



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH
ARMED FORCES COVENANT**

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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Cllr Mike Davey

Armed Forces Covenant Champion – Cambridge City Council

It's been another busy and productive twelve months and much has been achieved. We are delighted that a number of new Organisations have joined the Covenant Board including Walking With The Wounded, Bridge Of Heroes, East Anglia Veterans Association, and The Poppy Factory.

We have held a number of outstanding events across the area, including a number commemorating the 80th D Day Anniversary. In Cambridge we held a very moving day recognising the contribution of those who served in the Indian Army during both World Wars, which involved contributions from High Commissions representing all the Countries who make up the sub-continent. Our partners in the County reviewed their terms of reference and both East Cambs and Fenland District Councils refreshed their Covenants.

It was particularly welcome for Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Boards to come together on a permanent basis which should enhance our delivery to those who are serving and veterans. In addition, we were able to secure the long-term funding for our Coordinator through the creation of the Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Coordinator building on previous work.

My thanks go to the individual bodies that have contributed to achieving this long-standing ambition, which also gives me the chance to thank Tommy Kelly for all his hard work over the last 12 months. Without him, none of what we do would be possible. Finally, and most importantly, can I express my gratitude to all those who serve within the Military in these difficult and uncertain times. The dedication and sacrifices that you and your families make on behalf of the Country is both appreciated and welcome. Thank you.



Cllr Sebastian Kindersley**Armed Forces Covenant Champion – Cambridgeshire County Council**

As I plan to retire from Cambridgeshire County Council, I have been reflecting on some of the responsibilities I have taken on over my time as a Councillor. One of these has been as the County Council's Military Covenant Champion. It has been both inspiring and humbling to see how deeply and seriously the armed forces community takes the care and support of those who have served and their families.

Over 37,000 people in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have served in the military. It is incumbent on us all to ensure that they and their families are both thanked and supported in good times and in bad – and the many organisations and volunteers I have come across do this work with enthusiasm and generosity.

But challenges lie ahead. We know the demands on our armed forces are likely to increase as European nations shoulder more and more of the responsibility for protecting us all in the West. Theatres of war and conflict continue around the world. We need our Armed Forces community to be confident that - whatever happens – we will be there to support them just as they support us in times of both war and peace.



Cllr Jason McNally



Armed Forces Covenant Champion – Peterborough City Council

As a proud supporter of our Armed Forces community, I am honored to introduce this report on the work of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Armed Forces Covenant Partnership.

Our region has a rich military heritage, and we remain deeply committed to ensuring that those who serve, have served, and their families are treated with fairness, respect, and gratitude.

The Covenant Partnership continues to be a vital force in strengthening the bonds between local authorities, military organisations, charities, and communities.

Through collaboration and shared purpose, we are making real progress in addressing the challenges faced by veterans and service families—whether in housing, employment, healthcare, or education.

I am particularly proud of the innovative and inclusive approach the Partnership has taken to ensure that no member of our Armed Forces community is left behind. Their dedication reflects the values we hold dear in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough: compassion, service, and unity.

As we look ahead, I reaffirm my full support for the Covenant and its mission. Together, we will continue to honour the sacrifices made and build a future where every veteran and service family can thrive.



The Armed Forces Covenant

An Enduring Covenant between the People of the United Kingdom, His 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 Royal 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.



Introduction

This year has seen continuing conflict across the globe, with the war in Ukraine seeing its second anniversary and significant unrest in the Middle East following the attack on Israel on the 7th October 2023.

UK Armed Forces continue to provide support to Ukrainian soldiers in the UK as part of Operation Interflex, the UK mission to train Ukrainian forces.

In June, we reflected on and remembered the thousands of Sailors, Soldiers and Aviators that made up the invasion force for Operations Overlord & Neptune 80 years previously.

The operations saw allied forces regain a foothold on the beaches of Normandy, launching the successful liberation of German-occupied Western Europe.



Overview & Project Update

2024 has seen a lot of changes in the arrangements for delivering the Armed Forces Covenant in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The end of the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust funding for the Armed Forces Covenant officer role ended in March this year and a new Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Coordinator role that had been planned over the previous 18 months, came to fruition.

This new role provides a dedicated officer to support and coordinate the Armed Forces Covenant work across the seven local authority funding partners.

With the new funding arrangements being shared equally amongst all partners, it was decided to combine the separate Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Armed Forces Covenant boards into a single Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Board.

This revised arrangement was beneficial for several factors, including reduced administration with the lead officer having only to administer a single board, more overlap across the various units and stations in the region and widening of the network of stakeholders.



Armed Forces Covenant Champions

All Cambridgeshire County, City & District Councils appoint an Armed Forces Covenant Champion that leads on the Armed Forces Covenant work at their respective council.

Partnership Armed Forces Covenant Champions

Cambridgeshire County Council

AFC Champion - Cllr Sebastian Kindersley skindersley@hotmail.com

Cambridge City Council

AFC Champion – Cllr Mike Davey mike.davey@cambridge.gov.uk

East Cambridgeshire District Council

AFC Champion – Cllr Martin Goodearl martin.goodearl@eastcambs.gov.uk

Fenland District Council

AFC Champion – Cllr Susan Wallwork swallwork@fenland.gov.uk

Huntingdonshire District Council

AFC Champion – Cllr Jon Neish Jon.Neish@huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Peterborough City Council

AFC Champion – Cllr Jason McNally jason.mcnally@peterborough.gov.uk

South Cambridgeshire District Council

AFC Champion – Cllr Jose Hales cldr.hales@scambs.gov.uk

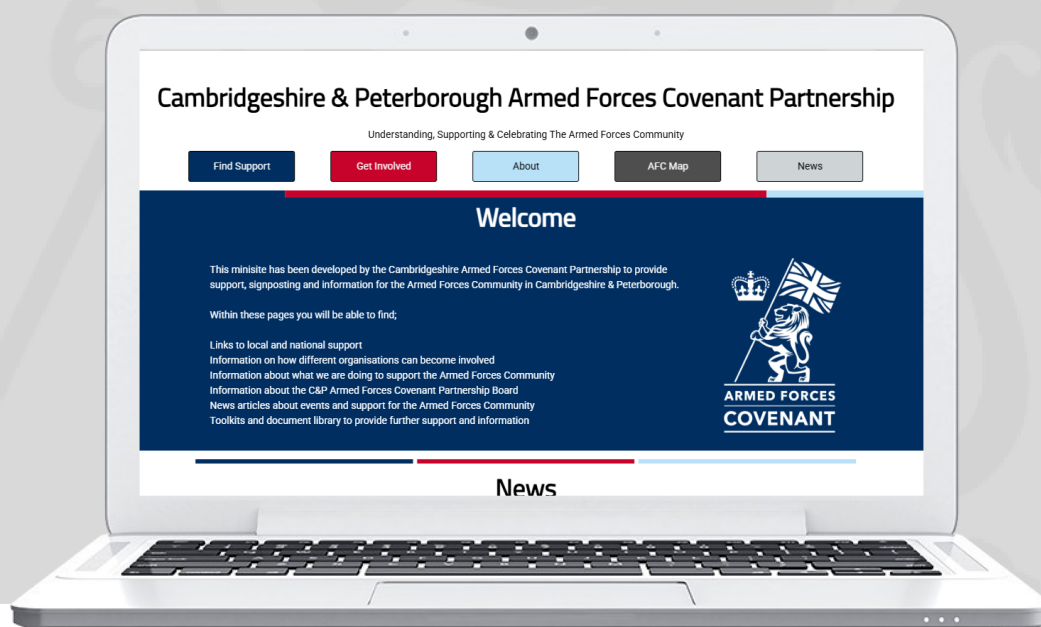
Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Coordinator,
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough
Tommy Kelly - thomas.kelly@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

This year, a microsite for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Armed Forces Covenant Partnership was developed as part of the larger Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Insights web platform.

With support from members of the partnership board, the Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Coordinator developed content for the site which primarily aims to provide links and guidance to support mechanisms for the Armed Forces Community. There are also further sections that provide information and toolkits on,

- How organisations can become involved in supporting the Armed Forces Community through the Armed Forces Covenant
- Organisations that have signed the Armed Forces Covenant
- Information about the Veteran Friendly Framework accreditation
- Information about the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Board and associated documents
- Annual Reports and other documents and toolkits
- A link to Armed Forces Covenant Mapping
- News articles

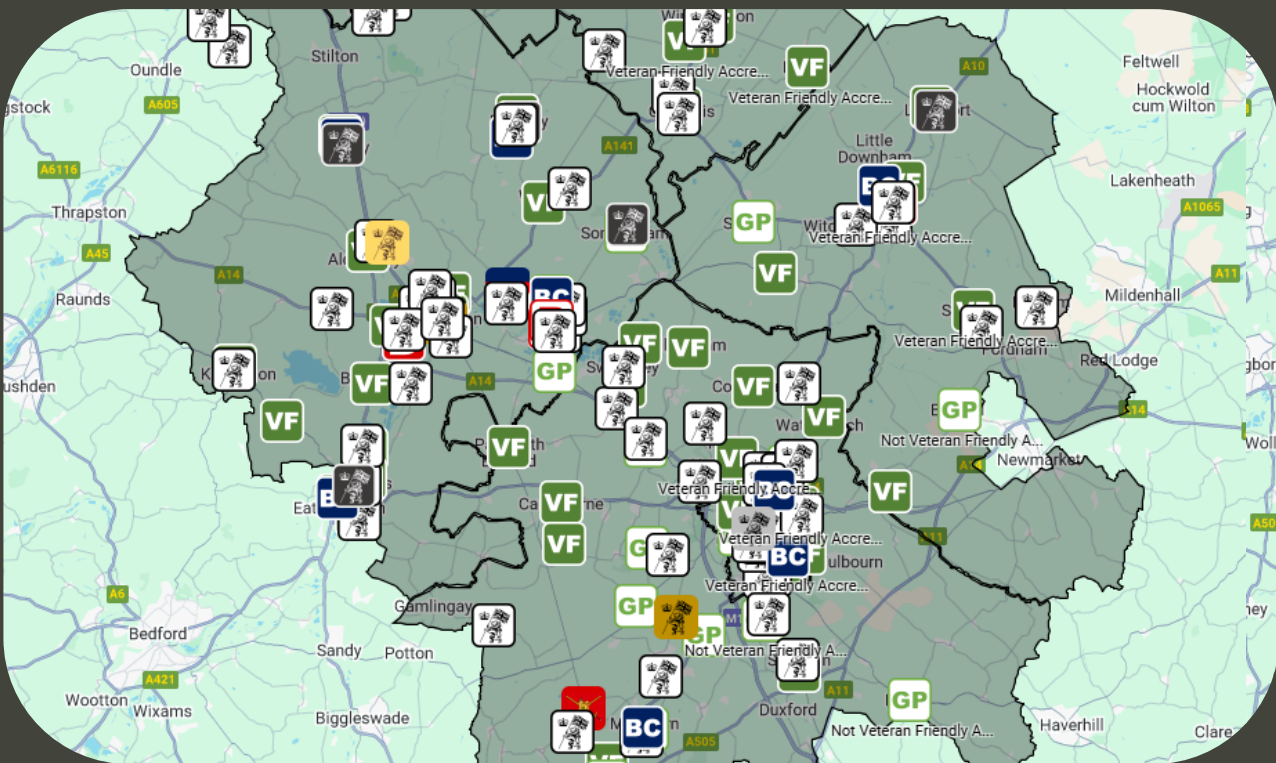
The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Armed Forces Covenant Partnership is available at <https://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/afc/>



Using existing functionality provided by Google Maps, a mapping of Armed Forces Community-related organisations was undertaken. This would allow users to use filtering tools to view the different types of organisations that are linked to, or provide support for, the Armed Forces Community. These include:

- Regular and Reserve Units and Stations
- GP Practices with/without Veterans Friendly Accreditation
- Private, Charity and Voluntary Organisations that have signed the Armed Forces Covenant
- Local Authorities, including Town and Parish Councils that have signed the Armed Forces Covenant

Not only is the mapping helpful to users to find support local to them, but it also helps support organisations to identify gaps in service.



Understanding who the Armed Forces Community are and the disadvantages that they can endure helps us to appreciate that we can all play some part in providing support.

The Armed Forces Community can face numerous challenges, with many being quite rudimentary and that don't hugely affect the public. A high number can simply be caused by the demands placed on service families to be more mobile than other citizens.

Warwickshire County Council developed training modules to explain more about the Armed Forces Covenant & Community and, through partnership working, have made them available to numerous organisations across the country.

The current available modules are:

The Armed Forces Covenant - Induction

The Armed Forces Covenant for Customer Facing Staff

The Armed Forces Covenant and Covenant Duty explained – Health

The Armed Forces Covenant and Covenant Duty explained – Housing

E-learning is being rolled out to all partner authorities that have Learning Management Systems that are compatible with the file formats required. For those that can't accept the learning modules, there are publicly available versions that anyone can access.

[The Armed Forces Covenant – Induction](#)

[The Armed Forces Covenant for Customer Facing Staff](#)

[The Armed Forces Covenant and Covenant Duty explained – Health](#)

[The Armed Forces Covenant and Covenant Duty explained – Housing](#)



Designed for use in residential settings for older people, the Veteran Friendly Framework (VFF) helps care providers to offer appropriate support for the thousands of veterans living in care homes across England.

The Framework supports care providers in identifying veterans and their wellbeing needs, addressing social isolation and providing signposting to statutory and charitable services.

It consists of eight standards which care providers will need to meet to complete their accreditation. Each of these standards will be accompanied by a set of resources that support care homes in demonstrating their achievement.

Supporting Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Care Homes to understand and become involved in the accreditation is now part of the Armed Forces Covenant Partnership action plan and conversations with a number of facilities have commenced.

Partners at Cambridgeshire County and Peterborough City Councils, with their links to the sector, are supporting.

D-Day 80th Anniversary

The 80th anniversary of D-Day was on June 6, 2024. This day marked the 80th anniversary of the Normandy Landings, a crucial event in World War II. Commemorations and events were held in the UK and France to remember the sacrifices made by Allied forces.

There were numerous beacon lightings and acts of remembrance across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to mark the anniversary.

D-Day 80th Anniversary

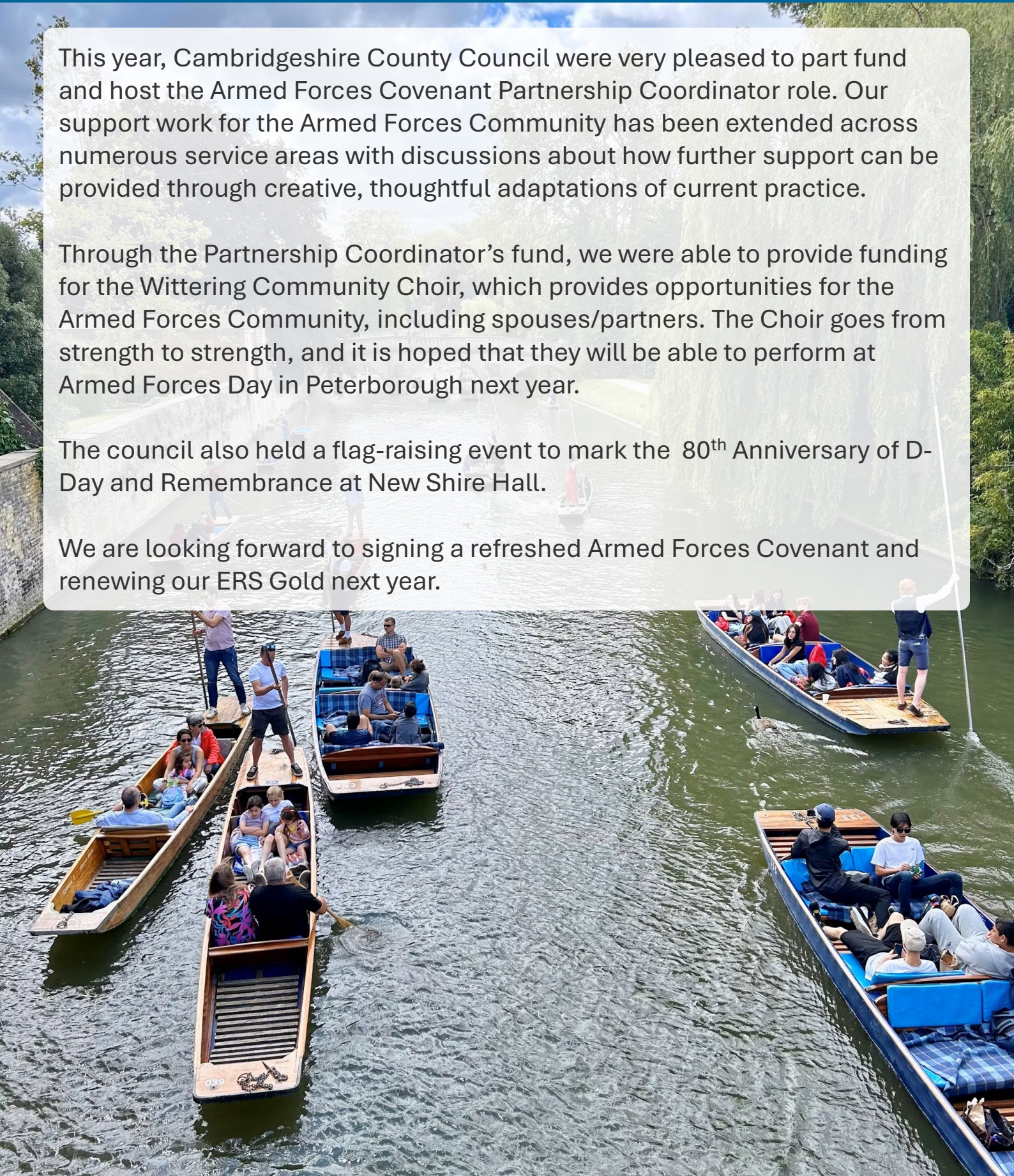


This year, Cambridgeshire County Council were very pleased to part fund and host the Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Coordinator role. Our support work for the Armed Forces Community has been extended across numerous service areas with discussions about how further support can be provided through creative, thoughtful adaptations of current practice.

Through the Partnership Coordinator's fund, we were able to provide funding for the Wittering Community Choir, which provides opportunities for the Armed Forces Community, including spouses/partners. The Choir goes from strength to strength, and it is hoped that they will be able to perform at Armed Forces Day in Peterborough next year.

The council also held a flag-raising event to mark the 80th Anniversary of D-Day and Remembrance at New Shire Hall.

We are looking forward to signing a refreshed Armed Forces Covenant and renewing our ERS Gold next year.





CAMBRIDGESHIRE SKILLS

Cambridgeshire Skills have continued to support this year by providing access to their complete syllabus free of charge to seventeen students that identified themselves as members of the Armed Forces Community.

Course were undertaken by people from a variety of backgrounds and covered a wide range of topics including,

- Ready, Steady, Cook (Healthy Lifestyles and Cooking)
- Ready, Steady, Slow Cook
- Healthy Eating on a Budget
- Improve your English Skills
- Prepare for Functional Skills English Level 1
- Prepare for Functional Skills English Level 2
- ESOL Vocabulary and Grammar Booster
- Improve your Maths
- Christmaths
- Confidence with Maths
- Mindfulness and Wellbeing
- Supporting your Anxious Child
- Green Family Activity Day
- Incredible Years
- ILM Certificate in Leadership and Management



This year, Cambridge City Council refocussed on its working group and action plan under the stewardship of new Armed Forces Covenant lead officer, Vicky Haywood. Working alongside colleagues and external stakeholders, the working group is solidifying its efforts towards preparing to resign the Armed Forces Covenant next year and investigating new threads of work to broaden its support for the Armed Forces Community.

During the 2024 Remembrance season, Cambridge City Council's Mayor, Cllr Baiju Thittala, hosted 150 guests—including the Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, and the High Commissioners of India, Pakistan and Zambia—to recognise the service of Indian Army veterans during the World Wars.

During his speech, Cllr Thittala quoted Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck, the Commander-in-Chief India from 1942, as saying: "The British couldn't have come through both wars if they didn't have the Indian Army."





East Cambridgeshire District Council

East Cambridgeshire District Council reaffirmed its commitment to supporting the Armed Forces Community in September this year by signing its own Armed Forces Covenant, replacing the 2011 shared agreement.

This commitment extends to serving members, veterans, and their families, acknowledging their service and ensuring fairness and respect in the community.

The covenant also recognises the need for special consideration for the injured and bereaved.





Councillor Martin Goodearl, the council's Armed Forces Covenant champion, said: “This council is proud to recognise the invaluable contribution the Armed Forces have made, and I am honoured to be the council’s Armed Forces Covenant champion.

“As a council, we regularly have close contact with current and former members of the Armed Forces and work really hard to mitigate some of these disadvantages and go the extra mile to help those who have sacrificed the most.”

Tommy Kelly, Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Coordinator, said “Working with AFC Lead Officer, Dan Gawthrop at East Cambridgeshire District Council has helped support the creation nineteen Covenant pledges across eight service areas.”

The council's initiatives aim to address some of the challenges faced by the Armed Forces Community. These can include difficulties accessing services due to overseas deployments.

The council aims to reduce these inequalities and provide additional support to those who have made significant sacrifices for the nation.

The signing ceremony took place in the council chamber, attended by serving members, veterans, and spouses from the Armed Forces Community.

The new covenant pledges to continue this support and ensure the community is treated with fairness and respect.



Fenland District Council reconfirmed its commitment to supporting the Armed Forces Community with the signing of its own district covenant in August this year.

Fenland District Council has long been committed to being supportive of the Armed Forces Community and, by signing its own Armed Forces Covenant, superseding the 2011 Armed Forces Community Covenant, has now developed support and actions that align with all service areas across the council.



Cllr Susan Wallwork, portfolio holder for communities, said: “We were delighted to sign the covenant to revalidate our commitment to the Armed Forces Community and proud to become the first of the district and county Cambridgeshire authorities to do so.

“We recognise the contribution that service personnel, both regular and reservist, veterans and military families, make to all of us, our community and to the country.”

The covenant states that the council will ensure members of the Armed Forces Community don’t face disadvantages arising from their service in the provision of public and commercial services.

And, in some circumstances, special provision may be justified, especially for those who have given the most, such as the injured or bereaved.

Local veterans from all branches of the Armed Forces attended the ceremony along with a representative from 1220 (March) Air Training Corps.

The district council website provides information, and signposting to support, for the Armed Forces Community.



This year, Huntingdonshire District Council welcomed new Armed Forces Covenant lead officer, Amanda Turner, to support the council's Armed Forces Covenant work.

Amanda, a Royal Navy veteran who also works as a Community Development Officer at the council, said "This is a great opportunity for me to support the Armed Forces Community as part of my work, and I am looking forward to working alongside Cllr Jon Neish, Armed Forces Covenant Champion for the District Council and other stakeholders to develop a full set of pledges and actions to get the council ready to resign the covenant next year.



Peterborough City Council's Corporate Leadership Team welcomed a presentation from the Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Coordinator in February this year to understand what the council could be doing to ensure that its Armed Forces Covenant work is effective and wide-reaching.

With the full backing of the Corporate Leadership Team, work was started to engage with leads across numerous council services to explore opportunities to create positive actions to support the Armed Forces Community and develop a mindset of this being day-to-day work.

Royal Logistic Corp veteran, Cllr Jason McNally, came into role as Armed Forces Covenant Champion for the City Council and continues to work closely with internal and external stakeholders to ensure the council's work runs smoothly and as effectively as possible.

The city council is looking to sign a refreshed covenant next year, to align with as many service areas as possible and to revalidate their ERS Gold status.



South Cambridgeshire District Council host the Mission Ready Training Centre in Bassingbourn and have developed links into the Barracks this year.

The council have also started an Armed Forces Community support working group which is looking at how the Council can support the Armed Forces Community, including reservist colleagues, with positive leave policies to allow them to undertake their annual training without having to use the leave entitlement.

The council is working towards achieving ERS Sliver and hope to be able to apply in an upcoming application window.





**Cambridgeshire and
Peterborough**
NHS Foundation Trust

Strengthening Our Armed Forces Programme

2024 marks a revitalised commitment to supporting the Armed Forces Community in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. This year, we proudly welcomed Major (Ret'd) Tom Bale as the new Chair of our Armed Forces Programme. Under Tom's dedicated leadership, we have successfully re-accredited with the prestigious Veteran Aware programme and are gearing up for further milestones, including enhanced commitments to the Armed Forces Covenant and the Employer Recognition Scheme early in the New Year.

Our engagement with the Armed Forces Community has been vibrant and impactful, with active participation in events across the region. These initiatives underline our ongoing dedication to supporting veterans, service personnel, and their families while reinforcing our role as a trusted partner in the community.



**Armed Forces
Network**



**Cambridgeshire and
Peterborough**
NHS Foundation Trust

Peterborough United Foundation – Remembrance Event

On Monday, 4th November, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust supported the Peterborough United Foundation to hold a heartfelt Remembrance Event at the Weston Homes Stadium, honouring the service and sacrifice of past and present Armed Forces personnel. The gathering celebrated the lives and contributions of those who have dedicated themselves to protecting others.





The event was graced by the Mayor of Peterborough, Marco Cereste, and opened by Jenna Lusk, Community Manager for the Peterborough United Foundation. Following her introduction, Major (Ret'd) Tom Bale, Director of Operations for Adult and Specialist Mental Health and Chair of the Armed Forces Programme at Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust, delivered a poignant address.

Drawing from his own experiences, Major Bale spoke powerfully about the critical importance of mental health support for veterans transitioning to civilian life.

He also urged attendees to remember veterans who have lost their lives to struggles beyond the battlefield, shedding light on the broader challenges faced by those who have served.

The event served as a reminder of the enduring gratitude owed to the Armed Forces community and highlighted the ongoing need for awareness and support.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust – Remembrance Events

On 11th November 2024, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT) Armed Forces Network marked Remembrance Day with solemn events at its main clinical sites in Peterborough and Fulbourn, Cambridge. These gatherings paid tribute to the sacrifices made by service personnel, past and present, and held special significance for CPFT staff who are veterans or have family members who served in the Armed Forces.

The events provided a moment of reflection and gratitude, emphasising the profound contributions of the Armed Forces community to the nation. Attendees included staff, patients, and visitors, who came together to honour the memories of those who served and to acknowledge the enduring impact on individuals and families connected to military service.

Through these Remembrance Events, CPFT reinforced its commitment to supporting veterans, service personnel, and their families within the Trust and the wider community. This initiative also served as a reminder of the importance of recognising the sacrifices made by those who serve, not just on the battlefield but in the challenges they face beyond it.



CPFT Honors Fallen Soldier with Special Remembrance Ceremony

On 4th December 2024, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT) Armed Forces Network held a poignant ceremony to mark the 106th anniversary of the death of Private John E. Gibbons. The event honoured his service and sacrifice, bringing together members of the Trust's Armed Forces community to reflect on his legacy.



Private Gibbons was admitted to Fulbourn Hospital on 2nd December 1918 after being transferred from the Great Eastern Hospital in Cambridge. Tragically, just two days later, he succumbed to tuberculosis. His final resting place lies within the CPFT grounds in Fulbourn, marked by a Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone.

The ceremony, held near his grave, served as a solemn reminder of the sacrifices made by servicemen and women, both during and beyond their time in uniform. Speakers at the event highlighted the enduring importance of remembering individuals like Private Gibbons, whose stories connect history, healthcare, and the Armed Forces.

This commemoration underscores CPFT's commitment to honouring the contributions of the Armed Forces community and ensuring the sacrifices of individuals like Private Gibbons are never forgotten.



North West Anglia

NHS Foundation Trust



Veteran Aware

In July 2024, continuing to promote their support of the Armed Forces Community, the Trust were proud to mount the Veteran Aware plaque in the main atrium at Peterborough City Hospital.



Armed Forces Day 29 June 2024

The Trusts Armed Forces Staff Network hosted awareness tables across the NWAFT sites at Peterborough, Hinchingsbrooke and Stamford, engaging with visitors and staff offering Armed Forces Day decorated cupcakes to all who stopped for a chat.



Armed Forces Covenant Training 26 September 2024

Peterborough City Hospital hosted an Armed Forces Covenant Training morning with information presented by Tommy Kelly, Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Coordinator – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, the Trusts Staff Network Chair and Vice Chair, and the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Team.

The training advised on the Armed Forces Covenant, identifying and supporting veterans as well as the resources available to NWAFT staff, e.g. Staff Network, Armed Forces Policy, and the MTY special register to flag veterans on patient lists.

The training also gave staff the opportunity to find out more information about:

- Who the Armed Forces Community are and what challenges they face
- What the Armed Forces do on our behalf
- What the Armed Forces Covenant is and how it can support personnel, veterans, and their families
- What resources are available at NWAFT for veteran staff, e.g. Armed Forces Staff Network, Armed Forces Policy
- How to identify and flag Armed Forces/Veterans/AF community patients in patient systems.



NWAFT Armed Forces Volunteers

The Trust has recruited two veterans who work as dedicated Armed Forces Volunteers across the Peterborough & Hinchingsbrooke hospitals.

The Wards/Clinics will engage with Armed Forces volunteers to inform them that a patient has been identified as a serving military/veteran or member of the Armed Forces Community.

The volunteer will then meet with the identified person and explain that the Trust is flagging the Armed Forces Community as per the Armed Forces Covenant. Since recruiting the veteran volunteers in September 2024, they have identified and flagged 90 veterans on the trust's patient systems.

**Supporting
Armed Forces
Patients**

We now have a dedicated Armed Forces Champion Volunteer to support patients.
If a patient advises they are serving or ex military personnel please call Volunteer Services on 5189 to request a visit from Martin.

The MTY patient identifier can be added to their records by emailing EDI Deborah Gallacher with the Patient DIS Number on d.gallacher1@nhs.net

Remembrance Day – 8th November 2024

Remembrance Day was honoured at Peterborough, Hinchingsbrooke and Stamford Hospitals with the order of service and laying of wreaths. At Hinchingsbrooke Hospital the Last Post was played by Dave Swan, trumpeter from the RAF Wyton Voluntary Band.



Hinchingbrooke Hospital Carol Service

The RAF Wyton Area Voluntary Band also played at the Hinchingbrooke Hospitals Carol Service held at All Saints Church, Huntingdon on the 16th December.



Cambridge University Hospitals

NHS Foundation Trust





Cambridge University Hospitals NHS FT

Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (CUH) is delighted to be accredited as ‘Veteran Aware’ by the Veteran Covenant Healthcare Alliance, a silver award holder for the Defence Employee Recognition Scheme and a member of the Pride in Veterans standard.

The trust has a busy and exciting 2024, with the highlight of being invited to the House of Lords to attend the 10-year celebration of the Step Into Health programme. We were delighted to be nominated for the ‘Forces Friendly Employer’ award at this event for the implementation of our Armed Forces staff forum, amongst other things.

We are proud to have added a guaranteed interview scheme to our recruitment processes for the Armed Forces community. This enables better processes for service leavers and veterans, as well as spouses and partners, by allowing them to meet the recruiting manager, as we know they tend to have better outcomes when communicating their experience in person. We hope that this will make a real difference to people looking to continue their careers in the NHS.

This year we have had a strong focus on training. Over the year, we have provided training on the Armed Forces covenant and community to around 1,000 members of staff. This helps to ensure a solid foundation of knowledge within our workforce which in turn assists in providing better care and support to individuals.





CUH has also worked on ways we can improve support and provision for patients. By working more closely with charities like SSAFA, we can effectively signpost patients to specialised support and Armed Forces services to improve the overall wellbeing of those in need.

We have provided SSAFA caseworkers with honorary contracts, allowing assistance to begin while someone is in hospital and continue once they are home. By SSAFA meeting patients in hospital and beginning to help at the earliest point, we hope to get patients home sooner but also reduce the likelihood of readmissions by having important financial, social and housing needs met.

In 2025, we aim to continue looking at how we can improve provision to our workforce and patient base. We will be to do this by reviewing the experiences of healthcare of the Armed Forces Community and using this knowledge to improve our services.





October last year saw the re-procured MOD CTP go-live across the UK. The new contract is now delivered by local public services provider and Gold Award Armed Forces Covenant holder Reed in Partnership.

As the official Armed Services resettlement provider, the CTP helps approximately 15,000 Service leavers each year through personal resettlement support from specialist advisors and Careers Consultants to meet their chosen outcomes, which typically range from seeking civilian employment, entering Higher/Further Education or retirement.

The new service increases the quantity and range of training courses available, while providing a range of other enhancements to further improve the Service leaver's chance of successful resettlement, including access to subsidised vocational training courses, training grants, resettlement allowances, a new Digital Platform, workshops and events, housing and finance briefs and links with thousands of forces-friendly employers.

The CTP continues to provide workshops and a range of careers events each year, including a programme of nine large-scale CTP Employment Fairs. Training and support will continue to be delivered from Resettlement Centres across the UK, including the flagship Resettlement Training Centre located in Aldershot.

The Forces Employment Charity, who have been engaged in the delivery of the CTP since 1998, will continue to play an active role supporting Reed in Partnership in the delivery of the new service. The charity will continue to provide specialist support for Early Service Leavers and Personnel on Recovery Duties.



The Forces Employment Charity will also continue to work with employers to source relevant job opportunities for Service leavers and provide a dedicated Central Support Team for all leavers.

Our team are looking forward to working collaboratively with the C&P Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Board. We are committed to sharing insights and data from our delivery that can inform coordinated support for Armed Forces personnel and their families and ensure opportunities are established and taken.

Reed in Partnership is deeply embedded within the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough region. The company currently provides a range of public services to residents, including employability support through the DWP's Restart Scheme service and the DVSA's Driving Theory Test service. You can find out more about us and our work at reedinpartnership.co.uk and about the CTP at modctp.co.uk





THE BRIDGE FOR HEROES

The Bridge for Heroes (BFH) provides quality help and support to the Armed Forces Community (AFC), across West Norfolk, the Fenlands area of Cambridgeshire, and the South Holland area of Lincolnshire. This is achieved through their multi-purpose drop-in centre - the 'Bridge Centre', which is open Monday to Friday, 10:00 to 16:00, and on a Saturday, 10:00 to 14:00.

The BFH team of staff, volunteers and trustees, who received the Queen's Award for

Voluntary Service in 2021, are fully committed to ensuring the needs of local veterans, reservists, widows, spouses/ partners, and family members receive person-centred support, whatever their issue may be.

The Bridge Centre offers informal drinks and home-made cooked lunches, with opportunities for a friendly chat with like-minded people, one-to-one sessions, innovative group therapies, a wide range of activities, and local community events, alongside referring individuals and families to other organisations when required. Some of these organisations use the Bridge Centre every month to offer their services, ensuring as much support can be offered under one roof.





THE BRIDGE FOR HEROES



The BFH's developing outreach programme also offers the opportunity to visit beneficiaries in their own homes, in care homes or when they are in hospital. The BFH are also working on an in-reach programme which involves helping beneficiaries come into the Bridge Centre by providing lifts or assisting with travel arrangements.

In their last reporting year, the BFH supported 300 beneficiaries, of which 144 were new. 72% were veterans, 25% were family or carers, and 3% were reservists or still serving. Over 5,000 welfare support sessions, 2,300 activity sessions, and 2,286 hot meals were provided.





THE BRIDGE FOR HEROES

The Bridge for Heroes are also the East of England Thrive Together lead running the 'Veteran's Voice' Programme to improve collaborative work across the different organisations and charities within the East of England who support the AFC. The programme is focused on improving the support available to the AFC, through improvements in awareness and access to support services, expanding networks across the region, tackling stigma and poor mental health, encouraging community integration and expanding the Armed Forces Network – so that whichever door a veteran opens the support will be there for them. This is grant-funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (AFCFT)



**VETERANS
VOICE**

It has been a very positive start for the newly formed Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Armed Forces Covenant Partnership and bringing Cambridgeshire and Peterborough together in the same space has yielded encouraging cooperation over a wider geography.

With a refreshed identity, public-facing web platform and new Terms of Reference, the partnership has started strongly with two of the seven funding partners already committing to new pledges of support through refreshed covenants.

Other partners have already started work to identify actions and practice that could be part of their commitments going forward.

Next year we hope to welcome further organisations and stakeholders into the partnership and broaden our support further.

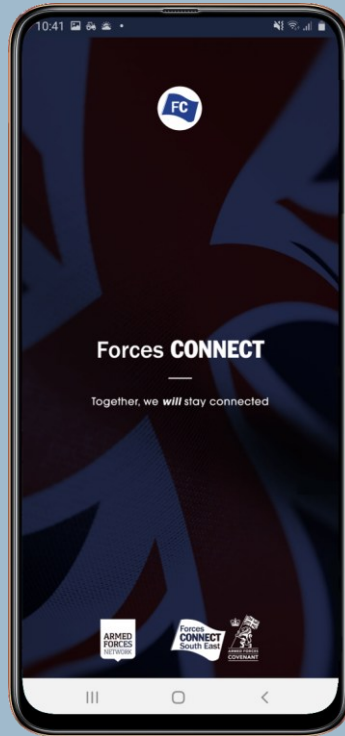
There will be a lot of work undertaken by partner authorities to get their covenants as wide-reaching and effective as possible and this should provide an element of future-proofing for when further duty is introduced.

We are also looking forward to Armed Forces week, VE Day & VJ Day 80th anniversaries, which will provide us with an opportunity to celebrate the end of the war and reflect on those that suffered for the freedom we enjoy today.



The Forces Connect App provides links to valuable information and support for the Armed Forces Community.

It is free to download, and there is no registration required



Forces Connect is now accessible as a website that you can reach through your preferred browser.

Please visit www.forcesconnect.co.uk

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