment targets.

Cadets that provided evidence for this report described the value of the Cadet experience in powerful terms:

*'Through my experience with the Cadets, I have gained many skills, experiences, and achievements. These include the Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) Level 4 Award in Uniformed and Emergency Services, the Level 5 Award in Leadership and the Level 6 Award in Advanced Leadership, as well as the BTEC Level 1 in Teamwork, Personal Skills and Citizenship. I have also gained life skills through passing the Youth First Aid, Activity First Aid training and earned my Duke of Edinburgh Bronze and Silver Awards.'* Female ACF Cadet, Borders

*'Cadets helped me get my apprenticeship in different ways. Firstly, Cadets gave me a network. So practically speaking, it was a Cadet contact that alerted me to the job and my Commanding Officer who wrote one of my references. Secondly, Cadets gave me a real interest in engineering and STEM in general. Thirdly, Cadets allowed me to gain qualifications like the Duke of Edinburgh Award, which made me stand out as a candidate. I was also able to talk about my amazing Cadet experience at the interview, which gave me an edge. Fourthly, being a Cadet gave me real-life skills which have prepared me for the world of work.'* Engineering Apprentice and ex-Air Cadet

The Scottish Government has a long-standing commitment to improving youth employment<sup>51</sup>. It is important to highlight that a key tenet of this strategy is to ensure a work relevant educational experience for young people. The strategy goes on to say that, 'It is about all of us valuing and understanding what a rich blend of learning, including vocational education, can offer.' Employers, parents and Cadets themselves are clear that the Cadet Force experience is a significant contributor to achieving youth employment goals.

50. <https://www.employabilityinscotland.com/policy/youth-unemployment/>

51. In 2014 the Government published its youth employment strategy, <https://www.gov.scot/publications/developing-young-work-force-scotlands-youth-employment-strategy/>

# The Impact of the Cadet Forces on Employability in Scotland (Continued)

However, it is not only youngsters that gain employment benefits from participation in the Cadet Forces. The 2021 report noted that surveys of CFAVs carried out in 2018 and 2019 showed that, for most CFAVs, the training they receive as adult volunteers, and the qualifications they can gain, are invaluable in their careers. Two points should be highlighted from these surveys:

- The majority of CFAVs said that the training they had received from the Cadet Forces had improved their career prospects;
- The great majority of CFAVs that were teachers said that their Cadet Force training and experiences had helped them to be more effective in the classroom;

Interestingly, the vast majority of the CFAVs surveyed were in work; 91% of the CFAV respondents were employed or self-employed, with 7% retired and only 2% unemployed. Respondents that said they were students were counted as ‘employed’<sup>52</sup>.

Scottish CFAVs that were interviewed for this report made statements that support the findings cited in the 2021 report.

*‘My training as a CFAV has provided me with a wealth of opportunities. I have gained very transferable skills in leadership and management. I have a very good insight into leadership that I did not get through my training with the police.’  
Sergeant and CFAV, Police Scotland*

*‘If it wasn’t for Cadets I would not have the job I am in. The ACF gave me skills to talk to others and take on challenges, I always push myself and others I work with and I feel this makes me a good team leader and this came from working with a large range of adults and Cadets from all over Glasgow and Lanarkshire as a CFAV Company 2IC.’ CFAV 2IC*

*‘In my career I have used the skills developed in the Air Training Corps. When I applied to the business, I took part in an assessment day where my main recollection is that it had not been anywhere near as difficult or as challenging as preparing for promotion in the Air Cadets. I had become used to operating at such a level with the Air Cadets that leading a team of four in an exercise and delivering a solo presentation with 30 minutes preparation seemed simple. I am now responsible for leading a team of 13 with an annual budget of £17m where both my leadership and management skills developed in the ATC play a strong part.’ CFAV and Manager in private sector business*

*‘I took a Chief Inspector and a Superintendent to a Cadet camp. They saw two days of activity. They were amazed that the event, and all the paperwork, safeguarding, planning, blank firing and other activities were being run by a CFAV Major, who was a Police Constable in his day job. They had no idea that CFAVs did so much.’ Inspector, Police Scotland*

It is notable that employers, parents, ex-Cadets and CFAVs all give out the same message<sup>53</sup>: participation in the Cadet Forces enables the development of attributes (personal skills, behaviours, and confidence) that are very helpful in both gaining employment and progressing in a career. These benefits are gained by both the young people that are Cadets, and the adult volunteers that deliver the Cadet Force experience in Scotland.

52. Counting students as employed might be thought generous by some people.

53. The authors were unable to get any negative statements about the impact of participation in the Cadet Forces on employability, despite some probing and challenging questions.





# Impact of the Cadet Forces on Scottish Communities

A cohesive community can be defined as one where there is a sense of belonging from all communities; diversity is valued; those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities and are developing strong and positive relationships<sup>54</sup>. The 2016 Casey Review<sup>55</sup> highlights the potential of a range of youth groups and the impact of youth volunteering in promoting positive social interactions between young people. Uniformed groups, such as the Cadet Forces, provide opportunities for young people from different backgrounds to work together, something that is perhaps particularly important in some parts of Scotland and directly relevant to the Scottish Government's strategy to counter sectarianism<sup>56</sup>. The research into the impact of Cadet Forces in the UK, published in 2021, supported the findings from prior research<sup>57</sup> about the positive impact of participation in youth groups on skills and behaviours and improvements in social mixing and integration.

*'Our Cadets are massively involved in the local community. We help at galas, do parades, help other charities raise money. We are a real part of the community' CFAV, ACF Detachment*

Research<sup>58</sup> has found that levels of crime are lower in areas that have high community cohesion. Estimates from a DCLG report<sup>59</sup> (2009), that calculated potential savings from increases in

community cohesion, put savings for some crimes, such as violent crime as high as £597 million and for others, such as theft from a vehicle as low as £23 million.

*'I'm 100% certain that Cadets don't cause the trouble. We know the youngsters that do, their names come up all the time; they are not Cadets.'*  
Community Sergeant, Police Scotland

To try and identify whether children that were, or had been, Cadets behaved in the community (i.e. not in school) the same, or differently, from their non-Cadet peers, interviews were held with three police officers (two Sergeants and an Inspector, two of which were CFAVs and one of which was a Police Scotland Youth Volunteering<sup>60</sup> coordinator). It is known that police forces do not gather data about whether a young person they come into contact with is, or has been, a member of a Cadet Force. However, all three Police Scotland officers (who had between 12 and 21-years' experience in their roles) said that there was a marked difference in the behaviour of Cadets and their non-Cadet peers, with Cadets being very much less likely to get into trouble with the police.

*'Cadets have more respect for authority, more respect for themselves than their peers.'*  
Sergeant, Police Scotland

54. <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/communitycohesionactionguide.pdf>

55. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/575973/The\\_Casey\\_Review\\_Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/575973/The_Casey_Review_Report.pdf)

56. <https://www.gov.scot/policies/community-safety/sectarianism/>

57. Kerr, D. et al. (2011) Evaluation of the schools linking network: Final report, Research report DFE-RR090, National Foundation for Educational research. Available at: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/182402/DFE-RR090.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/182402/DFE-RR090.pdf)

58. Hirschfield, A. and Bowers, K. J. (1997) The Effect of Social Cohesion on Levels of Recorded Crime in Disadvantaged Areas. *Urban Studies*. 34: 1275 – 1295

59. <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120920021221/http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1303560.pdf>

60. <https://www.psyv.org/>

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# Impact of the Cadet Forces on Scottish Communities (Continued)

The importance of the values and standards instilled by the Cadet Forces was described as being significant, affecting the behaviour both of Cadets and, often, their non-Cadet peers. Cadets were described by two police officers as community role models; they showed a sense of purpose and were proud of the role played by their Cadet detachments in their areas. The police officers believed that children that were not Cadets often lacked the same sense of purpose. As noted above, all the Police Scotland officers interviewed for this report stressed that participation in the Cadet Forces was especially valuable for children from deprived areas.

*'Cadets helps kids from deprived areas to develop a sense of pride, a willingness to try hard and succeed. I think the Cadets could give them more than they could get at school.'* Sergeant, Police Scotland

*'Cadets have structure to their lives, and they are resilient. They are much less likely to get involved with the police.'* Community Sergeant, Police Scotland

The above-mentioned Casey Review<sup>61</sup> into social integration in the UK, undertaken at a time of increased social divisions and cultural tension, called for more to be done to build bridges between people and bind communities. It said that Government programmes that encourage the mixing of young people from different communities are to be positively encouraged. The evidence gathered in interviews with police officers, CFAVs and

Cadets for this report indicates that Cadet Forces encourage such integration, both within the community and schools. Cadet camps, both weekend and summer, seem to be particularly impactful in helping young people from different backgrounds. The Cadet Forces provide positive experiences and opportunities that are very relevant to the reduction of anti-social behaviour.<sup>62</sup>

There are many examples of Cadet detachments going to great lengths to accommodate the religious, and other, requirements of people from different backgrounds. However, integration is not just an issue among religious and ethnic communities, it is also of concern for many other groups in Scottish society. Social exclusion can be caused by many factors, such as unemployment or having mental or physical difficulties. A particularly heartening example of the Cadet Forces 'going the extra mile' to be inclusive is that of a young boy from Alexandria. The child has a rare terminal disease that is very incapacitating and requires full-time medical care.<sup>63</sup> He has recently joined an ACF unit and attends parades, which he very much enjoys.

Helping young people, especially those with additional needs, feel more included in society is a valuable impact of the Cadet Forces. The consequences of isolation and exclusion can be life changing for young people and their families. The rise in anxiety, depression and behaviour problems are well documented at a time when mental health services for young people are under increasing strain and financial pressure.

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61. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/575973/The\\_Casey\\_Review\\_Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/575973/The_Casey_Review_Report.pdf)

62. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/guide-antisocial-behaviour-etc-scotland-act-2004/>

63. See <http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/local-news/inspiring-vale-youngster-continues-reach-26387138>



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# Impact of the Cadet Forces on Health and Wellbeing in Scotland

In March 2013 Scotland's Chief Medical Officer wrote, 'This second decade of life - youth - is critical to the development of future health behaviours. Youth is typically defined as a transitional and risky stage between childhood and adulthood. It is a period of experimentation, of biological and psychological change, and one which spans key transitions. It is a period of considerable change and we must support young people to negotiate their way through what is an increasingly complex world. It is therefore critical we continue our action to encourage positive health behaviour development beyond the early years. And while we want to support all young people, we must ensure we target those most at risk of poor health outcomes, such as those exposed to chaotic early lives. We must work with these young people to improve their life chances.'<sup>64</sup>

*'Before Cadets I couldn't look people in the eye. I couldn't order my own food at a restaurant, I was one of the most antisocial and "loner" type of person you'd ever have met. Now, I'm a very outgoing, social, friendly person. I'm very confident in myself and my own social ability and have met so many different people through Cadets.'* ACF Cadet, Glasgow

In addition to developing a range of attributes and increasing their confidence and self-efficacy, the Cadet Forces provide a variety of activities that are strongly associated with good physical and mental health. As the Scottish Government policy on physical activity and sport points out, being physically active is one of the very best things somebody can do for their physical and mental health<sup>65</sup>. In addition to sports and physical activities carried out at camps and at Cadet weekends, they are heavily involved in cultural and heritage events including small and large-scale parades, visits to museums and historic sites, and formal (i.e. assessed) and informal educational activities. As the Scottish Government points out, 'culture, creativity and a rich, diverse heritage sit at the heart of Scottish life and play a critical role in the economy, communities and almost everything we do.'<sup>66</sup> In the research carried out for the 2021 report, the clear majority of Cadets surveyed said that being in the Cadet Forces had had a positive impact on their mental and/or physical wellbeing.

*'If it wasn't for Cadets I would be a couch potato. I am now more active, meeting other people, learning new skills and have become a better version of who I would like to be.'* ACF Cadet, Lanarkshire

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64. <https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-young-peoples-health-wellbeing-summary-scottish-government-policy/>

65. <https://www.gov.scot/policies/physical-activity-sport/>

66. <https://www.gov.scot/policies/arts-culture-heritage/>

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# Impact of the Cadet Forces on Health and Wellbeing in Scotland (Continued)

A survey of 151 CFAVs from throughout the UK carried out for the 2021 report provided evidence that respondents believed participation in the Cadet Forces was effective at promoting health and wellbeing: 81% of CFAVs agreed or strongly agreed that ‘being in the Cadets improves the physical wellbeing of young people’; and 86% agreed or strongly agreed that ‘being in the Cadets helps young people cope with the pressures of everyday life.’

Interestingly, it is possible to put an indicative value on the health and wellbeing outcomes of the culture, heritage, sport and physical activities that the Cadet Forces provide. Fujiwara et al. (2015<sup>67</sup>) stated that such activities are associated with increases in wellbeing, improvements in health, improved educational and economic prospects, and higher levels of positive civic participation. Using the calculations developed by Fujiwara et al., it is possible to calculate an indicative return on investment of the Cadet Forces in Scotland based on a (conservative) sample of 20% of the members of its Cadets. Moreover, the calculation is based on the value of the heritage activities that Fujiwara et al. defined as being part of the overall ‘culture’ category. We do not use the values Fujiwara et al. give for ‘participation arts’ and ‘library’ as these are not regular parts of the Cadet Forces’ syllabi. We believe our calculation is thus conservative and prudent. This sample size allowed for the ‘churn’ in the numbers of Cadets<sup>68</sup> as well as levels of participation, alternative attribution and deadweight<sup>69</sup>. Young people leave the Cadet Forces each year for various reasons. For the purposes of this

indicative calculation, it is assumed that the 20% figure represents the number of youngsters leaving the Cadet Forces in a particular year, and further assumes that they have been Cadets for over 18 months, thus benefiting from the activities offered.<sup>70</sup> Therefore, to the annual positive values noted below can be added the lifetime benefits that this cohort will derive.

Based on the 20% sample, it was calculated that young people in Scotland’s Cadet Forces produce an indicative annual return on investment of c. £5.9 million (using 2019 prices), made up of:

- A reduction in GP visits, worth c. £31,100 per annum
- A reduction in use of mental health services, worth c. £42,000 per annum
- Lifetime private benefits from their increased likelihood of attending FE/HE of c. £4,359,000
- Lifetime public benefits in increased tax receipts from their increased likelihood of attending FE/HE of c. £1,451,000<sup>71</sup>.

Of course, heritage activities are only a very small part of what young people do when they are in the Cadet Forces. The personal competencies youngsters gain, the increases in self-efficacy they experience, the experiences they have, all contribute to an increased likelihood of their attending FE/HE and going on to gainful employment. In addition, we accept that simply adding the figures noted above is a crude way of showing the potential value of some aspects of the social impact of Scotland’s Cadet Forces. As noted earlier, the calculation of social impact value is not an exact science. However, we suggest this example provides one illustration of their very large potential return on investment.

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67. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/446273/Health\\_and\\_educational\\_benefits\\_of\\_sport\\_and\\_culture.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/446273/Health_and_educational_benefits_of_sport_and_culture.pdf)

68. Churn is the number of cadets leaving each year as they become too old to remain in the Cadet Forces.

69. Deadweight refers to the amount of outcome that would have happened even if an activity had not taken place.

70. Obviously, these assumptions will not apply to 2020 - 2021 when Cadet Force activities were disrupted by Covid-19.

71. The indicative figure of c. £5.9M p.a. is based on the concept that because every year 20% of cadets leave, and going forward each ‘cohort’ enjoys these lifetime benefits, it is reasonable to count the £5.0M figure as an annual amount.

# How do the Cadet Forces Achieve Impacts?

*'If it wasn't for the Cadets then no part of my life would look the way it does now.'* Air Cadet, Livingston

The authors of this report have reflected about how the Cadet Forces in Scotland achieve the impacts that they do. All the CFAVs interviewed highlighted the importance of the core values that the ACF, Sea Cadets and Air Training Corps have<sup>72</sup>. Certainly, both the primary research carried out for this project, and that done for the 2021 report show that significant effort is made to instill these values into all aspects of Cadet Force activity.

When speaking with the young people that are Cadets, additional factors emerge that may help explain how the Cadet Forces achieve the impact they do. Cadets highlight the following factors as being very important to them:

- The **sense of belonging**, to an entity bigger than the individual, but that respects the diversity of individuals,
- Related to belonging, the **sense of identity**, engendered by uniforms, parades and activities such as camps,
- The **positive role models**, both from among the Cadets themselves<sup>73</sup>, and the adult volunteers they see working hard to deliver the Cadet Force experience,

- The **positive relationships developed with adults** through the Cadet Force experience, leading to improved relationships with parents/guardians, teachers, police officers etc.
- The **structured challenge and fun** of Cadet Force activities, with opportunities for promotions, additional responsibilities and activities such as sailing, flying, shooting, expeditions and overseas trips etc.
- The **collective discipline and individual self-discipline** developed by the Cadet Forces.

It is hypothesized that these factors explain many of the Cadet Force outputs and outcomes achieved in Scotland, they are certainly integral to the Getting it right for every child policy of the Scottish Government.<sup>74</sup>

*'If it wasn't for Cadets, I wouldn't have the memories and friendships I have now. Cadets pushed me out of my comfort zone which allowed me to meet new people from all around the country by attending various courses and going on international educational trips to places such as South Africa.'* Cadet, Motherwell

72. The ACF has seven core values – Selfless Commitment, Courage, Discipline, Integrity, Loyalty, Respect for Others and Adherence to the Law; the Sea Cadet Corps has six core values – Commitment, Loyalty, Self-Discipline, Respect, Courage, and Honesty and Integrity; while the Air Cadets have four core values – Respect, Integrity, Service and Excellence. The detailed description of each of these sets of values shows that there is little, if any, difference between them.

73. The importance of older Cadets providing guidance, support and positive examples to younger Cadets seems hard to over-estimate.

74. <https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/>

# Conclusions

The extensive qualitative and quantitative data gathered and analysed, both for the 2021 report and for this Scottish report, provides consistent evidence that participation in the Cadet Forces results in significant impacts for both Cadets and adult volunteers, and consequently for society. These impacts range from positive outcomes in education, health and wellbeing, employability, lifetime earning potential, community relations, and benefits to the Scottish Government through facilitating the achievement of policy objectives<sup>75</sup>. Importantly, four key capabilities are fully addressed by the Cadet Force syllabi: responsible citizens, effective contributors, confident individuals and successful learners. It is not possible to definitively calculate the exact value of these impacts and the return on investment produced by the Cadet Forces in Scotland; there is no single figure that can be said to identify the return on investment. However, where calculations

of financial return can be carried out based on models produced by HM Government and others, their sum is vastly more than the annual cost of the Cadet Forces in Scotland. Spending c. £17 million a year of Ministry of Defence funding on the Scottish Cadet Forces is an excellent use of taxpayers' money.

The Cadet Forces are uniformed volunteer youth movements that benefit nearly all their participants, both young people and adults. As our Key Finding shows, the Cadet Forces are particularly important for those children that are classed as disadvantaged, for them being a Cadet can be life-enhancing and life-changing. This impact on the disadvantaged young people of Scotland should not be underestimated.

*'There is not a single area of my life that Cadets has not made better.'* Cadet, Glasgow



75. Including the Four Capabilities of Confident Individuals, Effective Contributors, Responsible Citizens, and Successful Learners, key elements of the Scottish Curriculum, see <https://scotlandscurriculum.scot/3/>



# Recommendations

This report was tasked with, as part of its terms of reference, providing a common lexicon that could be used by the Cadet Forces in Scotland to inform policy makers, educational leaders, employers, current and future adult volunteers, and parents/guardians of current and future Cadets of these impacts and outcomes. It is recommended that this report should be made widely available to policy makers and the other groups defined in the terms of reference.

In addition, the Cadet Forces in Scotland should develop and implement a scheme to invite policy makers, educational leaders, employers and members of the police force to visit Cadet activities, particularly camps so they can see the results of structured challenge and fun at first hand.

Thirdly, the Cadet Forces in Scotland should explain to educational leaders in the rest of the UK how the Linked Detachment model works and how the ACF and ATC have integrated their syllabus to SQA awards. These are unique models and the way the Cadet Force experience can lead to national qualifications should be known about and, ideally, replicated.

Finally, the Cadet Forces in Scotland should be proud of the outputs and outcomes they enable their young people, and their adults, to gain. They should tell people about the great work they do at every opportunity.

# Appendix

## Extract from Air Cadet CV

### Curriculum Vitae

#### **Detailed breakdown of qualities by attribute**

The individual attributes contain a number of qualities which may be seen both positively and negatively in individuals. The attributes/qualities are:

#### **Confidence and Resilience**

Commitment, Mental Courage, Responsibility, Reaction to Pressure, Determination.

#### **Oral Communications**

Effectiveness, Clarity, Projection, Diction, Grammar, Fluency, Ability to Reason.

#### **Influence**

Management within team, Motivation, Negotiating Skill, Conflict Resolution, Ability to Lead, Authority, Presence, Control.

#### **Problem Solving**

Appreciation, Situational Awareness, Information Management, Reasoning Ability, Risk Management, Priorities, Ambiguity, Planning Judgement, Flexibility, Receptiveness, Effective Intelligence, Perception, Objectivity, Lateral Thinking, Resource Management, Mental Capacity, Mental Agility, Numeracy.

#### **Teamwork**

Reliability, manner and attitude as a leader and team member, Interpersonal skills, Respect and humility towards fellows.

#### **Understanding of the Need for Integrity**

Moral Courage, Material Honesty, Honourable.

#### **Spirit of Adventure**

Assessment of Risk, Physical Courage.

#### **Citizenship**

Rights and responsibilities, Role in the Community.

#### **The Ability to use ICT**

#### **Airmindedness**

Understanding of air issues



## Research commissioned by Lowland and Highland Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations



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