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10 September 2012

S U M M O N S

MEETING: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
DATE: 18th September 2012
TIME: 6pm
PLACE: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Gosport
Democratic Services contact: Carly Walters

LINDA EDWARDS
BOROUGH SOLICITOR

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Councillor Forder (Chairman)
Councillor Jessop (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Farr	Councillor Hylands
Councillor Foster-Reed	Councillor Jacobs
Councillor Geddes	Councillor Kimber
Councillor Gill	Councillor Scard
Councillor Hazel	Councillor Mrs Searle

FIRE PRECAUTIONS

(To be read from the Chair if members of the public are present)

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, please leave the room immediately. Proceed downstairs by way of the main stairs or as directed by GBC staff, follow any of the emergency exit signs. People with disability or mobility issues please identify yourself to GBC staff who will assist in your evacuation of the building.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

- If you are in a wheelchair or have difficulty in walking and require access to the Committee Room on the First Floor of the Town Hall for this meeting, assistance can be provided by Town Hall staff on request

If you require any of the services detailed above please ring the Direct Line for the Democratic Services Officer listed on the Summons (first page).

NOTE: Please note that mobile phones should be switched off for the duration of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members present are reminded to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter, any personal (including financial) or prejudicial interest in any item(s) being considered at this meeting.

3. MINUTES

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4th July 2012 (attached)

4. REPORTS TO BE RECEIVED

- (i) ARMED FORCES COVENANT WG
To Follow
- (ii) GOSPORT MEDICAL WG
Verbal Update report
- (iii) PROMOTION OF THE BOROUGH WG
Verbal Update report
- (iv) EDUCATION IN GOSPORT
Verbal update report

5. DEVELOPMENT OF A WORK PROGRAMME

A) REQUESTS FOR SCRUTINY

To consider any requests for scrutiny received by the Borough Solicitor. A copy of the Scrutiny Work Plan Prioritisation Aid is attached.

B) WORK PROGRAMME

To consider the work programme (attached) for the Committee and any suggestions from Members for issues to be scrutinised.

C) OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR SCRUTINY

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

GOSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 18 SEPTEMBER 2012

ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

TITLE: ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

AUTHOR: ARMED FORCES COVENANT SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 A light touch scrutiny has been carried out into the background and aims of an Armed Forces Community Covenant, and whether Gosport Borough Council is meeting its commitments, and if not, what short comings need to be addressed in order to comply.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A Sub Group was formed of volunteers from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it comprised:
Councillor Derek Kimber (DK)
Councillor Tony Jessop (TJ)
Councillor Keith Farr (KF)
- 2.2 Prior to the first meeting on 1st August 2012 DK received a briefing from Mandy Baggaley (MB) Principle Policy Officer, on the background to Hampshire County Council (HCC) commitment to a civilian Military Covenant. MB also provided most of the background papers that the Working Group used during their scrutiny.
- 2.3 DK also received a brief from County Councillor Keith Mans (HCC Armed Forces Champion) and also from Ian Parker, Lead Officer for the HCC Community Covenant, who gave further information on the Counties aspirations for their Covenant.
- 2.4 The information pack is provided for future reference at Annex 1.

3. MEETINGS

- 3.1 A total of 4 meetings of the sub group were held with Mrs. Carly

Walters of Democratic Services, acting as the note taker and additional researcher for the group. It was agreed at the scoping meeting on 1st August 2012 that the group wished to hold discussions with Gosport Voluntary Action (GVA), Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) and the Services Resettlement organisations to determine both their role and involvement with service and ex-service personnel.

- 3.2 GVA were interviewed on 5th September 2012 and the HMS Sultan Resettlement Officer on 7th September 2012. CAB provided an email with further information.
- 3.3 The Working Group interviewed Gosport Borough Council's Housing Options Officer on 7th September 2012.
- 3.4 Notes from these meetings are in Annex 2 and Annex 3 with some comments absorbed into the body of this report.

4. AIM OF THE SCRUTINY

- 4.1 To review the work carried out by HCC to ensure it meets the aspirations of GBC and to highlight any areas where improvements might be made.
- 4.2 To review how GBC deals with service personnel coming up to retirement and those recently retired, and whether improvements could be made in the way in which the borough gets involved with them.
- 4.3 To confirm that GBC can commit to signing an Armed Forces Community Covenant.
- 4.4 To agree timescales for implementation.

5. REQUIREMENTS FOR COVENANTS

- 5.1 Local Authorities make a voluntary pledge of mutual support between the local civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community. In Gosport's case this would be HMS Sultan specifically and all Armed Forces residents in the Borough generally. The Covenant is intended to complement at local level the Armed Forces Covenant signed by the Government and HCC. The aim of the Community Covenant is to encourage local communities to support Service Communities in their area.
- 5.2 A proposed Covenant is attached at Annex 4.
- 5.3 The Covenant signed by HCC has been supported by the 11 districts of the county but to date none of them has signed their own Covenant. The HCC Covenant whilst intended to commit to all the Armed Forces, is biased somewhat towards the British Army and particularly 145 Brigade based in the north of the county. One of the benefits of signing

the Covenant is that it allows Authorities to bid for funds from a Central Government Grant of £30m (maximum over 4 years) for schemes of benefit to resident service personal.

Funding available from MOD

- 5.4 The Ministry of Defence announced in 2011 that £30 million in grant funding would be available over four years to encourage and support projects which strengthened mutual understanding between the Armed Forces and Civilian communities at a local level.
- 5.5 Grant funding is only eligible to local authorities which have a Community Covenant in place. Under Hampshire's Covenant, bids from all Hampshire authorities are submitted to the Hampshire Covenant Partnership Panel for initial review. Only those endorsed by the Panel can be submitted to the MOD Covenant Team for consideration. Without proper endorsement, the MOD, cannot issue grant funding and a decision will be delayed until proper local authorisation is verified.
- 5.6 All local bids must be reviewed and approved by members of the local Community Covenant Partnership. The Partnership can include signatories to the Pledge as well as other relevant representatives. The full Partnership or a sub-group can be appointed to review local bids for Covenant Grant funding.
- 5.7 If the MOD has any queries or concerns about a bid, it will contact the local Covenant Partnership Grant Panel to act as its liaison with the local grant applicant to clarify information or seek additional information about the bid.
- 5.8 At the very least, the Partnership Grant Panel or sub group would need to convene four times a year to coincide with the Covenant Grant bidding cycle. The Partnership would need to review any local bids for Covenant grant funding, check details, ask for any missing information and pass those that are endorsed onto the MOD for consideration.
- 5.9 The MOD publishes its quarterly deadlines for applications to be received and when the Panel meets for making grant decisions. The HCC panel usually meets four weeks prior to the submission date (see application review schedule below) to sift through all of the Hampshire bids, check details and decide which to endorse.
- 5.10 Successful project funding is usually released to the Covenant's Local Authority and the MOD may require regular financial reporting for audit purposes. The Local Covenant Partnership takes responsibility to ensure the grant is used for its stated purpose, is managed prudently and delivers value for money; a full account of expenditure is to be maintained.

- 5.11 There is no evidence to suggest that local bids would have more success being funded if endorsed through a Borough Covenant as they would still need to meet the more rigorous grant criteria. However, the increased profile and publicity of a local Covenant may spark more partnership working ideas between local organisations, HMS Sultan, and service charities which could be turned into viable bids.
- 5.12 If a local Covenant were being planned, the timing of the launch may want to take into consideration the cycle for bids submission to avoid confusion for local groups wanting to submit an application and not knowing whether to submit locally or to HCC.
- 5.13 The deadline for submitting applications to the Hampshire Panel for the next bidding round is 2 November 2012. The Panel will convene on 20 November 2012 and endorsed bids will be forwarded to the MOD on 28 November 2012.
- 5.14 MB has asked the MOD Covenant Grants Team about transition arrangements if a Gosport Panel is not set up in time to review any Gosport bids by the November deadline and if local bids can still be submitted to the Hampshire Panel in the interim. A positive response was received from the Armed Forces Covenant Team.
- 5.15 Ongoing liaison between the Hampshire Partnership Panel and a Gosport one would also be beneficial to maximise the value of local projects and the MOD has this clear expectation.

Funding and resources required from GBC

- 5.16 It is difficult to estimate the amount of officer and Member time and resources needed to provide a separate local Covenant Partnership Grants Panel and carry out the responsibilities described for the remainder of the grant fund. There are only two funding rounds left in this current financial year, with four rounds expected for the next two financial years. There has been no announcement of further funding from the MOD.
- 5.17 Because of possible resource shortfalls within the Borough it is anticipated that the majority of bidding for Covenant funding would be conducted through HCC initially, whilst an examination of spare resource is carried out internally.

6. HAMPSHIRE COUNTY ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

- 6.1 At its meeting on 23rd May 2012 the HCC Partnership Board discussed many areas of mutual interest which by association GBC is committed to. These include :
- 6.2 Children's Education:
a) Troubled Family arrangements and co-location of funds to

work in this area; and

b) Children and Young Peoples Plan. A plan is being finalised as Service Children have been identified as vulnerable.

6.3 Education:

a) School Funding. The mechanism by which funds are allocated for Service Children are being revised nationally and HCC have indicated that they are opposed to the proposals. It was noted that 153 of Hampshire's 530 schools have received children from service families. In Gosport, 31 schools teach 1158 pupils from service families out of a school population of 10,617 children (see Annex 5 of this report for details).

Although no discussions have been held with Head Teachers from schools in Gosport it appears that in general there seems to have been little problems with their integration.

b) Reading Force- HCC continues to support this successful scheme (Annex 1 page 3/23 – 3/24).

6.4 Economy & Skills:

a) Employment Fairs have been held and judged to have been successful. A seminar 'Preparing for Self Employment' was to be held on 11th October 2012 and invitations were passed on to local authorities as well as HCC to attend.

b) Enterprise Centres: A study has been carried out in North Hampshire to establish what commercial properties might be available for 'Start Up' businesses and whether any pathway exists to support Ex Service Personnel in their endeavours.

The introduction of an "Enterprise Centre" was considered after a survey of 86 people indicated a preference to setting up their own business of which 41% said they might take advantage of this facility. The introduction of "Enterprise Centres" has also been considered by other authorities such as Southampton, Liss and Fareham. Fareham Borough Council have introduced a Enterprise Centre at premises in Hackett Way Fareham to allow local Service Personnel use of this important resettlement tool.

6.5 Health and Wellbeing:

HCC are aware of some shortcomings in procedures for dealing with service personnel leaving the Armed Forces, and a health sub group is being set up to investigate how best to deal with these anomalies.

6.6 It is felt that a dialogue should be started between GBC (a suitable vehicle for this would be the O&S group) and the health sub group, to confirm progress in this area. The new Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) should be consulted as to their activities in this area.

- 6.7 Traumatic Stress Disorder:
Traumatic Stress Disorder had been discussed by HCC.
- 6.8 Veteran's Court Diversion Scheme:
A study has been funded to investigate how to divert veterans from the Criminal Justice System on arrest or at court and how to mentor veterans released from Winchester Prison. The system will involve veteran's organisations. It would be interesting to know if RBL/GVA/CAB are involved and could be a subject of later discussions.
- 6.9 Housing:
This is primarily a GBC responsibility, although the HCC partnership board discussed this as an item.
- 6.10 A clear indication of GBC commitments in the E Mail posted by Mr Steve Newton (Head of Allocations) appears at Annex 1 page 2/1.
- 6.11 Mr Newton's interview with the working group can be found at Annex 3. However it is worth noting here the general arrangement for allocation of points for anyone wishing to be considered for borough housing accommodation:
- Up to 10 points for residents in Gosport;
 - Up to 60 points for local connection;
 - Up to 50 points for residing in Gosport in the last 2 years (including those in military married quarters);
 - Up to 60 points for medical (30 points: medical and 30 points: social);
 - Up to 20 points for in adequate housing; and
 - Up to 5 points for homelessness.
- 6.12 THE ALLOCATION OF THESE POINTS ALWAYS DEPENDS UPON THE INDIVIDUAL CIRCUMSTANCES.
- 6.13 Discussions are taking place within GBC as to how the statutory requirement to Service Personnel wishing to be added to the housing list is introduced and a paper is expected to be presented to the Community Board by January 2013.
- 6.14 Service Personnel in Armed Forces accommodation have three routes for accommodation on leaving the service:
- a) purchase their own property;
 - b) apply to join the Council's housing list; or
 - c) seek private accommodation.
- 6.15 It was highlighted that by applying to join the Council's housing waiting list early gave little advantage because of the time taken to reach a

position where an offer can be made. An example was quoted that 15 years ago anyone entering the housing waiting list could expect to be accommodated within 2 years, whereas now they could expect to wait 10 years before reaching the same position. This was caused primarily by the reduction in Council and housing association properties for rent in the intervening period.

- 6.16 Service Personnel are advised that often their best route to securing accommodation was down the shared ownership route. This was because having a lump sum available on discharge from the Service, they were in a good position to enter into this form of house purchase.
- 6.17 It was also highlighted that GBC housing personnel are active in giving advice at external seminars and courses to personnel leaving the service.
- 6.18 The HCC report of the meeting closes with three questions which might act as an aide –memoir for GBC Councillors:
 - 1. How do we in civilian services go about linking with the Mental Health teams in each of the Armed Forces?
 - 2. How can we ensure immediately prior to discharge that every Service Person has registered with a GP?
 - 3. The Early discharge group has been identified as vulnerable people in the transition process, how can each of the three Services identify those people being discharged to Hampshire (and Gosport) and pass this information to HCC Adult Services?

7. SERVICE PEOPLE LIVING IN GOSPORT

- 7.1 Married Quarter Accommodation in Gosport and Fareham: In January 2012 there were 817 Service Family Accommodation (SFA) units in Gosport (of which 41 were void). Council Tax records indicate that we had 1028 properties including Barracks.
- 7.2 The Void properties are planned as part of the MOD accommodation policy.
- 7.3 In Fareham there are 491 SFA properties of which 85 are void, 60 of which are undergoing major improvements.
- 7.4 The number of service personnel living in Gosport is 2,190 (*taken from TSP 10 UK Regular Forces Distribution Across UK, Section 3 England, Table 3.8 South East MOD Personnel as of 1st January 2012*).

8. WORKING WITH VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

Gosport Voluntary Action (GVA)

- 8.1 The Working Group met with GVA on 5th September 2012 (minutes of the meeting are attached as annex 2).
- 8.2 The Chief Executive explained that they did not keep records of whether people they dealt with, or volunteers, were from the military. However he did note that GVA got involved with military families through their children's nurseries. The Chief Executive explained that contact with military personnel tended to be through other means i.e. international women's day and then not because they were in the military.
- 8.3 The Chief Executive thought that a way to improve their service for military personnel might be to ask if people were in the military.
- 8.4 The Chief Executive thought that an Armed Forces Access Group could be a good development from the covenant.
- 8.5 The Chief Executive advised that Gosport still used the Voluntary Sector Compact and noted that it was still very productive.
- 8.6 The Chief Executive thought that the Covenant was a good idea for Gosport as it gave focus for those involved and a target for partnership working.

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

- 8.7 The Working Group received an email from CAB regarding their involvement with military personnel. CAB indicated that a brief inspection of their records shows that 68 of their clients were from Service Personnel this year. Because of their workload more detailed analysis would not be practical but they are keen to be involved in the Covenant and to sign if required.

9. ABOUT SERVICE RESETTLEMENT

- 9.1 The Armed Forces are well served by their resettlement organisations. A scrutiny of the Internet revealed several sites to which Service people are directed during their transition to civilian life.
- 9.2 A Career Transition Partnership (CTP) exists with Right Management to advise on a plethora of subjects including on line Resettlement Guides. These include:
 - Approaching the Job Market;
 - Association & Professional Bodies;
 - Benefits;
 - Charities: Army Benevolent Fund, Royal British Legion, Forces Pension Society, RAF Association, SSAFA, Veterans Agency and White Ensign Association;
 - Employment;

- Finance;
 - Health & Education: clients are directed to Local Council websites;
 - Housing: Housing Briefs are given 9 months prior to leaving if required;
 - Explanation of Council Tax;
 - Interviewing & Negotiating;
 - Manage your Career;
 - Professional Network & Social Media; and
 - Pensions.
- 9.3 Resettlement Courses and Workshops are also arranged to advise personnel on many retirement issues.
- Education Resettlement Officer of HMS Sultan**
- 9.4 The Working Group interviewed the Education Resettlement Officer (ERO) of HMS Sultan on 7th September 2012 (minutes of this meeting are attached as Annex 3).
- 9.5 Only part of the ERO's role was resettlement. She also was responsible for advice on elective learning, learning difficulties, basic skills support and Learn Direct (E Learning).
- 9.6 The ERO explained her role in resettlement of Service Personnel who generally fell into three categories:
- a) Early leavers – those personnel who have not entered an active naval career;
 - b) Service between 4 – 6 years; and
 - c) Long term Service Personnel.
- 9.7 Each of these groups received a separate resettlement package with the most comprehensive being provided for those who had served the longest. Packages b and c received some financial allowance including an Education Learning Contribution (ELC) and all received contribution towards their costs from the resettlement organisation.
- 9.8 Service Personnel had access to many resettlement aids both online and through organisations contracted to provide this service. The ERO highlighted some of the organisations available to them:
- Career Transition Partnership (CTP);
 - Royal Naval Association;
 - White Ensign Association;
 - Royal British Legion;
 - Royal Naval Reserves;
 - Regular Forces Employment Association;
 - The Officers Association; and
 - British Forces Resettlement Association.

- 9.9 Additionally personnel leaving the service have access to several publications produced to seek skills of particular kinds, such as engineering.
- 9.10 Personnel were given a suggested timeline for resettlement planning and were encouraged to review this regularly.
- 9.11 The ERO was not aware of any information given to service personnel on local services such as Borough Councillors or medical facilities during their leaving routines, but was unsure whether naval welfare would deal with this in their remit.
- 9.12 After leaving the service, personnel continue to have available to them the services of CTP for up to 2 years and can use their ELC for up to 10 years post discharge.

10. TIMESCALE FOR SIGNING COVENANT

- 10.1 7th September: Working Group complete interviews and agree final draft of document for typing.

10th September: Document dispatch to O & S.

18th September: O & S approval of report.

3rd October: Council Approval of Report and Deed of Covenant.

11th November: Signing of the Covenant at Remembrance Parade Ann's Hill.

11. CONCLUSIONS

- 11.1 Resettlement for Service Personnel is a mature procedure that has adapted well to the changing circumstances that military persons find themselves in on conclusion of their Armed Forces career. If any criticism were to be made, it would be to highlight the lack of information given about local conditions such as the role of Local Councils and availability of local voluntary services, where it is assumed that Service Personnel will 'self-help' as required. This is an area where Gosport may be able to have an input to a service discharge routine in the future.
- 11.2 The services provided within Gosport Borough Council adequately support Military Personnel when they enquire and is thus fit for purpose in agreeing to commit to an Armed Forces Community Covenant.
- 11.3 HCC have worked hard to ensure that the Armed Forces Covenant agreed by the 11 Boroughs meets the requirement in almost all areas and has satisfactorily highlighted areas of concern where more work

needs to be done and the method by which solutions could be achieved. This is particularly the case in mental health rehabilitation where a sub group has been set up. By signing our own Covenant and being aware of our resource limitations HCC will continue to be our major partner in this exciting venture, but a locally based covenant could concentrate efforts within Gosport to focus efforts for funding and other activities.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 Council approve the creation of a Armed Forces Community Covenant document and that the Commanding Officer of HMS Sultan for the Armed Forces, Chief Executive and the Mayor of Gosport Borough Council, Gosport Voluntary Action's Chief Executive and a representative of Gosport Citizen's Advice Bureau be asked to sign this document at a ceremony to be conducted during the Remembrance Day service at Ann's Hill on 11th November 2012.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee would like to express their thanks to all who contributed voluntarily with this investigation including:

HMS Sultan
Gosport Voluntary Action
Citizens Advice Bureau
Hampshire County Council

Supporting Information

Financial implications:

Legal implications: None

Risk Assessment:

Background papers: None

Enclosures/Appendices: Annex 1: Working Group Information Pack

Annex 2: Minutes from meeting with GVA

Annex 3: Minutes from meeting with the
resettlement Officer at HMS and CAB

Annex 4: Armed Forces Community Covenant

Annex 5: Service Children in Hampshire Schools

Contact name & tel. no. Armed Forces Covenant Scrutiny Working Group
Councillor Kimber: 02392 55 2151

Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Armed Forces Covenant Scrutiny Working
Group

Paperwork for first meeting
2012

Contents

1. Research from the Principal Corporate Policy Officer
2. Note from the Head of Housing Options
3. Hampshire County Council Grant Update

Walters, Carly

1

From: Baggaley, Amanda
Sent: 26 July 2012 16:07
To: Councillor Kimber, Derek
Cc: Walters, Carly; Petty, Julie
Subject: Background research for O&S

Attachments: Armed Forces Community Covenants background OS info 7-12 doc

Cllr Kimber,

Attached are my notes from some preliminary research into Community Covenants. Some of it you will already know; other bits are from trawling various websites and checking notes I took from previous meetings with HCC, HMS Sultan, etc. when we first looked into Covenant funding. It may not be too useful, but I include it for you to decide if it helps your enquiries.

It would be useful to know what Borough-specific information is provided to people leaving the armed forces, whether through voluntary or involuntary redundancy to see where the possible gaps are and work together to address this.

I have also mentioned to GVA and CAB that we are interested in knowing what are the main presenting issues. Armed forces community members are likely to seek advice about in the community. Unfortunately, I was not able to speak to [REDACTED], the manager at CAB, but think that could be a particularly useful source of information.



Armed Forces
Community Covenants

Happy to help further, if I can, on my return.
Regards,

Mandy Baggaley
Principal Corporate Policy Officer
Gosport Borough Council
023 9254 5695

www.safergosport.co.uk

Please consider the environment before printing this email

Armed Forces Community Covenants

Hampshire County's Covenant was signed on 23 June 2011 with The Leader of HCC and leading service personnel as the signatories. Although Districts were not specific signatories to this statement, there has been something of a tacit understanding that the 11 Districts also support the covenant. A benefit of this understanding is that covenant grant bids from groups or organisations within the Hampshire Districts are eligible to apply for funding through the county level Civilian Military Partnership grant panel.

No Hampshire District LA currently has a separate Community Covenant in place. (Note: MB has made some queries of other Districts to ask if they are considering a community covenant, but no positive response to date)

There are now more than 80 Community Covenant partnerships across the UK, most of them signed within the last 12 months, with another 50 covenants ready to sign up soon. Oxfordshire was the first and Hampshire the second Community Covenant to be signed at Unitary level in 2011.

Since the Ministry of Defence's announced in 2011 that \$30m in grant funding would be available over four years to encourage and support projects which strengthen mutual understanding between members of the Armed Forces Community and the wider community in which they live, there has been a proliferation of local authorities and towns creating their own Community Covenants. 27 Community Covenants have so far submitted bids to the grants scheme.

What is required to set up a local authority Armed Forces Covenant?

Local authorities must make a pledge and there is an MOD template for doing this. The Armed Forces signatory should be at or around the OF5 (Captain-RN, Colonel, Group Captain) where possible. The Local authority signatory should be the Leader or a senior Elected Member and or the Chief Executive or other senior officer. Other members of the partnership can include members of the local Armed Forces charities, or other community or statutory bodies.

What do Community Covenants at local authority level actually do?

Community covenants are as diverse as the communities they represent. No one model exists. Some examples are:

County / Unitary Covenants

Hampshire County Council – A Civilian Military Partnership Board and a Civilian Military Economic Partnership have been established since the signing of the Hampshire Covenant in June 2011. Some areas of work include:

Health and Welfare

- A series of workshops between key service charities and HCC to improve understanding of their roles and services to armed forces community;
- Monitoring callers to the HCC Contact Centre to ask if they have an armed forces connection;
- Monitor Supporting People users for armed forces connection
- establishing better links between JSHAO and Housing Authorities, Housing Options teams to ensure staff are better informed of service personnel issues, needs and opportunities
- developing a standardised approach to allocation policies for serving personnel families and veterans across all housing authorities in Hampshire, Portsmouth, Southampton and Isle of Wight

- **Transition pathway**

Hampshire is a member of the SHA military transition group and has sight of the cases to be discharged into Hampshire (Of 31 listed at the April meeting there are 6 who seek to live in Hampshire (just under 20%) A dedicated point of contact has been identified for referrals to HCC. Information provided on how to find services which includes an explanation of the roles of the various levels of local government and who does what. Key contacts and web links have been provided as part of this document.

Note: GBC does not provide central corresponding information for local armed forces personnel who are transitioning to civilian life in the area. Some of this may be included for leaving personnel from the Education & Resettlement Team. However, if there are gaps in the information already provided, this could be explored with a view to develop tailored Borough-specific transitioning information, local contacts and web links for those transitioning to civilian life and planning to stay in the area. (This could help address the points raised in a) through e? in the O&S scoping document)

Buckinghamshire County Council- signed its covenant on 10 July Some of the initiatives underway across the country include fun days out for Service families and Service children, play parks, mentors for Service leavers and veterans, and support services for those dealing with long periods of separation.

The scheme also works reciprocally, with servicemen and women pledging to aid the community in a variety of ways.

District/Borough Covenants – These Covenants are newer, generally, and information provided via their web site seems to indicate a more ceremonial focus rather than detailing specific work strands which may be developing

Croyden-The first local authority in London to have its own covenant signed in December 2011, during a review of its housing allocations policy. The covenant pledges additional support for work and training, housing, school admissions, adult social services, and medical needs

Barnet Council- signed its own Community Covenant on 1 July this year, following adoption of a new Housing Allocations Policy. The Borough has two Territorial Army sub-units based in it. Signatories included range of representatives including those from the armed forces, Barnet Council, Barnet Homes, voluntary and charitable organisations, Barnet's business community, the NHS and emergency services.

What is the role of a local Covenant Partnership in accessing Covenant grant funding?

All local bids must be reviewed and approved by members of the local Community Covenant Partnership. The Partnership can include signatories to the Pledge as well as other relevant representatives. The full Partnership or a sub-group can be appointed to review local bids for Covenant Grant funding.

Only bids properly endorsed should be forwarded to the MOD Armed Forces Covenant Team for consideration. Without proper endorsement, the MOD, cannot issue grant funding and a decision will be delayed until proper local authorisation is verified.

If a Gosport Covenant Partnership existed, all local bids from Gosport would need to be submitted to it. If the decision were made not to endorse a bid by the Gosport Partnership, then that organisation could not then apply directly to the Hampshire Partnership panel. Where a local Covenant exists, local bids must be submitted, reviewed and endorsed at that level before being passed on to the MOD.

Examples of Hampshire Grant recipients so far:

- Calshot Activity Centre will receive £27,000 to provide highly subsidised places for Service children on residential sailing and adventure weeks during school holidays
- A garden office for a community link project in Aldershot has received £22,000
- Ashcroft Arts Centre, Fareham and Gosport will receive £18,640 towards a film project involving local schools exploring the lives of Servicemen and women
- £6,000 has been provided to help Gurkhas in Eastleigh to learn English and integrate with the local community

As of May Hampshire have been allocated **£505,620.70** across 16 projects A total of approximately **£276, 548.80** matched funding towards the 16 projects has also been committed by partners.

	No of applications submitted to Hampshire Panel	No of Defers	No of Decline	No of applications sent to MOD	MOD Endorsed
September 2011	32	9	9	14	12
November 2011	11	8	1	2	1
March 2012	17	4	6	7	3(4)
June 2012	8	7	1	1	Pending
TOTAL	68	28	17	24	16 (17)

How much resource/ officer time is needed to support a local Covenant Partnership?

This is difficult to establish exactly It depends on what the Partnership wants to do [REDACTED], the chief officer supporting HCC's covenant, and [REDACTED] then also a designated HCC covenant officer, reported that it would be very resource intensive for Gosport to go it alone with a separate Covenant They said they believed HCC will have spent more in officer resource to the Covenant than it will receive from the funding amount coming into Hampshire organisations

At the very least, the Partnership would need to convene four times a year to coincide with the Covenant Grant bidding cycle The Partnership would review any local bids for Covenant grant funding, check details, ask for any missing information and pass those that are endorsed onto the MOD for consideration

The MOD publishes its quarterly deadlines for applications to be received and when the Panel meets for making grant decisions The HCC panel usually meets four weeks prior to the submission date (see application review schedule below) to sift through all of the Hampshire bids, check details and decide which to endorse

Would having our own Community Covenant in place increase the chances of bids from Gosport being more successful in receiving funding?

During the first year of the grant scheme, there have been some issues with regard to the clarity of the MOD's grant criteria, initially very broad, and the specific governance requirements laid down by the Treasury These conditions led to an influx of grant bids last year, most of which were not considered suitable or complete enough to be endorsed and passed onto the MOD for consideration.

Although some were successful in gaining grant funding, most were not (16/17 out of 68) HCC officers spent a great deal of time trying to clarify the grant criteria and providing some advice to help bidders meet the criteria

The MOD has since been more specific about what a good bid should contain Partnership bids are more favoured than those from single organisations and evidence of local match-funding or in-kind support from local partners are seen as key elements of a strong bid

There is no evidence to suggest that local bids would have more success being funded if endorsed through a Borough covenant as they would still need to meet the more rigorous grant criteria However, the increased profile and publicity of a local covenant may spark more partnership working ideas between local organisations, HMS Sultan, and service charities which could be turned into viable bids

GBC, through MB in Corporate Policy, acted as a central liaison point for Gosport bidders so that we could help avoid potential duplication of services and encourage more partnership working between local groups rather than competition This could continue whether or not Gosport has its own Covenant or continues to work under the Hampshire agreement and submit Covenant bids to the Hampshire Covenant Partnership

Two bidding rounds remain this year If a local covenant were being planned, the timing of the launch may want to take into consideration the cycle for bids submission to avoid confusion for local groups wanting to submit an application and not knowing whether to submit locally or to HCC

Hampshire timetable for submission of applications

Deadline for the submission of applications to the Hampshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Panel	Date of Hampshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Panel	Date for Submission to MOD	Date of MOD Panel
3 August 2012	15 August 2012	24 August 2012	13 September 2012
2 November 2012	20 November 2012	28 November 2012	13 December 2012



Walters, Carly

From: Newton, Steve [REDACTED]
 Sent: 12 July 2012 16:16
 To: Councillor Kimber, Derek
 Cc: Baggaley, Mandy; Waterfield, Corinne; Broomfield, Alison; Councillor Hook, Mark; Councillor Burgess, Graham
 Subject: Armed Forces personnel and council re-housing services

Dear Councillor Kimber,

I have been passed your enquiry about the above to respond to. I understand that you want to know about services across the Council but I am only commenting upon re-housing services.

As you may be aware, the Localism Act expects Councils Allocations Policy to now provide additional preference to MOD customers who are both in urgent housing need and also fall into one of the existing "reasonable preference" categories (homeless or unsatisfactory housing or have medical or welfare needs to be moved). We are currently consulting on how much this MOD additional preference should be. We have recommended 20 points which is equivalent to a medium level of medical priority (so this is a fairly significant weighting for MOD customers). We aim to go to Community Board this year for approval of Policy changes.

The current and historical reality is that most MOD leavers tend to not get rehoused via the Allocations Policy (Choice Based Lettings) because they have a limited period in which to be re-housed before becoming homeless. As a result the main re-housing options have been:

- Equity purchase - generally shared ownership at say 50% of equity and they rent the remaining 50% of the equity (held by a housing association). Usually the list for a specific shared ownership property is very small so there is far less competition. Additionally, with the usual lump sum given at MOD employment end, shared ownership represents a sound option for these customers to secure high quality accommodation, quickly, with a low long term rent.
 - On the down side, many MOD leavers feel that they should be using the lump sum to pay off credit debts rather than resolving their own re-housing. It comes as a terrible shock to MOD leavers to realise just how hard it is to access accommodation.
- The back-stop option that everyone wants to avoid, but all too often has been used historically is that of homelessness assistance. Nowadays we have the prevention of homelessness option which is effective at getting people into a private let. A homeless application generally only gets the customer a private let so you can see all roads lead to (well not Rome, but a private let). One caveat here and that is for those needing supported accommodation. This is quite prevalent amongst MOD leavers.
- Supported Accommodation:
 - We now control access to all supported accommodation in the district. We hold waiting lists etc and this is a relatively intensively managed area so I have officers who can assess needs to provide a little more support to navigate the customer through the application process. The down side is that there is not enough supported accommodation and waiting lists can be long.

I have personally undertaken work both locally and for Hampshire County to help MOD:

- Guiding Alabare (specialist ex MOD provider) through the process of accommodation development to delivery of a small cluster home this year;
- Speaking at the County forum for MOD leavers strategy
- Co-ordinating district responses on MOD leavers

I have pushed these matters mainly after you saying, as an aside, that Gosport has the highest proportion of veterans and of course a very high MOD profile in Gosport - so I have taken those as my political steer to do more than most districts do.

I hope this information is useful for you and I would be happy to meet to discuss these and any other points you wish to raise. If you wish to meet please email me or phone or even pop in on the off chance.

Regards

Steve Newton

2 / 1

30/07/2012

023 9254 5296

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1. MOD AFCC Grant Update- Information provided by MOD AFCC Team

- Approximately £3m allocated with £2m having been distributed Of this £3m allocation £2m was allocated in year 1 and £1m to date in year 2 leaving £4m remaining for 2012/13 As in year 1 any unallocated funds are lost/returned
- Further criteria/application guidance disseminated to AFCC grant contact within each Covenant area

2 Hampshire AFCC Grant Scheme Update

2.1 Hampshire AFCC Panel

The Hampshire panel is working very effectively with representation on the Panel from all three Armed Forces within Hampshire alongside the HCC representative All members provide invaluable support and input into the process each having knowledge of existing or emerging programmes/services available to the armed forces communities, understanding of local and service needs, providing advice and guidance - supporting applicants develop their project proposals, knowledge on other more appropriate funding streams, supporting the development of an assessment process and making internal MOD enquiries/raising concerns to overcome identified issues

2.2 Applications and Finance

	No. of applications submitted to Hampshire Panel	No of Defers	No of Decline	No of applications sent to MOD	MOD Endorsed
September 2011	32	9	9	14	12
November 2011	11	8	1	2	1
March 2012	17	4	6	7	3(4)
June 2012	8	7	1	1	Pending
TOTAL	68	28	17	24	16 (17)

- 1 application decision outstanding from MOD March 2012 Panel meeting due to further information required
- To date Hampshire have been allocated **£505,620.70** (16.9% of £3m allocated) across 16 projects (see attached table for a breakdown) A total of approximately £276, 548 80 matched funding towards the 16 projects has also been committed by partners
- Funds received from MOD to date: £358,258 06 (£147,362 64 allocated since the MOD March panel meeting – MOD currently sending out their Terms and Conditions)
- Money distributed to Hampshire organisation's to date: £48,840 00 leaving £309,418 06 remaining due to unreturned Hampshire Partnership Terms and Conditions
- Development of the Hampshire Partnership terms and conditions as a result of MOD agreement conditions 2, 3 and 5

2.3 Representation at the March MOD Central Panel Meeting

- County Council/local Community Covenant Representative, HM Treasury representative, AFCC team members, MOD finance team representative and Chief Executive of Army Families Federation
- Assessment template was provided along with 56 applications three days before the panel meeting
- Observations/learning points gained and feedback provided both linked to the further guidance/tips released to local authorities by MOD in May

3 Challenges

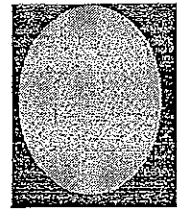
- MOD communication channels
- MOD central administration/Management of the scheme
- Delay in Decision Making Processes

Hampshire AFCC Grant Funded Projects

September 2011 – May 2012

Organisation	Project	Area	Amount	MOD Panel	Current
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1	Riverside ECHG	Construction by residents of a community garden office to be used by local community	Aldershot	22,000	Sept 11	Awaiting Hants I & C's
2	KidsDen Pre school	Computer & Security	Aldershot	5,162 64	Sept 11 (final decision made May 2012)	Awaiting MOI I & C's
3	HCC Calshot Activity centre	Subsidised places for the children of service personnel	Hampshire (Calshot)	22,700	Sept 11	Funding distributed
4	AWAAZ community Radio	Encourage the local Asian community to support the Armed Forces- community days	Southampton	800	Sept 11	Funding distributed
5	Eastleigh Ghurkha Nepalese Association	English Lessons	Eastleigh	6000	Sept 11	Funding distributed
6	Marchwood Junior School	Temporary classroom	Marchwood	10,850	Sept 11	Awaiting Hants I & C's
7	Ashcroft Arts Centre	Film Project	Fareham/ Gosport	18,640	Sept 11	Funding distributed
8	HCC Trading Standards	Buy With Confidence scheme	Hampshire Wide	5,148 06	Sept 11 (final decision made February 2012)	Project development proposals
9	Talavera School	Community Room	Aldershot	100,000	Sept 11	Awaiting Hants I & C's
10	Rushmoor BC	Conflict resolution	Rushmoor	60000	Sept 11	Awaiting Hants I & C's
11	Rushmoor BC	Network Communicators	Rushmoor	50000	Sept 11	As above
12	Rushmoor BC	Better Together Festivals	Rushmoor	56,500	Sept 11	As above
13	Lepe Country Park	Transport 'The New Forest Remembers' July 2012 which looks back and celebrates the D Day heritage of Lepe Country Park	Lepe	700	Nov 11	Funding distributed
14	Royal Navy & Royal Marine's Children's Fund	Art Competition	Hampshire (Portsmouth)	4920	March 12 (final decision made in April 2012)	Awaiting Hants I & C's
15	Service s Employment & Enterprise Network (SEEN)	Employment Hub	Aldershot	135,000	March 12 (final decision made in April 2012)	Awaiting MOI I & C's
16	Pawprints Pre school	Outdoor sensory space	Worthy Down	7,200	March 12 (final decision made in May 2012)	Awaiting MOI I & C's
				505,620 70		



Supporting Service Children in Hampshire

Issue 1

March 2012

Supporting Service Children in Hampshire	1
Understanding the requirement	2
Funding available to support Service children	3
Further information and support	4
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Examples of best practice	6
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Supporting Service children in Hampshire



Recent military operations in both Iraq and Afghanistan have highlighted the frictions and complexities that many service families are managing. This, in turn, has brought into ever increasing focus the requirement to understand and meet the specific needs of our Service children. Children's Services, within Hampshire County Council, are working closely with 145 (South) Brigade to better understand the requirements of Service children within the county. There are also sources of funding for schools that have Service children - these are outlined on page 3. In addition, we have examples of best practice and further sources of information and support.

Understanding the requirement

The three main areas of concern regarding the specific needs of Service children are:

- **Increased mobility** – regular moves within the United Kingdom, as well as overseas, are a reality for the majority of service families. In particular, high levels of mobility impact significantly on children with special educational needs
- **Impact of a parent deployed on operations** – the absence of a parent for long periods of time is another reality of service life. This friction is compounded when the parent is deployed on active service in warzones
- **School admissions** – moves will often take place outside of the standard school admissions window. Service families can struggle to get their children into the schools of their choice, indeed some families struggle to get their children into the same school. The needs of Service families are actively represented on the Hampshire Admissions Forum

It is recognised that Service children bring with them a wealth of experience. They are also, in general, more resilient, and will actively contribute within the school environment. However, it is important to acknowledge that there are times when they may be extremely vulnerable. This was expressed by some of the young people interviewed:

"It is daunting enough when you move one school to another without having to do it five times"
(Year 6 pupil)

"Moving schools has not helped me with my literacy – I seem to miss vital parts"
(Year 6 pupil)

"I don't want to be treated differently, I can't handle it. I just want to be the same as everyone else, especially when my dad is away and I am on a knife-edge the whole time"
(Year 10 pupil)

We have to ensure these young people are supported appropriately. It should also be stressed that the needs of Service children should not be looked at in isolation. For example, the requirement to mitigate the effect of mobility or manage the complexities of bereavement may be applied to any child. By actively meeting the needs of Service children, the benefits will inevitably be felt throughout the school community.

Parents appreciate the support they receive from schools that are sympathetic to their concerns:

"I was pleased with the contact I had with the school before we moved. They sent me information and rang me. The communication was good." (Parent of Year 4 and Year 6 children)

"When the class teacher found that I was in the Falklands she made this a learning point and all the children learnt about the Falklands. This made my son feel really proud of his dad rather than unhappy."
(Parent)

Headteachers have recognised the ongoing benefits of providing extra support for the children of Service families in their school and have facilitated smooth transitions:

"All new arrivals are automatically admitted as soon as they arrive. This happens before formal approval is received from the LA!"
(Headteacher)

"We have identified a teaching assistant (who happens to be a Service wife) who will work with groups of joiners to identify gaps in their mathematics knowledge"
(Headteacher)

OfSTED has identified the issues facing some of the young people:

"One school who responded to the survey questioner stated 'It is everyday talk in our dining room to hear children say: "Four more sleeps before Daddy is home!" Weekly repatriation is on our school doorstep and it is not unusual for children to comment, as Hercules fly over: "There goes another body plane" '"

(OfSTED Report, *Children in Service Families*, May 2011, No: 100227)

There are many things that schools can put in place as part of their *duty to promote well-being* that will support Service children and also contribute to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development. Schools may wish to use the whole-school approach wheel to support them in planning to best support these young people. This can be downloaded from the Health, Personal Development and Well-being (HPDW) website:

www.hants.gov.uk/whole-school-approach.doc

Funding available to support Service children

There is funding to support the work of schools in addressing the issues for these children. This includes:

- **Pupil Premium** – the Pupil Premium has also been introduced for children whose parents are currently serving in the Armed Forces; £200 in 2011 – 2012 rising to £250 in 2012 – 2013. It is allocated according to the number of Service children registered in the Annual Schools Census
- **Community Covenant Funding** – the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has established a grant scheme through which organisations, including schools, can demonstrate their support to the Armed Forces and develop projects which will integrate the Armed Forces into the civilian community. The grant scheme aims to distribute £30 million between 2011 and 2015. The website below outlines the process for application and also details the terms and conditions for funding. It should also be noted that the MoD will consider bids in July and November 2012. For a bid to be considered, it must go through the regional Community Covenant Partnership. The relevant point of contact can be confirmed by contacting:

E-mail: covenant-mailbox@mod.uk

www.mod.uk/defenceinternet/aboutdefence/corporatepublications/personnelpublications/welfare/armedforcescommunitycovenant/armedforcescommunitycovenant.htm

- **Support Fund for State Schools with Service Children (Directorate of Children and Young People) –**

Directorate of Children and Young People is the MoD's professional focal point for all matters relating to children and young people who belong to the Armed Forces community, at home and overseas. The MoD's Support Fund for State Schools with Service Children was launched in 2011 and currently plans to offer £3 million annually for four years. The Fund aims to assist publicly funded schools, academies and free schools to mitigate the effects of mobility or deployment, and applies to Reserve Forces as well as the regular Armed Forces. More information is available at:

www.mod.uk/childrenandyoungpeople

Alternatively, questions can be directed to:

E-mail: LF-PSC-CYP-3MSF-Mailbox@mod.uk

or to:

Directorate Children and Young People,
HQ Army
Ramillies Bldg
IDL 436
Marlborough Lines
Andover SP11 8HJ

The deadline for this year's round is
23 March 2012.

Further information and support

The contacts detailed below highlight sources of further information and support.

- **Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS)**

Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS) is a tri-service organisation within the MoD. It was established to provide information and support to service families and eligible MoD civilians on all aspects of their children's education in the United Kingdom and overseas. Further information is available at:

www.mod.uk/defenceinternet/defencefor/servicecommunity/education/childrendeducationadvisoryservice.htm

Enquiries can also be directed to:

E-mail: enquiries@ceas.detsa.co.uk

- **Service Children in State Schools (SCISS)**

Service Children in State Schools (SCISS) is a network of state maintained schools in England which serve military communities. An executive committee of headteachers, facilitated by CEAS and supported by the MoD, Service Children's Education (SCE), local authorities and the Department for Education (DfE) meets three times a year to advise Government on the issues facing such schools in England. Schools who wish to be included on the database will be contacted regularly by e-mail with relevant information and will also be invited to bi-annual regional SCISS meetings. For further information on SCISS please contact:

E-mail: jmuspratt@ceas.detsa.co.uk

The *SCISS Handbook* is also a highly informative tool, and can be accessed via:

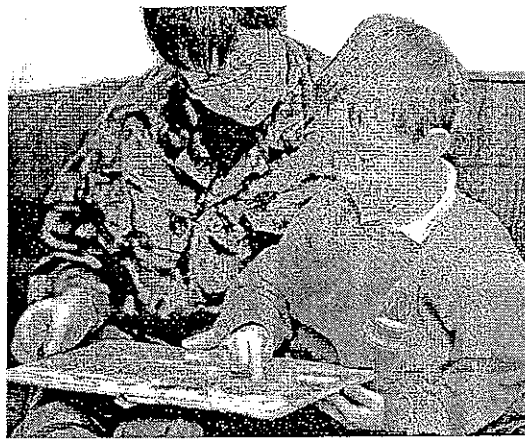
www.mod.uk/nr/rdonlyres/ab82868d-bf82-41d6-b29c-d3db09da2019/0/sciss_handbook_july09.pdf

- **Service Children's Education (SCE)**

Service Children's Education (SCE) is dedicated to the education of Service children. It has developed a *mobility toolkit*, sponsored by National College for School Leadership (NCSL) and supported by SCISS and CEAS, which has been created for students, parents, all school staff and leaders to assist in school transitions wherever you are in the world. The *mobility toolkit* can be accessed via:

www.serviceschoolsmobilitytoolkit.com/default.asp?submit=go+to+site

Reading Force



Reading Force in action

Reading fun for all the family,

Something to talk about, something to share,

At home or away

Reading Force helps families keep in touch, even when someone in the family is serving away from home. Families form book groups, read the same book, and complete a free scrapbook. Scrapbooks can then be submitted to the Reading Force competition to win a great prize.

Schools with a high percentage of Forces children acknowledge those children often have extra needs, partly as a result of several school moves and disrupted education. Reading Force supports communication within families and promotes shared reading.

Following a successful pilot project in Aldershot last year, Reading Force is now inviting all Forces families in Hampshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire to participate in 2012's activity.

Reading Force 2012 will be launched in May.

"I think Reading Force is a great idea – a brilliant way of uniting families and sharing the joys of reading."

Dame Jacqueline Wilson, award-winning children's author

"It felt good to share a book because it was something to talk about."

2011 Reading Force participant

Reading Force is funded by the MoD's Directorate of Children and Young People and supported by Kingston University

For more information contact:

[Redacted Name]:

E-mail: **[Redacted Email]**

Tel: **[Redacted Phone]**

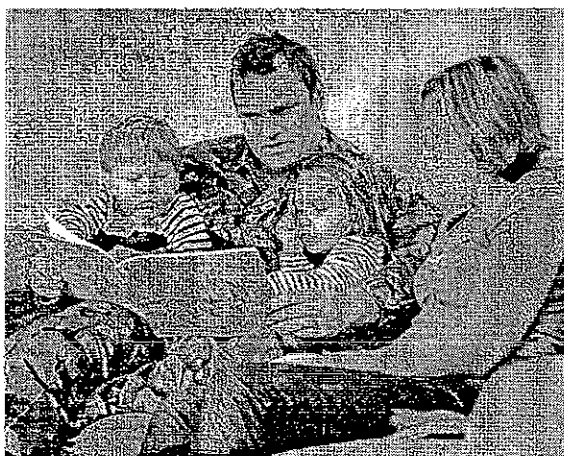
or

[Redacted Name]:

E-mail: **[Redacted Email]**

Tel: **[Redacted Phone]**

Website: www.readingforce.org.uk



Examples of best practice

There are also numerous examples throughout the county of schools demonstrating best practice in the support they offer Service children. Schools that have large numbers of Service children are usually experienced when it comes to meeting their needs. It is, however, acknowledged that schools that support fewer Service children do not always feel so well equipped. It is hoped the following examples of best practice may provide some initial guidance and highlight areas for further consideration.

An effective induction policy that covers pastoral as well as academic needs is essential if the impact of mobility is to be mitigated. It should also be stressed that a positive exit strategy is equally as important. Early contact from the receiving school is vital, as is the effective transfer of school records that capture details such as special educational needs and exam curriculum. In addition, school websites and initiatives such as virtual learning environments are powerful tools that can significantly ease a pupil through a school transition. Some schools have also funded *mobility co-ordinator* appointments in order to closely manage the protracted process that is transition.

It is essential that schools have the information they require from their parents and/or the Armed Forces in order to ensure they can provide the necessary support during a parent's deployment on operations. Key to this is ensuring the school is prepared to react to bereavement, which must also be managed in the longer term. Schools often establish a special place where information linked to the deployment can be displayed, an *Afghanistan clock* and notice board, for example. It is also important to respond positively to term time absence requests. Service children may require wider emotional support whilst a parent is deployed on

operations, with many schools providing counselling services. Communication with an absent parent which is initiated from school can be enormously positive. This can include e-mail or *Bluey* messages that capture school news and photographs. Copies of school work or a scrapbook can also be sent out to a parent deployed on operations. It is important to ensure seasonal greetings cards are completed in sufficient time for delivery through the British Forces Post Office systems. Recordings of events, such as the school Christmas carol service, can also be sent out to deployed units. Garrison radio may be able to visit schools to broadcast messages to parents deployed overseas.

How are you going to support Service children in your school? Please send us a paragraph so that we can share your best practice.

Do not forget to look on the HPDW website to access other supporting materials: www.hants.gov.uk/hpdw

Useful contact details

- **Glyn Wright – County Inspector/Adviser for Personal Development Learning**
E-mail: glynis.wright@hants.gov.uk
Tel: 023 9244 1442
- **145 (South) Brigade, Firm Base Branch**
E-mail: 145x-FirmBase-Groupmailbox@mod.uk
Tel: 01252 347755
www.mod.uk/communityengagement
- **Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS)**
Tel: 01980 618244
- **Army Welfare Service**
www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/welfare-support.aspx
- **Navy Families Federation**
www.nff.org.uk/
- **Army Families Federation**
www.aff.org.uk
- **RAF Families Federation**
www.raf-ff.org.uk
- **HIVE**
www.mod.uk/defenceinternet/defencefor/servicecommunity/hive

NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP

HELD ON 1 AUGUST 2012 AT 6PM IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1

Members of Working Group (in attendance): Councillors Kimber (DK) (P), Farr (KF) (P) and Jessop (TJ)

Officers: Carly Walters (CW) (notes)

- 1 DK informed the WG that the purpose of the meeting was to approve the key timings and finish date for the scrutiny
- 2 The WG agreed that voluntary organisations within Gosport should be consulted, especially CAB and GVA. The WG suggested meeting the two voluntary bodies on one night. The WG wanted to find out how many military personnel they dealt with and what sort of problems they encountered. **ACTION: CW**
- 3 The WG also wanted to meet with a representative from the MOD Resettlement Department who dealt with military personnel that left HMS Sultan. The WG wanted to find out further information regarding the resettlement package available to those leaving HMS Sultan. **ACTION: CW**
- 4 DK advised the WG that the HCC Covenant had plans for the provision of children and those with mental health issues. GBC would change the point system for housing.
- 5 The WG discussed whether they should consult Gosport GP's. While military personnel with families would be registered with Gosport GP's if stationed at HMS Sultan, it was unclear whether single military personnel would have that contact with the civilian world.
- 6 The WG agreed to hold two further meetings, in which to interview the voluntary sector in Gosport and a representative from the MOD Resettlement Department, in the following weeks:
 - o Week commencing 20th August 2012; and
 - o Week commencing 27th August 2012. **ACTION: CW**
- 7 The first half of the first WG meeting would be for WG members to decide on the depth of the investigation and how the report would be structured. The WG needed to decide whether they should support a Gosport Armed Forces Covenant. DK brought to the attention of the WG pages 1/3 and 1/4 of the WG Work Pack which outlined the role of a local covenant partnership.
- 8 DK saw the local covenant as more ceremonial than practical. DK reminded the WG that GBC had signed the HCC Covenant, which

dealt with the more practical issues.

- 9 The WG agreed that they would like to see representatives from GBC (i.e. the Mayor, the Leader or the Chief Executive), Gosport Voluntary Organisations and HMS Sultan sign the community covenant.
- 10 The WG stated the growing emphasis on the role of the Reserves in the British Armed Forces and noted that Gosport had no Reserves.
- 11 The WG saw few disadvantages to a local covenant
- 12 The WG agreed to take a draft report to the O&S meeting due to be held on 10th October 2012. If approved, the report would be taken to the Full Council meeting due to be held on 17th October 2012. To meet those deadlines the WG agreed to have the first version of the report drafted by the end of August 2012, with the completed draft report sent to CW by 21st September 2012.
ACTION: WG
- 13 The WG agreed that the report would not be extensive, but would include advantages and disadvantages of a covenant; the Scrutiny's work pack; and minutes from the interviews with voluntary organisations and a representative from the MOD Resettlement Department.
- 14 CW would send to the WG further information from the MOD website on community covenants and a copy of the draft community covenant.
ACTION: CW
- 15 The following summary was agreed:
- 1 The scrutiny would be a light touch scrutiny focusing on community covenants and Gosport's potential role in one;
 - 2 The WG would interview CAB, GVA and a representative from the Royal Navy Resettlement Department;
 - 3 Meetings would be held on the weeks commencing 20th August 2012 and 27th August 2012;
 - 4 The WG would formulate the first draft of the report by the end of August 2012;
 - 5 The final report would be sent to CW by 21st September 2012;
 - 6 The report would be taken to the O&S meeting due to be held on 10th October 2012;
 - 7 The report would then be taken to the Full Council meeting due to be held on 17th October 2012; and
 - 8 The Covenant to be signed at the Remembrance Service on 11th November 2012.

Meeting concluded: 6.30pm

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Armed Forces Covenant Scrutiny Working Group

Information about the Armed Forces Covenant
from the Ministry of Defence Website

(August 2012)

Contents

1. What is the Armed Forces Covenant?
2. The Armed Forces Covenant
3. What it means for you
4. Support for the Armed Forces Covenant
5. Covenant Achievements
6. Covenant History
7. Covenant Pledge and example Covenant
8. Covenant Grant Scheme

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About Defence

The Armed Forces Covenant

It is vital to reward and recognise what our Armed Forces do for us. This recognition extends not just to those in the Services but also their families and veterans, and especially the injured and the bereaved.

This page tells you how we are working to rebuild the Covenant. From here you can find more information about the support available for Serving personnel, their families and veterans.

What is the Armed Forces Covenant?



An Army soldier, a Royal Navy sailor and a Royal Air Force servicewoman

The Covenant sets out the relationship between the Nation, the State and the Armed Forces. It recognises that the whole nation has a moral obligation to members of the Armed Forces and their families, and it establishes how they should expect to be treated.

It exists to redress the disadvantages that the Armed Forces community faces in comparison to other citizens, and to recognise sacrifices made. In some cases this will require special consideration, especially for those who have given the most such as the injured and the bereaved.

Since the Armed Forces Covenant was published in May 2011, the Government and our partner charities and voluntary organisations have been very busy. We've delivered on a number of commitments, introduced the Community Covenant (with a £30m grant scheme to support it) and produced an interim annual report on our progress.

The principle behind the Covenant is that the Armed Forces Community should not face disadvantage because of its military experience. In some cases, such as the sick, injured or bereaved, this means giving special consideration to enable access to public or commercial services that civilians wouldn't receive. The Covenant covers issues from housing and education to support after Service, and in it veterans have great importance. It is crucial to the Government that it, and the nation, recognises the unique and immense sacrifices you have made for your country.

The Prime Minister emphasised this himself during his Christmas visit to Afghanistan when he announced a new Ministerial Committee to make sure that, at the highest level across Government, departments are sticking to the promises made in the Covenant. He chaired the first meeting himself on 2 February 2012.

Key actions we are committing to

- Twice doubling Council Tax Relief which now stands at nearly £600 per Service person for a six-month deployment
- Doubling the Families Welfare Grant
- Launching the Community Covenant scheme
- A new fund of £30m Community Covenant Grant to support the scheme
- A Pupil Premium for Service children
- An additional fund of £3m per year to support state schools catering for significant numbers of Service children including children of Reservists
- Launching a veterans' information service to provide support on health issues including mental health
- Launching a Veterans Card to access commercial discounts or privileges and to consider how this could be expanded to include Service families
- Working to ensure AFCS payments are not required to be used to pay for social care
- A guarantee that veterans suffering serious genital injuries receive three cycles of IVF
- Working with banks and building societies on how they lend to members of the Armed Forces
- A Ministerially-chaired meeting with key stakeholders to explore ways to improve access to housing
- Launching a Military to Mentors scheme

Welfare

in this section:

- Armed Forces Covenant
 - What it means for you
- DCYP
- Families' Activity Breaks
- Defence Recovery
- Mental Health
- MODCARE

Covenant timeline

Prime Minister chairs first Cabinet sub-committee on the Armed Forces : **February 2012**

Interim Annual Report on the Armed Forces published : **December 2011**

First meeting of the Community Covenant Grant panel : **October 2011**

Community Covenant launched : **June 2011**

Armed Forces Covenant published : **May 2011**

Contact us

Covenant Team

Ministry of Defence

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[Armed Forces Community Covenant](#)

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The Armed Forces Covenant



The Armed Forces Covenant was published in May 2011 and sets out the relationship between the Nation, the State and the Armed Forces. It recognises that the whole nation has a moral obligation to members of the Armed Forces and their families, and it establishes how they should expect to be treated.

It exists to redress the disadvantages that the Armed Forces community faces in comparison to other citizens and to recognise the sacrifices that they have made. At the local level, 'Community Covenants' are being signed across the country bringing military and civilian communities together.



Communities are getting behind Armed Forces Covenant

25 Jun 12: Communities across the country are getting behind the Armed Forces Covenant to improve the lives of Service personnel and their families.



Anglesey signs Armed Forces Community Covenant

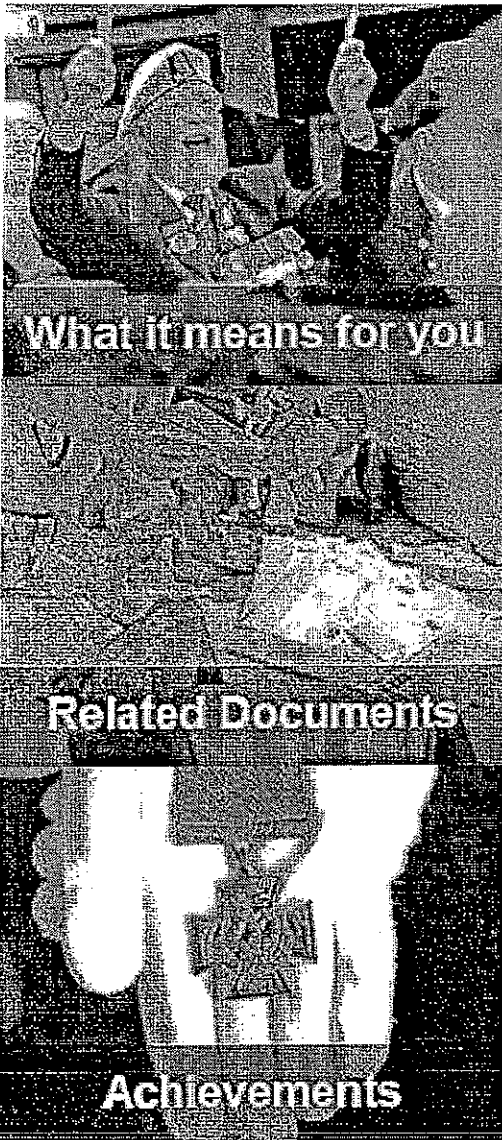
24 May 12: Representatives of the Isle of Anglesey County Council signed the Armed Forces

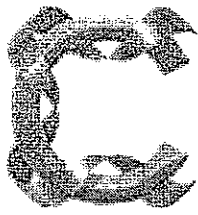
Community Covenant, becoming the 40th county to do so



Armed Forces Day flags raised

25 Jun 12: Armed Forces Day celebrations begin in style today with thousands of Armed Forces Day flags being raised across the UK

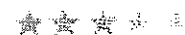




**Community
Covenant**



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What it means for you

This page is designed to give you more information on the commitments we're delivering under the Armed Forces Covenant, and to point you in the right direction if you are having problems.

We've split the information into themes. Use the links below to find out more:

[Healthcare](#)

[Education](#)

[Housing](#)

[Support after service](#)

[Family life and care in service](#)

[Family life and responsibility of care](#)

[Deployment](#)

[Tax, terms and conditions of service and benefits](#)

[Commercial products and services](#)

[Recognition and participation](#)

[Armed Forces Covenant](#)

in this section:

- [What it means for you](#)

Related Pages

[The Nation's Commitment: what does the Covenant mean for you?](#)

Leaflets aimed at outlining how the Covenant can help veterans, serving personnel and their families

[Where can I go if I have a problem or complaint?](#)

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About Defence

Armed Forces Community Covenant

A Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community

Support for Covenants

Thanks to support from military and civilian communities across the UK, there are now more than 80 Community Covenant partnerships, as far north as Moray and as far south as Cornwall



Members of the public welcome troops home

Community Covenants are intended to complement, at local level, the Armed Forces Covenant, which outlines the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces. The aim of the Community Covenant is to encourage local communities to support the Service community in their area and promote understanding and awareness amongst the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces Community.

Many people have become involved in supporting the Service community through Service charities, or more recently by participating in Armed Forces Day. They have shown their support through fundraising, military celebrations and open days, attending homecoming parades and repatriation ceremonies and offering commercial discounts. Even simple demonstrations of support, such as displaying the Armed Forces Day window sticker in cars and businesses, have had a positive effect and boosted the morale of our Armed Forces community. The Community Covenant scheme aims to build on this local level of support.

The aims of the Armed Forces Community Covenant are to:

- encourage local communities to support the Armed Forces community in their areas
- nurture public understanding and awareness amongst the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces community
- recognise and remember the sacrifices faced by the Armed Forces Community
- encourage activities which help to integrate the Armed Forces Community into local life
- to encourage the Armed Forces Community to help and support the wider community, whether through participation in events and joint projects, or other forms of engagement

Local Authorities and the Armed Forces Community are encouraged to work together to establish a Community Covenant in their area



A concert during Veterans' Awareness Week

Community Covenants may look quite different from one location to another. This is a scheme where one size does not fit all, and the nature of the support offered will be determined by both need and capacity. It is expected that most Community Covenants will be led at Local Authority level. However Unitary Authorities and individual towns may also wish to have a Community Covenant and this is equally welcome.

Guidance on the Community Covenant scheme is available to download below as is the Community Covenant Pledge template.

This pledge sets out what a Community Covenant seeks to achieve in a particular area and, where possible, will be signed by representatives from all parts of the Community. In most cases the lead signatories will be a senior representative from the Local Authority and one from the Services who will sign on behalf of the Armed Forces Community (although the pledge may also be signed by those representing veterans' or families groups, especially in areas without a large Serving presence).

It is supported by the **Community Covenant Grant Scheme** which has been established to financially support projects, at the local level, which strengthen the ties or the mutual understanding between members of the Armed Forces Community and the wider community in which they live. See the related link for further information.

Welfare

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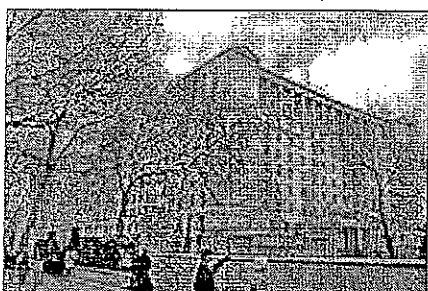
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Covenant achievements - Commitments delivered

Information on commitments delivered under the Armed Forces Covenant



Ministry of Defence Main Building in London

Since the Armed Forces Covenant was published in May 2011, the Government and our partner charities and voluntary organisations have been very busy. We've delivered on a number of commitments, introduced the Community Covenant (with a £30m grant scheme to support it) and produced an interim annual report on our progress. Here we list the commitments we have delivered. If you'd like to see the commitments we are working to deliver, please see the link on the right-hand side.

Healthcare

- We are investing up to £15 million in prosthetics provision for personnel who have lost limbs during Service. The funding will support commissioning specialist prosthetic and rehabilitation services for amputee veterans through a number of multi-disciplinary centres in England.
- We endorsed proposals for improvements in mental health care provision, most of which have been implemented already. These include an extension of access to mental health care to six months after discharge, an increase in the number of Veterans' mental health nurses, a 24-hour helpline and a support and advice website.
- There is ongoing work to gain professional recognition for military medical qualifications, in particular for Combat Medical Technicians and Medical Assistants. The next stage is to clarify the requirement, which will need to reflect the different environments of each Service.
- An e-learning package has been delivered to educate GPs in how best to support veterans' healthcare needs. This includes raising awareness of the Reservists Mental Health Programme.

Education

- We have delivered a scheme to provide scholarships to bereaved Service children. As of October 2011 a total of 22 Further Education and 61 Higher Education scholarships have been awarded for academic years 2010/2011 and 2011/12.
- We have delivered more help for those leaving the Service to go on to higher / further education – not least through payment of tuition fees, which has been extended to the spouses or partners taking up the entitlement because of bereavement or extreme injury of a discharged Service Person.
- We have introduced the Pupil Premium for the children of those currently serving (£200 per child), amounting to £9m for 2011/12 (for 2012/13 this will be increased to £250, meaning Service children will benefit from around an extra £11 million). In addition, we have made available £3m per year for state schools with Service children (including those of reservists). Since the launch of this fund, 139 bids from schools have been approved, amounting to £2.9m for this financial year.
- Schools can now exceed the 30-pupil limit for infant classes in order to accommodate Service children.
- A Service child indicator is now part of the Annual School Census in England and DfE is now able to identify separately the children of parents in the Armed Forces.

Housing

- In England, members of the Armed Forces are being placed at the top of the priority list for the Government's £500m FirstBuy scheme, which is designed to help first time buyers; and at the top of the priority list for all other Government-funded home ownership schemes. The Department for Communities and Local Government announcement has been highly publicised, with the first FirstBuy purchase by a Service person having now taken place. This priority lasts for up to 12 months after active service ends. In the event of a death in service the priority passes to the bereaved spouse or civil partner.
- Our support to the Armed Forces Home Ownership Scheme continues: The pilot AFHOS scheme was a huge success in the first of its agreed four years of operation, with the agreed funding being used in full.
- Service personnel are now able to apply for Service Families Accommodation online.

Pay and benefits

- We are continuing to provide a minimum £250 increase for the lowest ranks in the Armed Forces during the two-year public sector pay freeze.
- Council Tax Relief has been doubled twice since the Coalition Programme of Government, now standing at nearly £600 per Service person for a six-month deployment.

Deployment

- We have doubled the Families Welfare Grant.
- We improved Rest and Recuperation leave for those on operations.
- We doubled the tax free Operational Allowance so that those serving on eligible operations now receive a lump sum of just over £5k for a six month tour.

Support After Service

- Continuous automatic entitlement to Blue Badges is in place for seriously injured Service personnel and Veterans.
- The SPVA has launched a new charity portal for veterans with a link to a dedicated full page of information on each organisation, including services provided and details of how to contact them.

Commercial products

- We are working with Credit Reference Agencies to ensure Service people are not disadvantaged by mobility requirements in accessing credit.

The Covenant and Wider Society

- We have announced a Community Covenant Scheme supported by a £30m Community Covenant Grant Scheme. Over 50 councils have signed a Covenant with the Armed Forces community in their areas, with 47 more planned.

in the coming months. More than £2m has already been released to support local projects, with 34 approved or deferred applications from our March panel

Monitoring progress

- The Armed Forces Covenant is a matter for the whole of Government, and sustained progress requires both close working across Whitehall and clear Ministerial leadership. Therefore the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister agreed to establish a new Ministerial committee, led by the Minister for Government Policy, Oliver Letwin, to oversee the Covenant Programme of work and ensure that momentum is maintained, working closely with the Covenant Reference Group. The first meeting was on 2 February 2012 and was chaired by the Prime Minister.

Welfare

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[Community Covenant Grant Scheme](#)

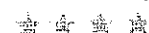
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The Armed Forces Covenant

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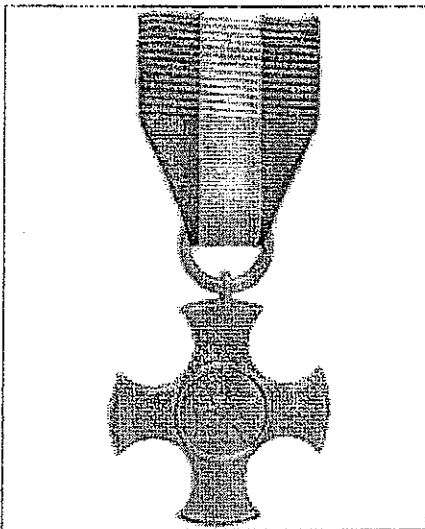
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Covenant history

Information on the history of the Armed Forces Covenant

History



The Distinguished Service Cross is awarded for gallantry during active operations against the enemy

The idea of a mutual obligation between the nation and its Armed Forces goes back centuries – a 1593 statute of Elizabeth I called for a weekly tax so that disabled army veterans: "should at their return be relieved and rewarded to the end that they may reap the fruit of their good deservings, and others may be encouraged to perform the like endeavours"

It was not until 2000 that the phrase 'Military Covenant' was first used, in a publication that details the moral basis for what the Army does. It explains how 'unlimited liability' makes soldiering a unique activity and it clarifies what soldiers should expect in return for forfeiting some of their civil liberties

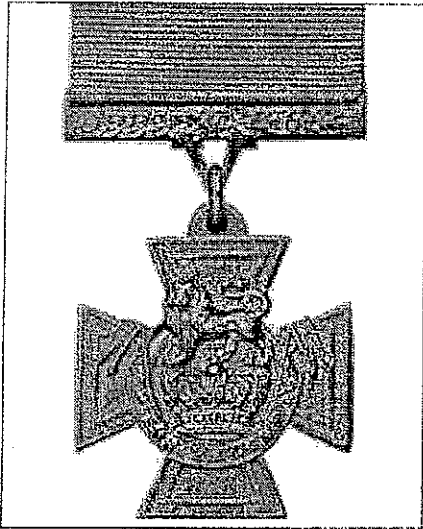
When the Coalition Government came into office in 2010 it made a commitment to rebuild the Covenant. The Covenant was re-named the Armed Forces Covenant to include all three Services

It expresses the enduring principles that should govern the relationship between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces Community. The accompanying guidance sets out the scope of the Armed Forces Covenant, to whom and

how it should be applied, and describes the different areas in which it should influence policy: healthcare, housing, education and so on

The Covenant is supported by a second document: 'The Armed Forces Covenant: Today and Tomorrow' which sets out in detail the steps we are currently taking to observe the obligations of the Covenant and the future measures which will be delivered

The Covenant one year on



The Victoria Cross is awarded for valour in the face of the enemy

Since the Armed Forces Covenant was published a year ago in May 2011, the Government and our partner charities and voluntary organisations have been very busy. We've delivered on a number of commitments, introduced the Community Covenant (with a £30m grant scheme to support it) and produced an interim annual report on our progress.

The principle behind the Covenant is that the Armed Forces Community should not face disadvantage because of its military experience. In some cases, such as the sick, injured or bereaved, this means giving special consideration to enable access to public or commercial services that civilians wouldn't receive. The Covenant covers issues from housing and education to support after Service, and in it veterans have great importance. It is crucial to the Government that it, and the nation, recognises the unique and immense sacrifices you have made for your country.

The Prime Minister emphasised this during his Christmas visit to Afghanistan when he announced a new Ministerial Committee to make sure that, at the highest level across Government, departments are sticking to the promises made in the Covenant. He chaired the first meeting himself on 2 February 2012.

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Community Covenant Pledge

This document provides a template for the signing of an Armed Forces Community Covenant. The Community Covenant aims to bring together the Armed Forces community and the civilian community on a local level, nurturing mutual understanding and raising awareness of issues faced by the Armed Forces.

- [Community Covenant Pledge DOC \[369.0 KB\]](#)
- [Community Covenant Guidance Notes PDF \[78.6 KB\]](#)

If you sign a Community Covenant in your area, do let us know by emailing us at covenant-mailbox@mod.uk

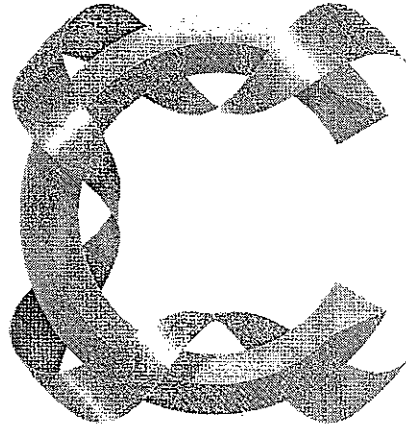
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Community Covenant

AN ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

BETWEEN

ABCD COUNTY COUNCIL, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHARITABLE
AND VOLUNTARY SECTORS,
THE CIVILIAN COMMUNITY OF *ABCD*

AND

THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY IN *ABCD* LOCATION

**We, the undersigned, agree to work and act together to
honour the Armed Forces Community Covenant.**

Signatories

(This page gives examples of the parties who may sign the Community Covenant This is an example only and is not limited to the examples given)

Signed:

Name:

Position Held:

Signed on behalf of the Armed Forces Community

Date:

Signed:

Name:

Position Held:

Signed on behalf of Armed Forces Charities

Date:

Signed:

Name:

Position Held: County Manager

Signed on behalf of the Business and Commercial Sector

Date:

Signed:

Name:

Position Held:

Signed on behalf of ABCD Council

Date:

Signed:

Name:

Position Held:

Signed on behalf of the Voluntary Sector

Date:

Signed:

Name:

Position Held: Branch Chairman

Signed on behalf of the Primary Care Trust/NHS Body

Date:

SECTION 1: PARTICIPANTS

1.1 This Armed Forces Community Covenant is made between:

The serving and former members of the Armed Forces and their families working and residing in ABCD

And

ABCD County Council

And

The Charitable and Voluntary Sector

And

Other members of the civilian community

SECTION 2: PRINCIPLES OF THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

2.1 The Armed Forces Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community. It is intended to complement the Armed Forces Covenant, which outlines the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces, at the local level.

2.2 The purpose of this Community Covenant is to encourage support for the Armed Forces Community working and residing in xxxx and to recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of this Armed Forces Community, particularly those who have given the most. This includes in-Service and ex-Service personnel their families and widow(er)s in ABCD

2.3 For ABCD County Council and partner organisations, the Community Covenant presents an opportunity to bring their knowledge, experience and expertise to bear on the provision of help and advice to members of the Armed Forces Community. It also presents an opportunity to build upon existing good work on other initiatives such as the Welfare Pathway

2.4 For the Armed Forces community, the Community Covenant encourages the integration of Service life into civilian life and encourages members of the Armed Forces community to help their local community.

SECTION 3: OBJECTIVES AND GENERAL INTENTIONS

Aims of the Community Covenant

3.1 The Armed Forces Community Covenant complements the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant which defines the enduring, general principles that should govern the relationship between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces community

3 2 It aims to encourage all parties within a community to offer support to the local Armed Forces community and make it easier for Service personnel, families and veterans to access the help and support available from the MOD, from statutory providers and from the Charitable and Voluntary Sector. These organisations already work together in partnership at local level.

3 3 The scheme is intended to be a two-way arrangement and the Armed Forces community are encouraged to do as much as they can to support their community and promote activity which integrates the Service community into civilian life

SECTION 4: Measures

4 1 *Detail regarding specific measures to be put in place could be inserted here, e.g. Civil/Military Partnership Boards, Welfare Pathway, etc*

CONTACT PERSONNEL AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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Address: DCDS (Pers) Covenant Team
Zone D, 6th Floor
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HB

In-Service representative(s)

Contact Name:
Title:
Telephone:
Address:

ABCD Council

Contact Name:
Title:
Telephone:
Fax:
Address:

Charities

Contact Name:
Title:
Telephone:

Address:

THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT

An Enduring Covenant Between

The People of the United Kingdom
Her Majesty's Government

— and —

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of
the Crown

And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

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Covenant Grant Scheme

The aim of the Community Covenant Grant Scheme is to financially support projects, at the local level, which strengthen the ties or the mutual understanding between members of the Armed Forces Community and the wider community in which they live

Next panel date

The next Community Covenant Grant Scheme panel will sit on Thursday 13 September. The deadline for applications reaching the MOD is Friday 24 August, but please note that your local Community Covenant Partnership may have timelines of their own. The following panel will be on 13 December with a deadline for applications to the MOD of 28 November.

The Grant Scheme will consider applications for projects that deliver tangible results and meet the overall aims of the Community Covenant Scheme. An application for funding can be submitted by any part of the community, this might include volunteer groups, charities, public bodies such as schools, and so on.

Panel dates

Grant panels are now held on a quarterly basis throughout the year, so that we can consider more bids at more regular intervals.

The panels include, in addition to members of the MOD's Armed Forces Covenant Team, representatives from the Treasury, the Single Services' Families Federations and local councils.

Please note that all bids must be approved by the local Community Covenant Partnership. They may have timelines of their own to which you will need to adhere.

Application signatures

Applicants should ensure that bids are signed off by members of the local Community Covenant

Partnership When we receive bids that are not signed properly it takes us a great deal of time to find out whether the bid has been endorsed. This delays our ability to provide a response on whether or not the bid has been successful. We would expect the Armed Forces signatory to be at, or around, OF5 level (Captain-RN, Colonel, Group Captain) where this is possible.

Once a bid has been received by the Ministry of Defence it is allocated a reference number. Please quote this number in any subsequent correspondence.

You can find details of bids that have been successful under this scheme by following the link [Community Covenant In Action](#) (Please see under Related pages on the right hand side of the page).

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NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP

HELD ON 5 SEPTEMBER 2012 AT 5.30PM IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1

Members of Working Group (in attendance): Councillors Kimber (DK) (P), Farr (KF) (P) and Jessop (TJ)

Officers: Carly Walters (CW) (notes) and Mandy Baggaley (MB)

Also in Attendance: Chief Executive (CE) for Gosport Voluntary Action (GVA)

5.30pm: Pre meet of the Working Group

- 1 The WG discussed the questions it would ask the CE of GVA. The main questions were:
 - o What involvement did GVA have with the Armed Forces?
 - o How many cases did they deal with annually?
 - o What sort of services did GVA provide?
 - o Could GVA improve their services?
- 2 DK reiterated the aim of the scrutiny which was to create a community covenant for Gosport and to have it signed in November 2012. The aim of the meeting was to see what voluntary organisations in Gosport already provided and whether that could be improved upon by the creation of a covenant.
- 3 The WG worked on the draft report.

6pm: Chief Executive of Gosport Voluntary Action joined the meeting

- 4 DK explained to the CE the aim of the scrutiny and how although GBC was incorporated in HCC's covenant, the Council was interested in creating its own. The WG was interested to know how the voluntary sector was involved with the military personnel in Gosport and would consider including the voluntary sector in the signing of the covenant.
- 5 DK asked whether GVA had been involved or understood the funding arrangements? CE replied that a member of staff from GVA had attended a number of meetings regarding funding. At these meetings the MOD had explained how they had received an influx of applications, but many of them were not comprehensive bids, therefore many were rejected. The MOD had since tightened its criteria for bids.
- 6 MB explained how currently bids from Gosport had to gain approval by a panel from HCC before moving on to the MOD panel. MB explained that this required a high level of resource from both panels and the bid organisation. MB advised the WG

that Gosport could have its own panel should it adopt its own covenant. However MB noted the staff and resource implications should a Gosport panel be adopted. MB would research whether bids would still need to go to the HCC panel if there was a Gosport panel.

ACTION: MB

Post Meeting note:

To following email was received from a member of the Armed Forces Covenant Team on 6th September 2012:

Mandy

Its great news that Gosport wish to sign their own Covenant with their local AF unit and I see no reason why this should disrupt current bids being processed through Hampshire County Council although this would clearly need to be discussed and agreed at local level. Indeed I see no reason why even when the Gosport partnership is fully up and running why you should not, where its deemed appropriate, still not go through Hampshire.

Our only concern about multi Community Covenants in the same area is that they do not place too much pressure on the local Armed Forces – Covenants should be meaningful and if there are too many in one area the AF cannot be expected to constructively engage with each of the partnership boards. I would also expect that in the future, even when you do not intend to go through Hampshire, that you would ensure that they are at least aware of your proposed work to ensure that you're both not trying to tackle the same issue and that this would be a mutual arrangement – after all the ultimate aim of the Community Covenant is to make life better through increased awareness which is ultimately all about better communication.

I hope this is helpful and am more than happy to talk it through with you should you have additional queries.

- 7** The WG discussed who would sit on a Gosport panel. It was thought that representatives from GBC, HCC, the voluntary sector and HMS Sultan. It was thought that a local panel would be a great advantage as the panel would recognise the problems/issues in the local area, while a panel for the whole of Hampshire might not.
- 8** The WG and the CE agreed that bids would be more comprehensive and probably more likely to receive funding should they made through partnership working.
- 9** The CE explained that they did not keep records of whether

people they dealt with or volunteers were from the military. However he did note that GVA got involved with military families through their children nurseries. The CE explained that contact with military personnel tended to be through other means i.e. international women's day and not because they were in the military.

- 10 The CE thought that a way to involve their service for military personnel would be to ask if people were in the military.
- 11 The CE thought that an Armed Forces Access Group could be a good development from the covenant.
- 12 The CE advised that Gosport still used the Voluntary Sector compact and noted that it was still very productive.
- 13 MB noted that the nearest successful bid for the funding was the Ashcroft Centre, Fareham.
- 14 MB noted that funding was made available for 4 years, of which 3 years remained. There was no guarantee that further funding would be provided after the 4 year period. DK stressed the importance of getting the covenant set up quickly and formulating comprehensive bids in good time before the 3 year deadline.
- 15 The CE thought that the Covenant was a good idea for Gosport as it gave focus for those involved and a target for partnership working.
- 16 The WG discussed how difficult it was for local councils and voluntary sectors to find out how many military personnel were in the Borough and whether any of them needed support. There was a fear that military personnel and those undergoing resettlement in Gosport did not know what services were available.
- 17 In summary, the CE agreed that the covenant was a good concept for Gosport and would be happy to sign it.

7.10pm: Post Meeting of the Working Group

- 18 The WG continued to work on their report.
- 19 It was agreed that the next meeting of the WG would be held at 9am on Friday 7th September 2012 where the WG would interview the Resettlement Officer from HMS Sultan and the Housing Options Officer from GBC.
- 20 The WG agreed the following timetable:
 - o 7th September 2012 – meeting with the Resettlement Officer from HMS Sultan and the Housing Options Officer from GBC, followed by further work on the report.

- 10th September 2012 – report to be finalised and send to CW for inclusion in the O&S agenda.
- 18th September 2012 – report to be taken to O&S Board for approval.
- 3rd October 2012 – report to be taken to Full Council for approval.

Meeting concluded: 7.30pm

NOTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP

HELD ON 7 SEPTEMBER 2012 AT 9AM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

Members of Working Group (in attendance): Councillors Kimber (DK) (P), Farr (KF) (P) and Jessop (TJ)

Officers: Carly Walters (CW) (notes) and Mandy Baggarley (MB)

Also in Attendance: Educational Resettlement Officer from HMS Sultan (ERO) Housing Options Officer for GBC - Steve Newton (SN)

9am: Pre meet of the Working Group

- 1 The WG discussed the email received from CAB and were glad to note that CAB were happy to be involved in the Community Covenant.
- 2 The WG worked on the draft report for O&S.

10am: The Educational Resettlement Officer from HMS Sultan joined the meeting

- 3 DK welcomed the ERO to the meeting. He outlined the aim of the scrutiny WG and explained that the WG were interested in finding out more information about the resettlement package available for personnel leaving the military, especially those leaving HMS Sultan.
- 4 The ERO explained that they dealt with 5 areas as ERO:
 - o Resettlement;
 - o Advice on elective learning;
 - o Specific Learning difficulties;
 - o Basic skills support; and
 - o Learn Direct (E – Learning).
- 5 The ERO advised the WG of the different types of military personnel they dealt with regarding resettlement:
 - o Early Service Leavers;
 - o Notice given (12 months);
 - o Medical discharge;
 - o Time expired/ long service; and
 - o Redundancies.
- 6 The ERO explained that resettlement entitlement was dependent on the time spent in the military and not rank. There was a sliding scale of support (more support the longer the service in the Military).

7 DK asked whether information regarding the local area was given to military leaving the Service. The ERO advised that that information was not provided by their department, but support regarding this was available from other sources. The ERO noted that some people 'resettled' where they lived in other parts of the country and therefore did not require information about the local area.

8 The ERO ceased support for military personnel once they had left the military, although some support was given to those medically discharged for between 12 and 24 months post-discharge. Further support for serving personnel was also given by other sources, which continued post-discharge, such as:

Career Transition Partnership (CTP);

- Support was given to ex-military personnel for up to 2 years after they leave service.
- They offered resettlement briefings on subjects such as accommodation, finance and pensions.
- They offered a 3 day Career Transition Workshop, including information such as getting in to the job market.
- Ran employment fairs, occupational information days and numerous training courses.
- The nearest centre was at HMS Nelson.

Royal Naval Association;

White Ensign Association (WEA);

- The WEA offered support for all military personnel and not just those leaving the Service.
- They run monthly visits to HMS Sultan and mainly gave advice on financial issues.

Royal British Legion;

Royal Naval Reserves;

Regular Forces Employment Association;

The Officers Association; and

British Forces Resettlement Association.

All of the above services were free to ex military personnel.

9 The ERO explained the different levels of support available to those leaving the MOD:

Early Service Leavers (in Service for up to 4 years)

They were given no time or money for resettlement, but still had access to resettlement charities and organisations listed above.

In the Service between 4 – 6 years

Referred to CTP for Employment Support Programme. No amount of time allocated for resettlement activities – need to fit those in around work commitments, but able to go on a reserve list for resettlement courses. Access to various Educational Allowances.

Full Resettlement Programme (6+ years)

Time allocated for resettlement activities such as training courses and work placements (ranging from 4 – 7 weeks, dependent on time in Service). Access to various Educational and Resettlement Allowances. Access resettlement support from the last 2 years in service.

- 10 The ERO explained that the resettlement package and support was voluntary and was up to the individual person to claim it.
- 11 The ERO advised the WG that the most common profile of personnel leaving the service from HMS Sultan was male/ in their 40's/engineer who was highly qualified and experienced and was seeking an engineering career in the civilian world.
- 12 DK advised the ERO that the Council held very little information on military and ex military personnel living in the Borough. The ERO advised the WG that she did not hold that information; however the Naval Families Welfare or HIVE departments may do.
- 13 The ERO advised the WG on different publications on resettlement available to military personnel, such as: Pathfinder, Equipped and Courses for Forces.
- 14 The WG thanked the ERO for attending the meeting and the ERO left the meeting.

11am: The Housing Options Officer from GBC joined the meeting

- 15 The WG welcomed SN to the meeting.
- 16 DK advised SN that the WG had included his early email to DK to the report they were producing on an Armed Forces Community Covenant for Gosport. SN was happy for that to be included.
- 17 SN explained the statutory requirement for the introduction of a preference for MOD customers in the Council's Allocations Policy. SN would present a report to GBC's Community Board before January 2013 regarding this change in policy.
- 18 SN noted that the change in the point allocation regarding MOD customers had been put out to public consultation and had received minimal opposition.
- 19 SN advised the WG that to date there was no special policy or points awarded to MOD customers.
- 20 SN noted that military personnel living in married quarters could be added to the Council's housing waiting list.
- 21 SN advised that 15 years ago the average waiting time for an offer

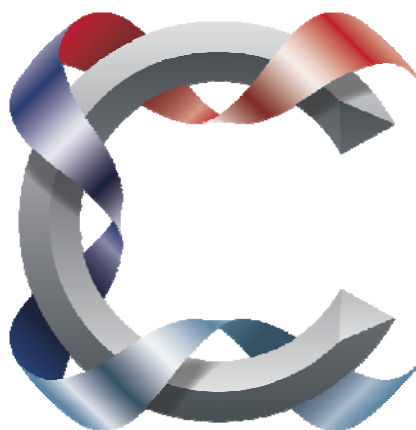
of rehousing was 2 years. Now it is around 10 years wait on average.

- 22** SN noted that it was unlikely that the fact that someone was in the military was recorded for the purposes of the housing waiting list. Last year 0 military personnel were recorded on homelessness records.
- 23** SN explained the points system used for the housing waiting list:
- Up to 10 points for residents in Gosport;
 - Up to 50 points for local connection;
 - Up to 60 points for medical/social need (30 points: medical and 30 points: social);
 - Up to 20 points for in adequate housing; and
 - Up to 5 points for homelessness.
- 24** The refusal rate from the housing list was very high: 20/30%. However this was a challenge facing all Councils throughout the Country. This was not helped by the reduction in social housing since the 1930's.
- 25** SN advised the WG of the work that the Council was doing to help MOD in the Borough and County wide, as detailed in his email.
- 26** The WG thanked SN for attending the meeting and SN left the meeting.

12.15pm: Post Meeting of the Working Group

- 27** The WG worked on the draft report for O&S.

Meeting concluded: 2.40pm



Community Covenant

AN ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

BETWEEN

GOSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTORS

AND

THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY IN GOSPORT

THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT FOR GOSPORT

**We, the undersigned, agree to work and act together to
honour the Armed Forces Community Covenant.**

Signatories

Signed:

Name:

Position Held: Commanding Officer for HMS
Sultan

**Signed on behalf of the Armed Forces
Community in Gosport**

Signed:

Name:

Position Held: Chief Executive

**Signed on behalf of Gosport Borough
Council**

Signed:

Name:

Position Held: The Mayor

**Signed on behalf of Gosport Borough
Council**

Signed:

Name:

Position Held: Chief Executive of Gosport
Voluntary Action

**Signed on behalf of the Voluntary Sector
in Gosport**

Signed:

Name:

Position Held: Gosport's Citizen's Advice
Bureau Manager

**Signed on behalf of the Voluntary Sector
in Gosport**

SECTION 1: PARTICIPANTS

1.1 This Armed Forces Community Covenant is made between:

The serving and former members of the Armed Forces and their families working and residing in Gosport.

And

Gosport Borough Council

And

The Voluntary Sector

SECTION 2: PRINCIPLES OF THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

2.1 The Armed Forces Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community. It is intended to complement the Armed Forces Covenant, which outlines the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces, at the local level.

2.2 The purpose of this Community Covenant is to encourage support for the Armed Forces Community working and residing in Gosport and to recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of this Armed Forces Community, particularly those who have given the most. This includes in-Service and ex-Service personnel their families and widow(er)s in Gosport.

2.3 For Gosport Borough Council and partner organisations, the Community Covenant presents an opportunity to bring their knowledge, experience and expertise to bear on the provision of help and advice to members of the Armed Forces Community. It also presents an opportunity to build upon existing good work on other initiatives such as the Welfare Pathway.

2.4 For the Armed Forces community, the Community Covenant encourages the integration of Service life into civilian life and encourages members of the Armed Forces community to help their local community.

SECTION 3: OBJECTIVES AND GENERAL INTENTIONS

Aims of the Community Covenant

3.1 The Armed Forces Community Covenant complements the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant which defines the enduring, general principles that should govern the relationship between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces community

3.2 It aims to encourage all parties within a community to offer support to the local Armed Forces community and make it easier for Service personnel, families and veterans to access the help and support available from the MOD, from statutory providers and from

the Charitable and Voluntary Sector. These organisations already work together in partnership at local level.

3.3 The scheme is intended to be a two-way arrangement and the Armed Forces community are encouraged to do as much as they can to support their community and promote activity which integrates the Service community into civilian life.

CONTACT PERSONNEL AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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In-Service representative

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Address:

Gosport Borough Council

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Voluntary Organisations

Contact Name:
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Contact Name:
Title: Bureau Manager
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THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT

An Enduring Covenant Between

The People of the United Kingdom
Her Majesty's Government

– and –

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of
the Crown

And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

Service Children's Schooling

DfE	School	District	Yes	No	Refused	Unknown	Total
1	1001 Haven Children's Centre	Gosport	19	118			137
2	2602 Brockhurst Junior School	Gosport	20	157			177
3	2606 Elson Junior School	Gosport	21	288			309
4	2607 Elson Infant School	Gosport	30	231			261
5	2610 Lee-On-The-Solent Junior School	Gosport	38	316			354
6	2612 Haselworth Primary School	Gosport	2	106			108
7	2613 Woodcot Primary School	Gosport	8	163			171
8	2616 Rowner Junior School	Gosport	37	145			182
9	2617 Rowner Infant School	Gosport	41	114			155
10	2618 Alverstoke Community Infant School	Gosport	36	143			179
11	2619 Grange Junior School	Gosport	44	155			199
12	2620 Grange Infant School	Gosport	58	160			218
13	2621 Siskin Junior School	Gosport	2	125			127
14	2622 Peel Common Infant School And Nursery Unit	Gosport	44	177			221
15	2623 Siskin Infant And Nursery School	Gosport	10	144			154
16	2624 Peel Common Junior School	Gosport	27	162			189
17	2625 Gomer Infant School	Gosport	31	151			182
18	2627 Brockhurst Infant School	Gosport	32	140			172
19	2630 Lee-On-The-Solent Infant School	Gosport	18	248			266
20	2631 Gomer Junior School	Gosport	26	210			236
21	2776 Bedenham Primary School	Gosport	17	220			237
22	2777 Holbrook Primary School	Gosport	11	205			216
23	3190 Leesland Church Of England (Controlled) Junior School	Gosport	10	211			221
24	3191 Leesland Church Of England (Controlled) Infant School	Gosport	11	166			177
25	3192 Newtown Church Of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School	Gosport	23	387			410
26	3600 Alverstoke Church Of England (Aided) Junior School	Gosport	49	224			273
27	3602 St John's, Gosport Church Of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School	Gosport	20	354			374
28	3650 St Mary's Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School, Gosport	Gosport	39	219		1	259
29	4314 Bridgemary School	Gosport	60	478		151	689
30	4315 Brune Park Community College	Gosport	128	1443			1571
31	5408 Bay House School	Gosport	246	1933		14	2193
	YES = Service Children	TOTALS	1158	9293		166	10451
					TOTAL		10617

Data provided by Hampshire Education Authority. Data as at Spring 2012 census.