



**Northumbria  
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# Geographically Dispersed Military Families

Exploring the psycho-social impact of intermittent separation

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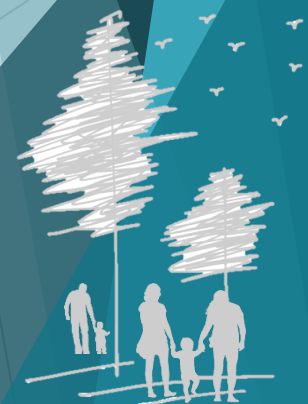




# Background

- ▶ No definitive record of the number of military families
- ▶ 65,000 military spouses and 90,000 to 186,000 service children?  
*(MOD, 2017; Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund, 2009)*
- ▶ No requirement to declare family on service records or to schools
- ▶ No verification of number of Reservists and their families

**What about unmarried families and those without children?**

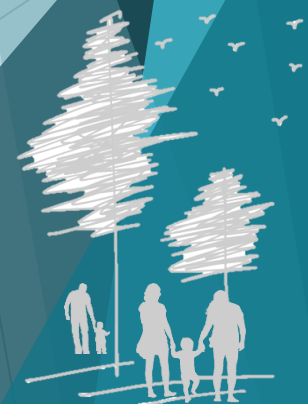




- ▶ Research primarily focusses on impact of operational deployments  
(*Thandi et al, 2017; Riggs & Riggs, 2011; Rossetto, 2015; White et al, 2011*)
  - ▶ US studies (*e.g. Chandra et al, 2010; Faber et al, 2008; Flake et al, 2009; Lester et al, 2010*)
  - ▶ UK (*e.g. Clifton, 2007; Noret et al, 2014*)

### What is the impact of military life in general?

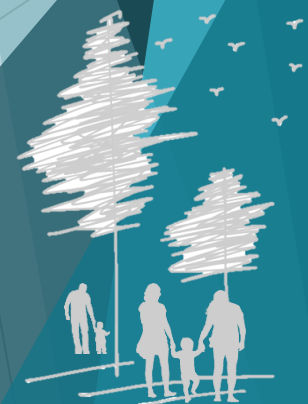
- ▶ Perceived role and identity of the military family is changing.
  - ▶ Future Accommodation Model (FAM)
  - ▶ Flexible Service Policy
- ▶ Approx. 24% of military families are living geographically dispersed from the serving family member (*MOD, 2015; 2016*)





- ▶ Similarities with families of offshore industry workers  
*(Ross, 2009; Perrucci et al, 2007; Parkes et al, 2005)*
- ▶ Reasons for living geographically dispersed: educational stability, spousal employment, wider family support *(Army Families Federation, 2016)*
- ▶ No MOD-led initiative for the broad psychological wellbeing needs of service families *(Fossey, 2012)*

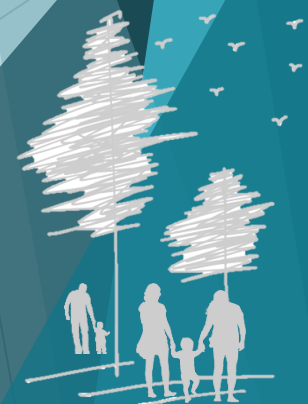
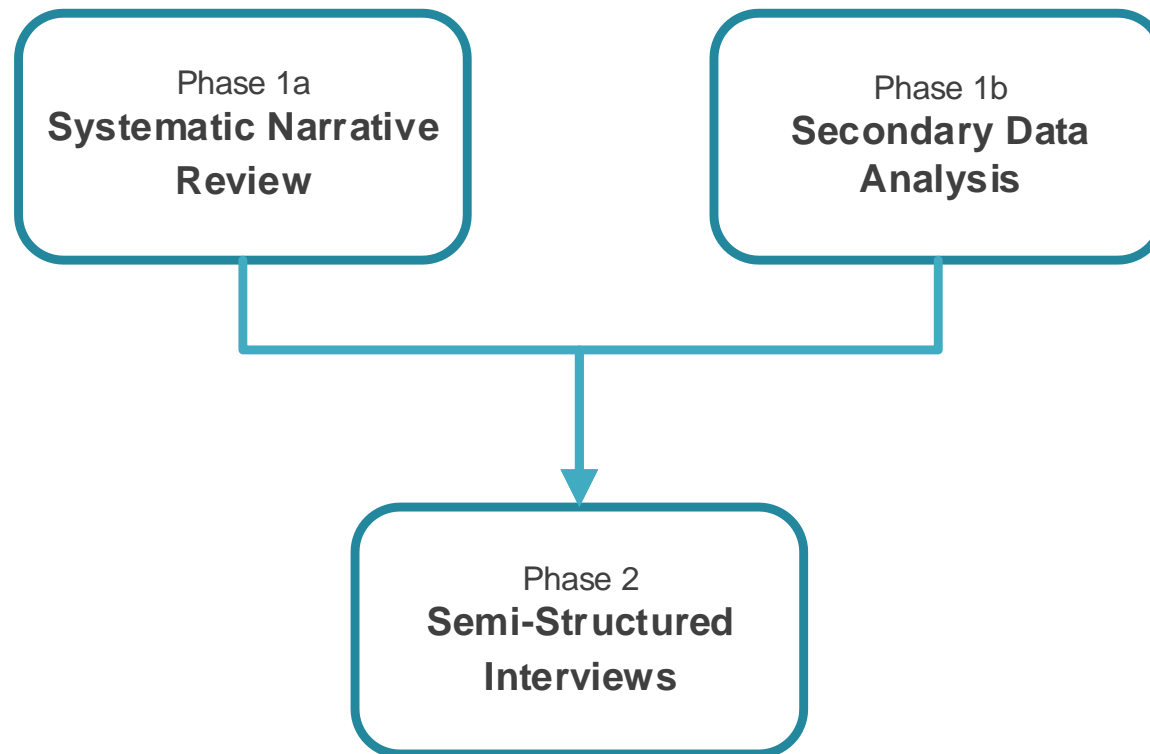
**Aim:** To explore the psycho-social impact of intermittent separation on geographically dispersed military families





# Methodology

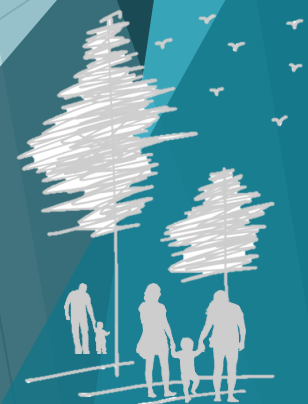
- ▶ Mixed methods approach
- ▶ Two-phase Explanatory Sequential Design (*Cresswell et al, 2003*)





# Phase 1a

- ▶ A systematic narrative review of:
    - ▶ peer-reviewed literature
    - ▶ relevant grey literature
- i.e. Families Federations, Ministry of Defence, Government, NHS
- ▶ Search items using PICO framework (*Russell et al, 2009*)
  - ▶ Critical Appraisal Skill Programme tool (*CASP, 2017*) to appraise quality of papers

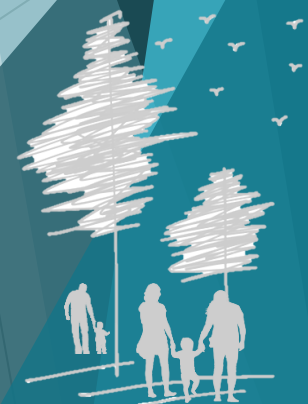




# Phase 1b

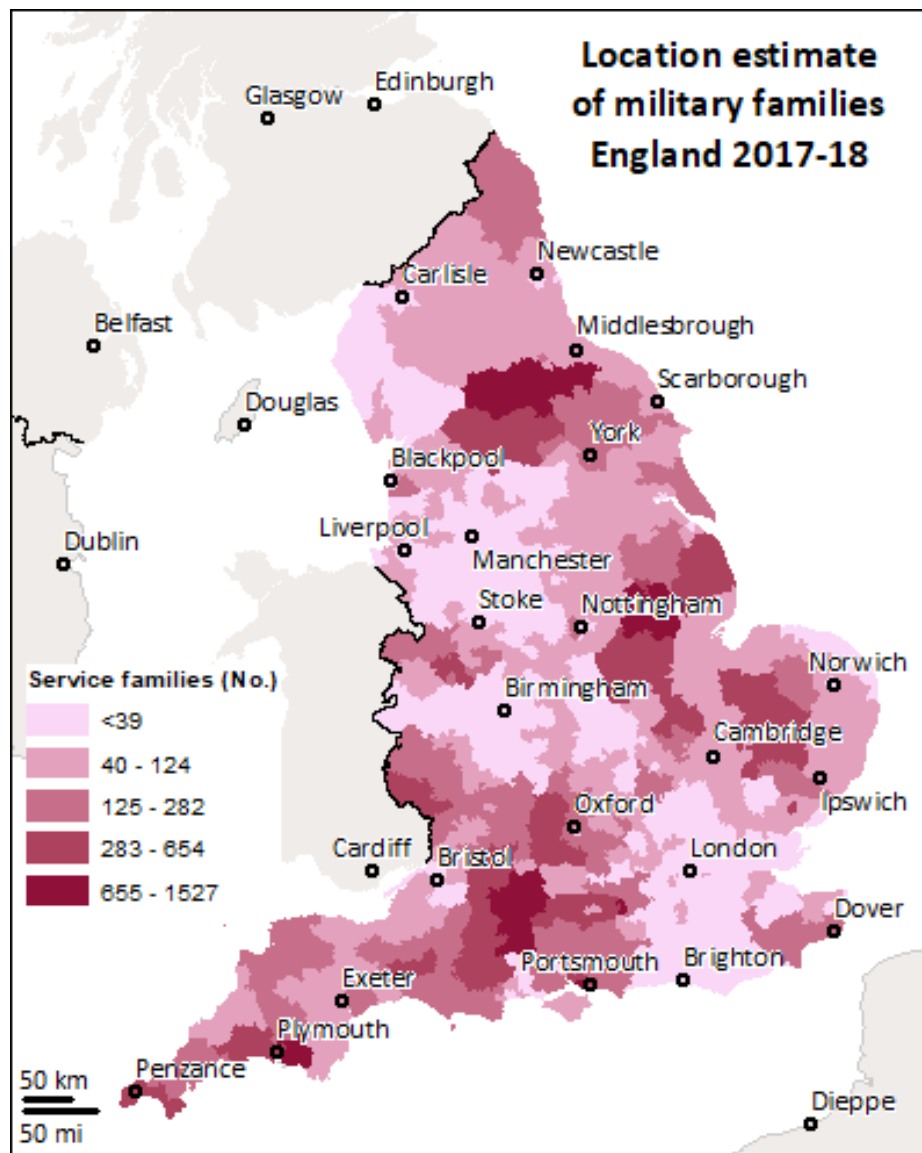
- ▶ Secondary data analysis of publicly available data - for example:
  - ▶ Service Pupil Premium
  - ▶ Office of National Statistics Fertility Rates
  - ▶ Location of UK Regular Service Personnel Quarterly Statistics
- ▶ Geospatial processing programme: ESRI ArcGIS
- ▶ Use proxy variables to estimate the location of service families.

**Preliminary geospatial estimation has been calculated for 2017-18 in England**



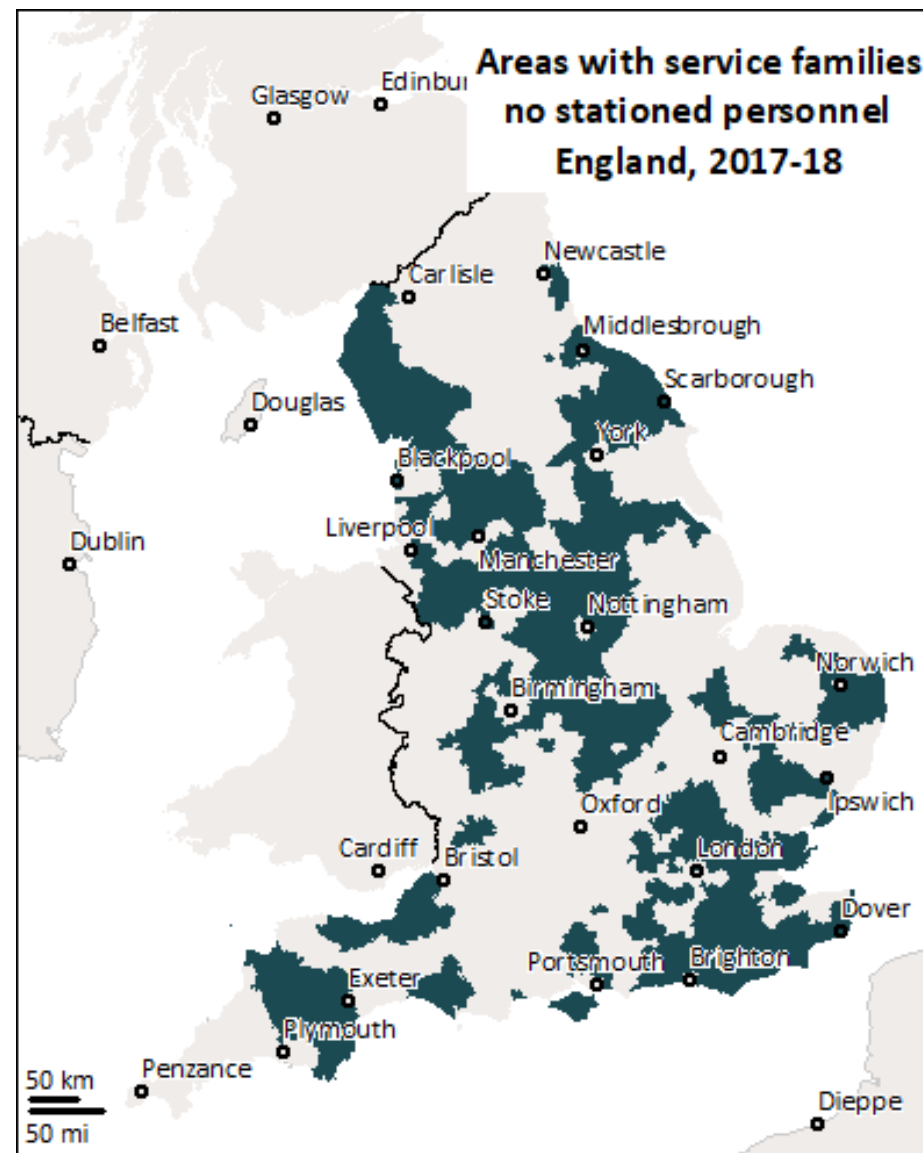


### Location estimate of military families England 2017-18



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### Areas with service families no stationed personnel England, 2017-18



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# Phase 2

- ▶ Semi-structured interviews
- ▶ Approx. 15 families of Regular and Reserve military personnel (25-30 participants)

## Inclusion Criteria

*≥ 16 years of age*

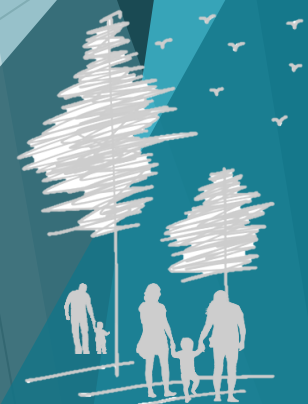
*Spouse/partner or child*

*Living/has lived separately to serving member in last 2 yrs*

*Live in the family home*

*Experienced intermittent contact as a result of living separately*

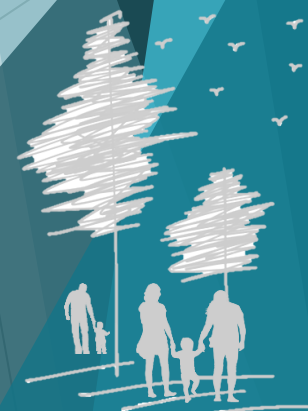
- ▶ Excludes participants living apart due to relationship separation
- ▶ No military personnel will be interviewed
- ▶ Granted ethical approval by Northumbria University's Ethics Committee





# Next Steps

- ▶ Literature search almost complete
- ▶ Geospatial mapping ongoing
- ▶ Start Phase 2 autumn 2018





# Any Questions?



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