

Career Development Institute Student Conference (England and Wales)

Wednesday 13 April 2022

WORKING WITH FORCES VETERANS

Sarah Barrett

**CFO Veterans Activity Hub Caseworker
North East England**

We exist to provide life-long, life-changing support, jobs and training opportunities to service leavers, veterans and their families, irrespective of circumstances, rank, length of service, or reason for leaving.

Founded in 1885 and operating across the UK, we have the specialist knowledge and understanding to bridge the gap between military life and civilian employment.

We work in partnership with other organisations and employers who, like us, respect and value the unique qualities and abilities of all those who have served.

PROJECT NOVA

Project Nova supports vulnerable veterans and veterans who have been arrested and enter Police Custody.

Veterans may also be referred by specialist Police teams, or other statutory organisations, because they are at risk of arrest.

Project Nova also supports Merchant Navy who have worked with HM Forces on Operational deployment.

Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service Co-Financing Organisation (CFO)

- **CFO projects aim to improve employability**
- **Seen as key to changing offender's lives and reducing reoffending**
- **Help offenders and ex-offenders access employment services and assist them to gain employment**

CF04 HMP HOLME HOUSE TEAM

- **2 PRISON OFFICERS (VETERANS)**
- **2 RFEA CASEWORKERS**
- **2 INGEUS STAFF, SUPPORT AND ACTIVITY COORDINATOR**

TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS

- **Level 4 Advice and Guidance**
- **Level 6 Diploma in Career Guidance and Development**
- **Level 3 Assessor Award**
- **Level 4 TAQA Internal Verifier Award**

CONTEXT

- **HMP Holme House - male Cat C prison, in Stockton on Tees**
- **The definition of a Veteran**
- **June 2021 3% of the population in prison were veterans**

BARRIERS VETERANS FACE

- **Institutionalisation**
- **Employer's perceptions and stereotyping**
- **Mental health and addictions**
- **Poor self-awareness**
- **Education and qualifications**

CFO VETERANS' ACTIVITY HUB CASEWORKER ROLE

IN CUSTODY:

- **Running group sessions**
- **One to one wrap around support**
- **Assessments (Justice Star)**
- **Supporting planning events**

CFO VETERANS' ACTIVITY HUB CASEWORKER ROLE

WORKING FROM HOME:

- **Team meetings, training and administration**
- **Referrals to veteran specific support**
- **Organising visitors to come into HMP Holme House**
- **Research – employment and training opportunities**

CFO VETERANS' ACTIVITY HUB CASEWORKER ROLE

The things I enjoy:

- **Seeing the Hub develop, and our veterans make progress**
- **Making a difference, sometimes the small things are huge**
- **Having to be creative and solve problems**
- **Never having 2 days the same**

CFO VETERANS' ACTIVITY HUB CASEWORKER ROLE

The challenges:

- **Working in a closed environment – restrictions and politics, isolation**
- **Helping veterans realise their worth to enable change**
- **Managing expectations**
- **Contract targets**

NVQ ASSESSOR AND IQA

- **Assessor in a small team for an FE College**
- **5 learners undertaking L4 Dip Advice & Guidance and L6 Dip Career Guidance and Development**
- **Based in school, college, training provider and RAF base, veterans residence**
- **Enjoy using my qualifications, experience and staying connected to the career guidance sector and keeping current with developments**

CPD

Different strands

- **Career guidance related**
- **Veteran specific**
- **Criminal Justice System**

PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS

Colleagues

Supervision

Criminal Justice System

Military based

OPPORTUNITIES IN THE SECTOR

WORKING WITH VETERANS

- Veteran charities offering employment support RFEA, The Poppy Factory, The Royal British Legion
- 'Charity Job'
- Personal contacts
- Social media, follow groups, get involved in discussions

WORKING IN CUSTODY

- PeoplePlus
- NOVUS Careers Service

RED NOSE DAY TENNIS-A-THON

Comic Relief £190 raised



ACTIVITY HUB OFFICE

A mural painted by a veteran. It depicts the 3 services represented in the prison population and how you can have a fresh start



WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

Remembrance Day £600 raised



Matchstick poppies made by the veterans at HMP Holme House to lay on the scattered graves of fallen service men and women

QUESTIONS?