

Dorset Armed Forces Community Covenant Action Plan

This action plan forms the basis of the Dorset Armed Forces Covenant Programme and is the basis of the 'Strengthening Local Government delivery of the Covenant' bid to Ministry of Defence Armed Forces Covenant Fund.

The action plan aligns to and seeks to assist in meeting the objectives of the Governments draft Veterans Strategy. The Veterans Strategy has the following cross cutting factors and key themes.

Cross-cutting factors		
1	Collaboration between organisations	Improved collaboration between organisations offers Veterans coherent support.
2	Coordination of Veterans services	The coordination of Veterans' provision delivers consistent aims and principles over time and throughout the UK, ensuring Veterans, their families and the bereaved are treated fairly compared to the local population.
3	Data on the Veterans community	Enhanced collection use and analysis of data across the public, private and charitable sectors to build an evidence base to effectively identify and address the needs of Veterans.
4	Public perception and understanding	The UK population value Veterans and understand their diverse experiences and culture
5	Recognition of Veterans	Veterans feel that their service and experience is recognised and valued by society.
Key themes		
1	Community and relationships	Veterans are able to build healthy relationships and integrate into their communities.
2	Employment, education and skills	Veterans enter appropriate employment and can continue to enhance their careers throughout their working lives.
3	Finance and debt	Veterans leave the Armed Forces with sufficient financial education, awareness and skills to be financially self-supporting and resilient.
4	Health and wellbeing	All Veterans enjoy a state of positive physical and mental health and wellbeing, enabling them to contribute to wider aspects of society.
5	Making a home in civilian society	Veterans have a secure place to live either through buying, renting or social housing.
6	Veterans and the law	Veterans leave the Armed Forces with the resilience and awareness to remain law-abiding civilians.

They will be addressed via the following Dorset actions:

Cross-cutting factors			
	Veterans' Strategy Action	Veterans Strategy desired outcome	Dorset Action
1	Collaboration between organisations	Improved collaboration between organisations offers Veterans coherent support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Programme and establishing of partnerships and collaborative working. • Consideration of collaborations and partnerships nationally and regionally.
2	Coordination of Veterans' services	The coordination of Veterans' provision delivers consistent aims and principles over time and throughout the UK, ensuring Veterans, their families and the bereaved are treated fairly compared to the local population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally by the Programme Board and employment of the Covenant Coordinator. • Dorset Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan. • Liaison and collaboration with national and regional programmes and projects.
3	Data on Veteran Community	Enhanced collection, use and analysis of data across the public, private and charitable sectors to build an evidence base to effectively identify and address the needs of Veterans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterans and family's engagement survey. • Pilot project with Northumbria University and Veterans Gateway on data collection and interpretation.
4	Public perception and understanding	The UK population value Veterans and understand their diverse experiences and culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterans and Family's Information Points. • Events. • Armed Forces Day activities and events.
5	Recognition of Veterans	Veterans feel that their service and experience is recognised and valued by society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Points, events and activities.

Key themes			
	Veterans' Strategy Theme	Veterans' Strategy Desired outcome	Dorset Action
1	Community and relationships	Veterans are able to build healthy relationships and integrate into their communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through the organisation of Armed Forces Day events that involve wider communities and through activities at Information Points, partners and other events. Organisation of Jobs Fairs and working with base resettlement teams, economic development teams and local businesses and business organisations. Working with bases and resettlement teams to identify where civilian input and expertise through courses or other interventions will assist in equipping Service Leavers for civilian life. Service provision through Dorset Health providers and identified charities meets the needs of our Veterans community Working with partners in housing be that Local Authority, housing associations or other providers to ensure that there is quality provision and advice to our Veterans community.
2	Employment, education and skills	Veterans enter appropriate employment and can continue to enhance their careers throughout their working lives.	
3	Finance and debt	Veterans leave the Armed Forces with sufficient financial education, awareness and skills to be financially self-supporting and resilient.	
4	Health and wellbeing	All Veterans enjoy a state of positive physical and mental health and wellbeing, enabling them to contribute to wider aspects of society.	
5	Making a home in civilian society	Veterans have a secure place to live either through buying, renting or social housing.	
6	Veterans and the law	Veterans leave the Armed Forces with the resilience and awareness to remain law-abiding civilians.	

It is intended that the

actions we deliver through the Dorset Armed Forces Covenant Programme will address the key aims of the Armed Forces Community Covenant:

- ▶ Encourage local communities to support the armed forces community in their areas and to nurture public understanding and awareness among 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
- ▶ 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

To achieve this there are eight themes that have actions assigned to them:

1. Community and relationships
2. Armed Forces community and the law
3. Schools and Children's Education

4. Employment, education and skills
5. Health and Wellbeing
6. Making a home in civilian society
7. Leisure and Culture
8. Recognition, Understanding and Communication

The action plan shows where the actions stated meet these priorities and should be read in conjunction with the bid breakdown and summary to enable full understanding of how the aims and objectives will be achieved. It has been rated in line with the BRAG (Blue, Red, Amber, Green) system to enable easy tracking of risk and progress.

BRAG definitions.

Red

Red should only be used when there are significant issues with the project. It can be used when one area of project viability such as scope, time or budget goes beyond the tolerance levels agreed at the start. Red signifies that the matter needs to be escalated to senior management for support immediately.

Amber

If you are suffering with a problem that is having a negative effect on the project performance then an amber rating is appropriate. Usually amber problems can be dealt with within the project team, by the project manager and team members, although it is good practice to alert the project board or senior management to such issues.

Green

Green for go! Everything is functioning as expected and the project performance is as planned.

Blue

Task or objective complete. Task or objective to be monitored and reviewed or no further action required.

Milestones and Outcomes date order				
M/S	Due Date	Target/ Outcome	Progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1	April 18	Appoint Coordinator	Coordinator appointed	
4	April 18	Source one stop shops	Initial locations agreed with Library Service 13 across Dorset	
5	April to Sept 18	Develop process to identify members of armed forces community who are entering, at risk of entering or are due to exit the Criminal Justice system	Being coordinated by Reducing Reoffending Strategy Group	
3	May 18	Evaluation of baseline position of Armed Forces community in Dorset and development of a system for future evaluation of the programme's success	Data entered onto spreadsheet. Factsheet created.	
3	May to Sept 18	Contact made with local voluntary and community sector organisations	RBL and SSAFA invited to be Board members	
4	May 18	Develop Communications Plan	Communications Plan completed. Working document to be reviewed by Board	
6	May 18 to March 20	Increase the number of businesses/organisations who are signed up to the covenant	Work to be done in partnership with Wessex Reserve Forces and Cadet Association	
6	May 18 to March 20	Increase the number of businesses/organisations who hold Bronze, Silver and Gold Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme Awards	Work to be done in partnership with Wessex Reserve Forces and Cadet Association	

1	July 18	Recruitment of Champions	To be completed in conjunction with Libraries Managers and launch of Information Points	
4	July 18	Develop and launch website	Website completed	
4	July 18	Launch one stop shops	Information Points are agreed and identified for 13 libraries across Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole. Launch arranged for 18 th September at West Moors Library.	
6	July 18	Work with business groups to increase uptake of Armed Forces discount scheme		
4	Aug 18	Adapt service based on identified needs and demand		
1	Sept 18	Completed training of Peer Volunteer Champions		
5	Sept 18 to March 20	Develop package of signposting options to support and help those who find themselves within the Criminal Justice system	Being coordinated by Reducing Reoffending Strategy Group	
2	Nov 18	Make contact with GPs across Dorset		
1	Dec 18	Design e-learning package for front line staff	Armed Forces Covenant online training package complete and available online	
4	March 19	Annual Conference and showcase		
2	May 19	Develop a joint Health and Social Care Transition Protocol		
2	May 19 to March 20	Implement joint Health and Social Care Transition Protocol		
3	May 19	Mid programme evaluation		
1	Dec 19	Completion of e-learning by all staff		
3	Mar 20	Programme Closure Evaluation		
4	Mar 20	Annual Conference and showcase		

Community and relationships				
No	Action	Measured by	Owner	Progress to meeting action
CO 1	Encourage communities, community groups and organisations to participate in Armed Forces Days	Number of communities participating	All partners Armed Forces Organisations	
CO 2	Boost the capability of Armed Forces charities through the recruitment of additional volunteers	New volunteers recruited	All partners Armed Forces Organisations and Charities	
CO 3	Develop a series of Veterans and Families Information Points using the Libraries network, service charities and volunteers	Centres created and numbers attending	Council Libraries All partners Armed Forces Organisations and Charities	Information Points are agreed and identified for 13 libraries across Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole. Launch being planned for mid-September.
CO 4	Work with charities and support agencies to develop joint projects that foster integration	Number of projects developed and implemented	All partners Armed Forces Organisations and Charities	Ongoing and meeting with key major Armed Forces Charities being arranged
CO 5	Ensure that Councillors are fully aware of the needs of the Armed Forces Community and the Armed Forces Covenant, to enable them to better develop links between the military and civilian communities	Briefings and presentations made to Councillors Links developed with civilian communities.	All partners	Briefing sessions for Councillors being arranged. Dorset CC session scheduled for 19/09/18. This will need to be re-established once LGR and local elections are completed in May 2019

Armed Forces community and the law				
No	Action	Measured by	Owner	Progress to meeting action
CJ 1	Reduce re-offending rates of Veterans released from prison/custody	Reduction in re-offending	Reducing Reoffending Strategy Group	
CJ 2	Development of process to identify members of the armed forces community who are entering, at risk or entering or are due to exit the criminal justice system	Reduction in re-offending	Reducing Reoffending Strategy Group	
CJ 3	A package of signposting options will be developed to support and help those who find themselves within the criminal justice system	Reduction in re-offending	Reducing Reoffending Strategy Group	

Schools and Children's Education				
No	Action	Measured by	Owner	Progress to meeting action
ED 1	Liaise with LA education units to develop a pan Dorset strategy to facilitate short notice access to school places	Strategy completed	Individual LA Education Units	Need to liaise with new education units after LGR is completed.
ED 2	Liaise with LA education units to provide advice to Head teachers re issues e.g. flexibility with children's absence from school (when parent/s come back from campaigns)	Advice provided	Individual LA Education Units	Need to liaise with new education units after LGR is completed.
ED 3	Encourage forces families to identify themselves to schools to enable schools to draw down the correct levels of pupil premium	Number of families identified by schools	Base Welfare Teams Welfare Organisations	Working with base and service welfare organisations.

Employment, education and skills				
No	Action	Measured by	Owner	Progress to meeting action
EM 1	Develop information and provide to reservists, potential reservists, cadets, potential cadets and local employers to ensure that the requirements of reserve service is understood by all.	Information pack developed. Number of businesses that are provided with packs.	Wessex Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (RFCA)/LEP/Chamber of Trades/ LA Economic Development Units	Ongoing work with Wessex RFCA who will be assisting with business liaison activities
EM 2	Identify incubator sites for businesses and disseminate their locations and other key information to the Armed Forces Community	Number of sites identified	LA Economic Development Units Wessex RFCA	
EM 3	Promote career opportunities for service leavers into partner organisations including support for those with physical and/or mental disabilities	Pathway developed and implemented	Wessex RFCA All partners	
EM 4	Provide information on employment opportunities to the Armed Forces Community via a variety of communication channels	Opportunities provided and uptake of opportunities.	Wessex RFCA LA Economic Development Units	Dorset Armed Forces Community Careers and Lifestyle event. Dorset Military bases Autumn Jobs Fair
EM 5	Work with businesses to identify opportunities for the Armed Forces Community and provide information to resettlement teams	Opportunity pathway in place	Wessex RFCA LA Economic Development Units	Outcome of Dorset Armed Forces Community Careers and Lifestyle event and Dorset Military bases Autumn Jobs Fair

EM 6	Use existing job fairs, business networks and business clubs to increase employer and business engagement and employment opportunities for all the Armed Forces Community	Number of ex forces personnel securing jobs	Wessex RFCA LA Economic Development Units	Outcome of Dorset Armed Forces Community Careers and Lifestyle event and Dorset Military bases Autumn Jobs Fair
EM 7	Increase number of businesses/organisations who are signed up to the covenant.	Number of businesses signing the covenant	Wessex RFCA LA Economic Development Units	Ongoing work with Wessex RFCA who will be assisting with business liaison activities
EM 8	Increase number of businesses/organisations who hold bronze, silver or gold Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme awards.	Number of businesses holding the employers award at various levels	Wessex RFCA LA Economic Development Units	Ongoing work with Wessex RFCA who will be assisting with business liaison activities

Health and Wellbeing				
No	Action	Measured by	Owner	Progress to meeting action
HW 1	Improve access to specialist mental wellbeing support for the Armed Forces Community	Number accessing support	DHUFT/Dorset CCG/LA Social Care Units	Being achieved through Dorset HealthCare's Armed Forces Health and Wellbeing Team
HW 2	GPs to identify veterans at routine medical appointments to enable tailored support	Number of GPs briefed Number of veterans identified	Dorset CCG	
HW3	Provide information, training and advice to Health and Social Care staff regarding support for the Armed Forces Community	Number of staff trained	DHUFT/ Dorset CCG / LA Social Care Units	Armed Forces Covenant online training package being amended and developed for delivery asap
HW 4	Implement joint Health and Social Care transition protocol to support Armed Forces personnel returning to civilian life	Protocol implemented	DHUFT/ Dorset CCG / LA Social Care Units	
HW 5	Make appropriate information available to enable the Armed Service Community to cope with issues triggered by deployment and return	Information distributed	DHUFT/Dorset CCG/LA Social Care Units	
HW 6	Implement scheme to overcome the issue of those foreign and commonwealth Armed Forces community families being unable to access vaccinations, through the provision of advice to all GP practice staff	Number of GP Practices advised and cooperating with scheme	Dorset CCG	

Making a home in civilian society				
No	Action	Measured by	Owner	Progress to meeting action
HO1	Provide housing advice to the Armed Forces community to enable access to housing services that meet their needs	Number of personnel advised Number securing housing	LA Housing Units/ Housing Associations	
HO 2	LA Housing and Communities Units to engage with HIVE, Armed Forces Welfare Officers, relevant statutory bodies and service charities to facilitate information sharing on the latest intelligence and options	Intelligence gathered	LA Housing Units Armed Forces Welfare HIVE Service Charities	
HO 3	Identify, advise and support homeless veterans and those who are rough sleepers	Number of veterans supported	LA Rough Sleeper and Homelessness Teams Homelessness Charities	Meetings being set up and held to discuss issues and interventions
HO 5	Liaise with LA's re allocation policies to consider opportunities to support housing needs of the Armed forces Community	Allocation policy published	LA Housing Units/ Housing Associations	

Leisure and Culture				
No	Action	Measured by	Owner	Progress to meeting action
LC 1	Negotiate higher intervention rate subsidy for leisure	% discount achieved	LA Leisure and Recreation Units	
LC 2	Encourage use of National Armed Forces discount card by increasing the amount of businesses who accept it and offer discount to serving members and veterans	Amount of businesses signed up	All partners	
LC 3	Establish information about businesses who individually give discounts and disseminate through web pages	Information shared	All partners	

Recognition, Understanding and Communication				
No	Action	Measured by	Owner	Progress to meeting action
RU 1	Develop information on the demographics of the Armed Service Community in Dorset	Up-to-date information collated and circulated	All partners Armed Forces Organisations Wessex RFCA Northumbria University Veterans Gateway	Initial demographics and stats assembled for writing of bid. These are being continuously updated. Data collection pilot project with Northumbria University and Veterans gateway.
RU 2	Develop a web site dedicated to information and advice for the Armed Forces Community, with appropriate links	Pages established Pages updated	All partners Armed Forces Organisations	Work ongoing with 'Dorset for you' web team to develop new pages on their website
RU 3	Develop links with media and ensure positive news distributed	Good news stories issued and used by local media.	All partners Armed Forces Organisations	Links being established with Partners communication teams with Dorset CC Comms Team taking the lead. Initial news re bid have been released and published.
RU 4	Encourage Armed Forces, community, business and charity organisations to take part in Armed Forces Day and remembrance activities	Number of organisations involved	All partners Armed Forces Organisations	
RU 7	Raise awareness and understanding of the roles and duties of the Armed Forces and of the needs of the greater Armed Forces Community	Create information displays for publically accessed venues	All partners Armed Forces Organisations	
RU 8	Increase awareness and understanding of the Armed Forces with young people by providing information to schools and local youth groups	Information packs developed and distributed.	All partners Armed Forces Organisations	
RU 9	Utilise existing networks to improve communications	Number of networks used to disseminate information.	All partners Armed Forces Organisations	
RU 10	Promote and encourage participation in cadet forces	Number of new members	All partners Schools and Cadet Force Leaders	
RU 11	Provide Single Points of Contact (SPC) in lead organisations	SPCs identified and publicised	All partners	New contacts to be established on completion of LGR