

Armed Forces Covenant

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milton keynes council



ARMED FORCES
COVENANT

EMPLOYER
RECOGNITION
SCHEME

GOLD AWARD 2020

Armed Forces Covenant

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise from the nation ensuring that those who serve or have served, and their families, are treated fairly.




UK AF Community

- Those still serving
- Those who have served (veterans)
- Reservists
- Their Families
- The bereaved, WIS
- Cadet Instructors/volunteers
- Divorced spouses
- ESL (Early Service Leavers)



Single Armed Forces Covenant Template



Organisation Name

We commit to uphold the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the contribution that Service personnel, both regular and reservist, veterans and military families make to our organisation, our community and to the country.

Signed on behalf of:
Organisation Name

Signed:
Name:
Position:
Date:

Add logo

- **Employment support to members of the Armed Forces Community**
- **Communications, engagement and outreach**
- **Commercial**
- **Health**
- **Housing**
- **Education**
- **Civic responsibilities**
- **Any additional commitment the organisation wishes to make**

Defence Employer Recognition Scheme



ERS encourages employers to Support defence

Bronze – Pledge

Silver – Demonstrate

Gold – Advocate



Defence Employer Recognition Scheme



Milton Keynes Council

- Silver award 2019
- Gold award 2020



Bedford Borough Council

- Silver award 2021



BEDFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL



Local Employers Who've Signed



BACKGROUND



- Armed Forces Covenant launched 2011; “Good initiatives”
- Some still suffer disadvantage – improve consistency of delivery.
- New legislation to address issues by introducing a duty to have ‘**due regard**’ to the principles of the Covenant on **local** public bodies
- Legislation introduced as part of Armed Forces Bill 2021.

ARMED FORCES COVENANT PRINCIPLES



1. Recognising the **unique obligations** of, and **sacrifices** made by, the Armed Forces.
2. **Remove disadvantages** for those serving and veterans
3. That **special provision** for those serving and veterans may be justified by the effect on them from service in the UK Armed Forces.

WHICH BODIES ARE IN SCOPE IN ENGLAND?



- Local Authorities
- Governing bodies of maintained schools
- Non-maintained special schools
- Proprietors of academies
- Governing bodies of institutions in further education
- Special post-16 institutions

- NHS commissioning boards
- Clinical Commissioning Groups
- NHS Trusts/Foundation Trusts



WHICH FUNCTIONS ARE IN SCOPE IN ENGLAND?



- In **Housing**:
 - The allocation of social housing
 - Homelessness duties
 - Tenancy strategies
 - Disabled facilities grants
- In **Education**:
 - Relevant functions under Education Act 1996
 - School admissions and transport
 - Special educational provision
 - Student wellbeing
 - Service Pupil Premium
- In **Healthcare**:
 - Relevant functions under NHS Act 2006
 - SEND healthcare provision



SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE



- Will be accompanied by statutory guidance – will help to understand & comply with the new Duty. (3rd and final round being written as we speak)
- Wider tranche of support and training materials to better promote the Covenant and best practice in delivery.
- Affected bodies may wish to **begin early consideration** of how they will demonstrate and record compliance with the Duty

This has happened locally!

INDICATIVE TIMELINE



February 2021 – Armed Forces Bill Second Reading in the House of Commons

March 2021 – Armed Forces Bill Committee stage in the Commons

Autumn 2021 – Armed Forces Bill passed both Houses and received Royal Assent in Dec 2021

June 2022 – Third round of guidance (No FG's, but circulated for final comments)

Late 2022 – Following an implementation period, expectation that Covenant statutory duty will enter into force



Office for
Veterans' Affairs

OVA Success Criteria - Armed Forces Covenant Community Action Group

8th March 2022



Strategy for our Veterans



THE STRATEGY FOR OUR VETERANS VALUED. CONTRIBUTING. SUPPORTED.



VISION

This Strategy has a 10 year scope to 2028. Through the 10 year timescale, the Strategy addresses the immediate needs of older Veterans as well as setting the right conditions for society to empower - and support - the newer generation. Initiatives and proposals will work towards an enduring Vision articulated by three key principles.

Those who have served in the UK Armed Forces, and their families, transition smoothly back into civilian life and contribute fully to a society that understands and values what they have done and what they have to offer.

PRINCIPLES

The Principles articulate in greater detail the strategic objectives of the Vision

Veterans are first and foremost civilians and continue to be of benefit to wider society

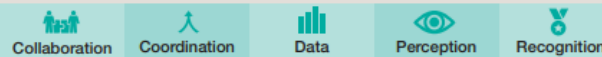
Veterans are encouraged and enabled to maximise their potential as civilians

Veterans are able to access support that meets their needs when necessary, through public and voluntary sectors

These Principles encompass Regular and Reservist Veterans and where appropriate, their families and the bereaved. The focus is on those Veterans of the UK Armed Forces resident in the UK. In due course, we will consider encompassing Veterans who return to or choose to live overseas. These Principles are consistent with, and underpinned by, the Armed Forces Covenant.

CROSS-CUTTING FACTORS

That affect service provision for Veterans across all Key Themes



KEY THEMES

That emerged as affecting Veterans' lives



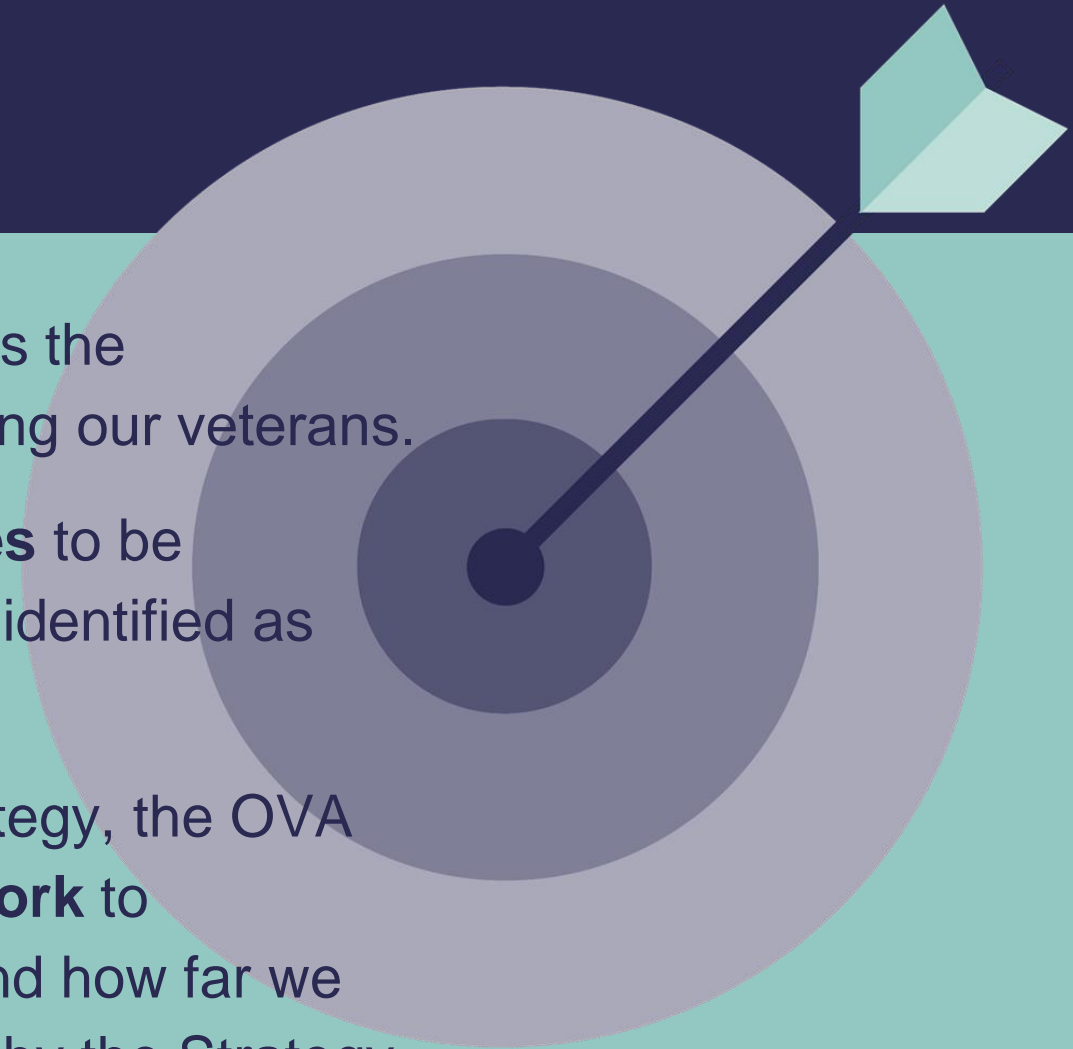
November 2018

Key Themes:

1. Health and wellbeing
2. Community and relationships
3. Employment, education and skills
4. Making a home in civilian society
5. Finance and debt
6. Veterans and the law.

Our Strategy for Veterans 2018

- The 10 year **Strategy for Our Veterans** describes the government's vision for supporting and empowering our veterans.
- The Strategy set **high-level, long-term outcomes** to be achieved by **2028** across **six key policy themes** identified as impacting veterans and their families
- As we approach the mid-point in the 10 year Strategy, the OVA has prioritised developing an **evaluation framework** to understand the progress we have made so far, and how far we are from achieving the **2028** outcomes as set out by the Strategy.



Success Criteria



- The OVA had **worked with other government departments** to develop an initial draft list of **success criteria for defining what success would look like by 2028**.
- So far **54** draft success criteria have been set across the six key themes of the Strategy:
 1. Health and wellbeing,
 2. Community and relationships,
 3. Employment, education and skills,
 4. Making a home in civilian society,
 5. Finance and debt,
 6. Veterans and the law.

Community Action Group



March 2022

- MK/Bedford
- North Lincolnshire
- Hereford and Worcestershire
- Hartlepool
- Greater Manchester
- Portsmouth
- Liverpool
- Plymouth
- Lancashire
- St Helens

June 2022

Local Government Association

About | Political | Our support | Case studies | Parliament | Topics | Publications | Events

Home > Parliament > Briefings and responses

Armed Forces Act 2021: background, implications for councils and practical steps to get ready for the Act

All councils have voluntarily signed the Armed Forces Covenant. The further enshrinement of the Covenant into law is an opportunity to build upon work councils are already leading to help serving personnel, reservists, veterans, and their families to have the same equality of access to public services as their civilian neighbours.

Communities | 16 Feb 2022

Introduction and purpose	Introduction and purpose
Background to the Armed Forces Act 2021	This briefing covers:
The implications of the Act for councils	■ Background to the Armed Forces Act 2021 – “the Act”
Practical steps councils can take to get ready for the Act	■ The implications of the Act for councils
Annex A – specified persons and bodies (in England)	■ Practical steps councils can take to get ready for the Act

'Asking the Question'



Main changes in response to the consultation are:

1. Clearer definition of former service personnel (1 day)
2. Further guidance to ensure that former service personnel are informed *why, how*, support rather than discriminate, no obligation
3. Definition of NS and MN to ensure capture

Government Statistical Service Home About us Guidance Learning and development

GSS > [Policy and guidance hub](#) > Harmonised standard for previous UK armed forces service

Harmonised standard for previous UK armed forces service

Publication date: 16 March 2022

Author: Ministry of Defence, and the Office for Veterans' Affairs

Who this is for: Users and producers of statistics

Type: Harmonisation standards and guidance

Contact: GSSHelp@statistics.gov.uk

What is harmonisation?

Harmonisation is the process of making statistics and data more comparable, consistent, and coherent. [Harmonised standards](#) set out how to collect and report statistics to make sure they can be compared effectively across different data collections in the Government Statistical Service (GSS). Harmonisation produces more useful statistics that give users a greater level of understanding about a topic.

What do we mean by previous UK armed forces service?

When we talk about previous UK armed forces service we mean any person who has served in the regular or reserve UK armed forces. Members of this population are sometimes called veterans. This includes all former service personnel who have served

Working Age Veterans

Milton Keynes: 3,139 (1.89%)

Bedford: 1,655 (1.64%)

Central Bedfordshire: 3,491 (2.12%)

AFCFT Knowledge Network



- Free, open-source, downloadable and adaptable resources for local authorities.
- Examples of best practice, training packages, TOR's and templates.
- New resources will be added as and when available and the collection will continue to grow.
- The MoN is also on the Network.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the AFCFT Knowledge Network. The header includes the AFCFT logo, the text 'The Knowledge Network', and navigation links for 'What's the Knowledge Network?', 'Impact Hub', 'Research and Reports', and 'AFCFT WEBSITE'. The main content area features a large heading 'Welcome to the Knowledge Network' and a sub-heading 'A place to access the learning and best practice from the grant making of the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust'. Below this are five white boxes, each with a red icon and a title: 'The Map of Need' (location pin icon), 'Programme Evaluations' (circular arrows icon), 'Service Families' (group of people icon), 'Veterans and carers' (two people icon), and 'Delivering locally' (location pin with arrows icon). Each box contains a brief description of the resource.

THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT FUND TRUST | The Knowledge Network | What's the Knowledge Network? | Impact Hub | Research and Reports | AFCFT WEBSITE

Welcome to the Knowledge Network

A place to access the learning and best practice from the grant making of the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust

- The Map of Need**
Explore the needs of veterans and their families across the UK, based on public data
- Programme Evaluations**
Discover the impact that our grant funding programmes have had on Armed Forces communities
- Service Families**
Discover how our funding has supported Armed Forces families
- Veterans and carers**
Discover the impact that our funding has had on veterans and those who support them
- Delivering locally**
Explore our approach to supporting real change at a local level

Contact and Questions



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