

Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan 2019 – 2023

Action Plan themes are based on the outcomes identified in the Government's "Strategy for Our Veterans: Valued. Contributing. Supported" (Nov 2018). In our plan the term veterans has been replaced with armed forces community to aid inclusion.

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755915/Strategy_for_our_Veterans_FI_NAL_08.11.18_WEB.pdf)

The plan will be updated on an annual basis and progress reported via the Derbyshire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership.

Cross cutting themes

Cross cutting theme 1: Collaboration between organisations					RAG rating
Improved collaboration between organisations offers the Armed Forces Community coherent support					
Action number	Action	Timescale	Member/ Officer lead	Progress	
1	Nominate new Armed Forces Covenant Champion	July 2019	Leader	Cllr Kate Sarvent confirmed as Armed Forces Champion.	✓
2	Provide member and/or officer representation and engagement at Derbyshire Covenant Partnership.	Ongoing	Armed Forces Champion / SD Corporate	Officer/ member representation agreed and actively engaged in partnership activity.	
3	Work with Derbyshire County Council, Derby City Council and Derbyshire Districts to establish an officer working group to progress covenant actions.	October 2019	SD Corporate	Group launched in October 2019 to support Derbyshire Armed Forces Covenant activity and delivery of individual authority action plans. Group continues to be well attended and provides great opportunities to collaborate and share	✓

				knowledge – this has been particularly valuable during the Covid-19 pandemic – for example developing Covid-19 secure remembrance events.	
4	Support the Department for Work and Pensions and Job Centre Plus to deliver the veterans hub. The veterans hub is open to all members of the armed forces including serving, retired, veterans, and reservists. The regular hub sessions focus on health wellbeing, re-employment, volunteering etc.	Ongoing	SD Corporate	<p>Venue provided at the town hall, website and social media promotion and officer support where appropriate.</p> <p>Following changes to government guidance regarding Covid-19 and extensive risk assessment activity Veteran Hub activity has moved into a digital and telephone support space which Chesterfield Borough Council help to promote.</p> <p>The Veteran Hub will return when partners can facilitate a covid-19 secure approach.</p>	
<p>Cross cutting theme 2: Coordination of the Armed Forces Community services</p> <p>The coordination of the Armed Forces Community provision delivers consistent aims and principles over time and throughout the UK, ensuring the Armed Forces Community, their families and the bereaved are treated fairly compared to the local population.</p>					
5	Improve access to information for the armed forces community via the CBC website. This includes developing a	<p>June 2020</p> <p>Revised - August 2021</p>	Communications and Marketing Manager	The Communications and Marketing Team have been under extreme pressures due to the Covid-19 pandemic – in particular developing the Covid-19 website hub, providing up to date information on	

	dedicated Armed Forces web page.			services and support and supporting key national, regional and local campaigns. This activity has a revised delivery date for 2021/22.	
6	Continue to support CBC services and partner agencies to promote services, information, events etc. aimed at or of benefit to the armed forces community.	Ongoing	Communications and Marketing Manager	A range of partnership campaigns supported across our communication channels including Your Chesterfield, website, intranet, social media accounts and members bulletins.	
Cross cutting theme 3: Data on the Armed Forces 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 the Armed Forces Community.					
7	Census 2021 includes key Armed Forces data. Encourage high completion rate within Chesterfield Borough.	Oct 20 – April 2021	Assistant Census Liaison Manager / Communications and Marketing Manager	Actively engaging with Office of National Statistics to support maximisation of completion rates in Chesterfield Borough: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media and web campaign • Information in Your Chesterfield • Pipeline of information to key local groups to cascade to communities • Promotion of alternative completion methods 	
8	Support the Derbyshire Covenant Partnership project aiming to identify the size and	2021/22	SD Corporate – via Derbyshire Armed Forces	Derby University commissioned to undertake the research.	

	needs of the Armed Forces Community within Derbyshire.		Covenant Partnership.	Some delays have been caused due to pandemic – expecting a further update in Spring 2021.	
9	Utilise the above Derbyshire Covenant Partnership project and Census findings to develop our action plan and the Derbyshire Armed Forces Covenant further.	2022/23	SD Corporate	Partnership study will report in 2021/22 and first Census date likely to be available in March 2022. Ward and super out level data is likely to be available in 2023/24.	
Cross cutting theme 4: Public perception and understanding					
The UK population value the Armed Forces Community and understand their diverse experiences and culture.					
10	Sign the revised Derbyshire Armed Forces Covenant.	March 2019	Leader	Signed March 2019. Website, social media and press coverage.	✓
Actions 1,4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 contribute to this cross-cutting theme.					
Cross cutting theme 5: Recognition of the Armed forces Community					
The Armed Forces Community feel that their service and experience is recognised and valued by society.					
11	Working with Armed Forces Charities and organisations to develop an annual programme of events and activities to recognise and value the contribution of the armed forces community past and present. This includes Armistice	Annually by April each year for the forthcoming year.	Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer	Annual events programme developed in consultation with Armed Forces organisations. Covid-19 secure events and virtual celebrations / remembrance activity developed for 2020/21 including:	

	Day, Remembrance Sunday, Armed Forces Day, commemoration of key dates			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VE / VJ Day virtual museum display and activities and social media Campaign • Covid-19 secure Remembrance Sunday event and 11th hour ceremony. Assistance and advice to local ceremonies • Remember at Home campaign • Flag flying and social media campaign for Armed Forces Day 	
12	<p>Pomegranate Theatre Chesterfield developing a range of event commemorate VE day including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VE celebration show • The Navy Lark show • WW2 Films 	4 – 8 May 2020	Arts and Venues Manager	Due to Covid-19 restrictions the theatres were not open during this period. Alternative virtual events were developed as described in action 11.	
13	Continue to support the Civic Cadet roles and encourage Armed Forces Cadet Units and other young people via schools, clubs and associations to take part in the annual programme of recognition events and activities.	Ongoing	Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer.	Due to Covid -19 restrictions we were unable to include cadet units, schools and young people’s clubs and associations in our Remembrance Day event in 2020. However extensive engagement and participation with young people was enabled via our virtual museum, activities schedule and social media campaigns. Prior to Covid-19 attendance at events and activities including Remembrance Sunday	

				had been growing year on year with over 450 children and young people taking part in 2019.	
14	Honour decorated service personnel and the wider remembrance of the sacrifices made by local residents e.g. Legion d'Honneur, Victoria Cross etc. receptions.	Ongoing	Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer.	No ceremonies during 2020/21.	

Key themes

Key theme 1: Community and relationships					
The Armed Forces Community are able to build healthy relationships and integrate into their communities.					
Action number	Action	Timescale	Member/ Officer lead	Progress	
Actions across the plan contribute to this theme.					
Key theme 2: Employment, education and skills					
The Armed Forces Community enter appropriate employment and can continue to enhance their careers throughout their working lives.					
15	Attain the Bronze Award in the Ministry of Defence's Employer Recognition Scheme.	June 2019	SD Corporate	Applications completed and status awarded in June 2019.	✓

16	Amend annual leave policy to include up to 10 days paid leave days per calendar year to undertake reservist duties.	2019/20	HR and Support Services Manager	Leave policy amended and approved.	✓
17	Register as an employer with links to our recruitment portal on the Forces Families jobs website.	December 2019	SD Corporate	Registration completed.	✓
18	Work towards the Silver Award of the Ministry of Defence's Employer Recognition Scheme.	2021/22	SD Corporate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended MOD Silver Award webinar • Expression of interest completed for Silver Award in 2021/22 • Application form and evidence being developed 	
Key theme 3: Finance and debt					
The Armed Forces Community leave the Armed Forces with sufficient financial education, awareness and skills to be financially self-supporting and resilient.					
Actions 4, 5, 6, 7, 8,9 contribute to this theme.					
19	Signposting to armed forces specific advice and support including SSAFA (The Armed Forces Charity), The Royal British	June 2019 – Revised August 2021.	Communications and Marketing Manager	The Communications and Marketing Team have been under extreme pressures due to the Covid-19 pandemic – in particular developing the Covid-19 website hub, providing up to date information on services	

	<p>Legion, Chesterfield Armed Forces and Veterans Hub.</p> <p>Signposting to advice agency support including Citizens Advice Bureau, Derbyshire Law Centre, Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre and other agencies including Credit Union.</p>			<p>and support and supporting key national, regional and local campaigns. This activity has a revised delivery date for 2021/22.</p> <p>It will include the new website pages but also a section on the intranet to assist staff with enquiries.</p>	
<p>Key theme 4: Health and wellbeing All the Armed Forces Community enjoy a state of positive physical and mental health and wellbeing, enabling them to contribute to wider aspects of society.</p>					
20	<p>Introduce concessions available at Queen's Park Sports Centre and the Healthy Living Centre, Staveley for active armed forces members and flexible terms for membership.</p>	2019/20	SD Leisure, Culture and Wellbeing	<p>Agreed as part of the overall concessions policy development.</p> <p>Bespoke flexible membership packages developed for armed services personnel who may be deployed.</p>	✓

Key theme 5: Making a home in civilian society

The Armed Forces Community have a secure place to live either through buying, renting or social housing.

21	Implement the Home Options Policy (Choice based lettings scheme) developed in partnership by the Derbyshire and Staffordshire Moorlands Home Options Partnership. Includes various exclusions to local residency requirements and preferences for armed forces applicants	2019/20	SD Housing	Partnership policy and arrangements in place.	✓
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Key theme 6: The Armed Forces Community and the law

The Armed Forces Community leave the Armed Forces with the resilience and awareness to remain law-abiding civilians.

Currently no actions identified for this theme, but this will be reviewed following the completion of the Derbyshire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership project to assess the size and needs of the local armed forces community.