



Community Covenant

Gloucestershire Armed Forces Community Covenant

Appendix – 2012/13 Measures

1. Cheltenham Borough Council Measures

Cheltenham Borough Council's formal links with the military began on the 2nd May 1962 when it confirmed the Freedom of the Borough to the Central Flying School of the Royal Air Force.

In October 1986 it also confirmed freedom of entry to the Borough to Royal Air Force Innsworth. This link ceased in 2011 when it was disbanded.

The Council will continue to pay special attention to the needs of the Armed Forces personnel, their families and former service personnel in such matters as council tax, benefits, housing, electoral registration and voting.

The council supports where possible schemes that help serving personnel or their families including working with partners across the county about trying to raise the priority status of those leaving the Armed Forces who require social housing.

Reservists employed by the council are supported with paid leave. The Council's Employee Volunteering Policy has incorporated specific reference to reservists since 2009.

Help with the emergency planning response at the Royal International Air Tattoo which is held every year

When requested the council's planning team meet with representatives of the armed forces estates team to consider housing opportunities and any issues relating to the occupation of properties by armed forces personnel

Have regular discussions, along with other districts and the County Council, with Ministry of Defence to inform the Council's emerging Local Development Framework and Core Strategy

The council continues to support remembrance services and civic occasions which highlight the role of the military, such as Armed Forces Day.

The council has a routine property maintenance programme that includes the restoration and repair of war memorials within the borough.

2. Cotswold District Council Measures

Cotswold District Council has worked for a number of years with and in support of the armed forces community in the district. We are keen to maintain our current positive links with the armed forces and help ensure that the Covenant is a success. In particular we:

- Have a nominated councillor, who is also the Chairman of the Council, who acts as our public facing link with the military community.
- Recognise the role of reservists and members of the Territorial Army among our employees and support them by special leave and financial provision so that they can fulfil their military commitments.
- Give special attention to the needs of military personnel and their families in the areas of housing and homelessness prevention advice, benefits and elections
- Help with the emergency planning response at the Royal International Air Tattoo which is held every year in the district. CDC officers work alongside The Royal Air Force Charitable Trust Enterprises and form part of the emergency team on the site during the event should an emergency situation arise. Because we have a significant number of military bases in the district, we need to prepare for different types of emergency that might arise and we work with the military who help us plan for these and make some facilities available to us should the need arise.
- Are a member of the Gloucestershire Local Resilience Forum (LRF) and we maintain links with the military through their representative at the Forum meetings.
- Have regular discussions, along with other districts and the County Council, with Ministry of Defence to inform the Council's emerging Local Development Framework and Core Strategy
- Maintain our link with the Families Officer at 29 Regiment Royal Logistic Corp (RLC) in South Cerney to ensure that the accommodation needs of service leavers are dealt with efficiently and sympathetically

We are keen to enhance our support of the military community, within the limits of our resources. In particular, we:

- Will promote the Covenant, its purpose and principles through our various internal and external communication channels
- Will ensure that the military community receives information about our services and those of relevant partners who offer specialist help and advice e.g. Citizens Advice, community safety, family learning activities etc. We will explore the possibility of funding a CAB advice surgery at South Cerney barracks.

- Will, through our Business Matters newsletter, raise awareness among the local business community and employers of the needs of service leavers for employment support and advice
- Explore the possibility of setting up six monthly meetings with the relevant officers at South Cerney barracks to ensure good two way communication and support.
- Will investigate the possibility of contributing (for example, by running a session on housing advice) to the programme of support provided by the armed forces to service leavers
- Will investigate providing activities on site for service children and young people at South Cerney barracks

3. Forest of Dean District Council Measures

There has been a long tradition of links between the Forest of Dean District Council and the Gloucestershire Regiment, in which many local people served in both world wars and in peacetime. While lamenting the loss of its County Regiment, which had received the Freedom of the District in 1984, the Council has warmly welcomed 1Rifles to their permanent base at Beachley Barracks which, despite a Chepstow postal address, is very much part of the Forest of Dean.

In December 2008 the Council resolved to grant the Freedom of the District to 1Rifles, as a thank-you to the soldiers who, at that time, were deployed in Afghanistan. Later, on 27 June 2009, the Council provided a public expression of its support for the Battalion by laying on a community event for soldiers, their families and local people after a Freedom Parade in Coleford. Since then staff at the District Council have raised money for the Rifles welfare fund charities through a variety of sponsored events and Friday 'Dress Down' days. In addition, members of staff have also contributed to welfare parcels for the troops when deployed.

Through its annual support for Armed Forces Day the Council recognises and applauds the contribution that the entire Armed Forces Community has made to the nation. The Council demonstrates similar support for the British Legion through annual 'Poppy Day' collections and, this year providing the use of some of its premises at no cost in support of the Poppy Appeal.

The Council has actively supported one member of staff in recently becoming a member of the Royal Naval Reserve and is now working on production of a policy that supports volunteering, including service in the reserves.

From a housing perspective the Council recognises the needs of all current and ex-servicemen and women; those serving with 1Rifles who seek accommodation locally will be treated as having a local connection.

The Forest of Dean District Council is wholly committed to this Community Covenant and looks forward to developing ever closer links with our resident Battalion while also addressing needs of the wider service community both in our District and across Gloucestershire.

4. Gloucester City Council Measures

- The City Council support staff who are members of the TA or other military support service through flexible employment arrangements.
- Building control provide a free advice service and do not charge for any applications made for extensions or alterations to a domestic property for armed forces personnel returning with any disability.

- We will continue to work with the armed forces on a number of events and in 2012, as part of the Summer Festival, there will be a focus on supporting the armed forces through an event devoted to 'Help for Heroes'. Examples of previously successful events include; staging a Ready Steady Cook event with the armed forces as part of our first ever food festival called 'Taste' which was held in the Docks. Part of this included liaising with the Ready Steady Cook team to gain permissions and 'give-aways' as well as working with key contacts in the Army. The event was a great success with the Navy winning the event. The Council has also worked with the Army to put on activities in the Park during the summer festival such as their assault course which proved very popular.
- The City Council will work in partnership with the Armed Forces to increase links to the local service units by; welcoming service personnel and their families to the area by supporting various activities including sporting and charity events, articles in the local traders' newsletters and developing the potential for MOD discounts with local traders.
- The Council will continue to support the British Legion's Poppy day through an arrangement with GL1 for free use of accommodation for their Remembrance Sunday event. Linked to this, in partnership with Enterprise (the Council's Street care contractor) we will ensure that planting around the war memorial is in good order throughout the year and especially for Remembrance Sunday.
- The war memorial at the cenotaph and the war graves at Gloucester cemetery will continue to be maintained to a high standard to recognize the sacrifices made by service personnel.
- The City Council will continue to support Army Recruitment Events by allowing access to suitable sites.

5. Gloucestershire County Council Measures

Gloucestershire County Council has already undertaken a number of pieces of work in support of Gloucestershire's Armed Forces Community and will continue to do so in order to ensure the Covenant is a success. Examples include the following:

- The County Council has recognized the important role and achievements of the Armed Forces Community by awarding the Freedom of Gloucestershire on three occasions:
 - To 501 (County of Gloucester) Squadron in 2006
 - To 1 Rifles in July 2009
 - To the King's Royal Hussars in September 2010
- Gloucestershire County Council will continue to recognise the role of reservists and cadet instructors amongst its employees. Following a motion at Full Council on 18 November 2009 the council endorsed the contribution that reservists make to our armed forces and to the council as an employer by extending the same special leave provisions that exist for cadet instructors to reservists, and has established a formal policy of nondiscrimination towards reservists in its employment.
- The County Council appreciates the importance of improving communications and sharing of information with the Armed Forces Community and has arranged:
- Regular update meetings between a lead senior officer at the County Council and the Military Civilian Integration (MCI) lead for Gloucestershire (Bill Dowling, 43 Wessex Brigade) to discuss emerging issues including surplus sites and related land use planning matters, location of military personnel and school places.
- Four District Councils (Cheltenham, Gloucester, Tewkesbury and Cotswold) and the County Council have regular quarterly meetings with the Ministry of Defence to establish the latest

information with regard to possible future plans for various MoD sites throughout the County. These are confidential meetings for the sole purpose of informing the District Councils' emerging Local Development Frameworks / Joint Core Strategy.

- The County Council will continue to ensure school admissions and transfers are made as smoothly as possible for the Armed Forces Community. Recent examples of support include the following:
 - Prior to the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC), a British-led NATO unit, relocating from Germany to Imjin Barracks in 2010, Gloucestershire County Council had regular meetings with the ARRC to establish potential pupil numbers and location of housing for service personnel to ensure pupils could be accommodated in local schools. A dedicated webpage was also created with frequently asked questions and other information for ARRC families.
 - In August 2011 the County Council supported 1 Rifles (Beachley Barracks) by making an exception to its school transport policy and providing additional resources for school transport for service children whilst the battalion is deployed to Afghanistan. The decision was made in recognition of the extraordinary circumstances and strain on service families, where a member of the family is on active deployment.
- The County Council supports the on-going work of the Soldiers of Gloucestershire Museum.

6. Gloucestershire NHS Measures

The NHS Operating Framework 2012-13 references the commitment of the NHS in England to military covenants. The relevant section is provided below:

SHAs should maintain and develop their Armed Forces Networks to ensure the principles of the Armed Forces Network Covenant are met for the armed forces, their families and veterans. The Ministry of Defence/NHS Transition Protocol for those who have been seriously injured in the course of their duty should be implemented, meeting veterans' prosthetic needs and ensuring improvement in mental health services for veterans. NHS employers should be supportive towards those staff who volunteer for reserve duties.

This inclusion was referenced by the Armed Forces Healthcare Partnership on their website:

<http://www.armedforceshealthpartnership.org.uk/news/military-health-nhs-operating-framework-2012-2013>

BORONA Movement of NATO troops into Imjin Barracks at Innsworth Project

From September 2007 to April 2010, the PCT worked with the army on the transfer of the base for the NATO Advanced Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) from Rheindahlen in Germany into Imjin Barracks at Innsworth in Gloucester to plan for healthcare provision. Information sheets on the availability of healthcare in the relevant area were provided to each family moving into Gloucestershire, covering primary care, dental care, pharmacy locations and opticians and regular contact is being maintained to ensure healthcare is effectively provided.

Mental Health services

Current IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) and Recovery service specifications have the following requirement:

"The service will provide priority treatment to Military Veterans for conditions that may be related to their military service (in line with DoH: Gateway reference 13406)."

These 2 services were selected for specific reference to veterans as they were judged to be the services veterans were most likely to be referred to. The IAPT service includes a Trauma service. This service targets PTSD in veterans and has a clinical lead who is a veteran and who links in with the regional network of services for veterans.

SaBRE - Reserves Network

Both NHS Gloucestershire and Gloucestershire Care Services have HR policies in place that support staff who are military reservists. NHS Gloucestershire have signed up to SaBRE, the reservist network.

Interventions Not Normally Funded (INNFs)

Under our INNF process we deal with individual patient funding applications for prosthesis (North Bristol NHS Trust is our main provider) which have specifications beyond our commissioned level are considered on a case by case basis. Although this applies to our population as a whole, this provides support for veterans. Approvals have been made for applications for veterans.

Armed Forces Veterans

A letter was sent to 2gether NHS Foundation Trust in order to clarify expectations regarding treatment priority for veterans. A similar letter was also sent to all provider trust Chief Executives.

Choose and Book (CAB)

So far as veterans are concerned, the issue at the SHA Choose and Book user group. It is difficult to identify exactly who is a veteran and so who should be given priority.

Many people have served in both the regular forces and the TA. So far as CAB is concerned, there is a current project to roll out the use to all serving members of the armed forces, so they have a choice of where to go for treatment.

At present they must be referred to the nearest NHS hospital and are not covered by the choice provisions. This is being led at a regional level by Swindon.

There is no mechanism when making a referral using CAB for identifying the patient as being a veteran – other than for the GP to explain that in the referral letter.

7. Gloucestershire Police Authority Measures

Gloucestershire Police Authority has undertaken work in support of Gloucestershire's Armed Forces Community and will continue to do so in order to ensure the Covenant is a success. Examples include the following:

- Gloucestershire Police Authority will continue to engage with Gloucestershire's armed forces communities, working with them to reduce crime and anti social behaviour and to maintain the peace where they live. Recent examples of support include work with communities at Kingsway and Imjin Barracks
- Gloucestershire Police Authority recognises the role of reservists and cadet instructors amongst its employees.

8. Stroud District Council Measures

Stroud District Council's formal links with the military began on 14th February 1980, when it 'adopted' 7 Maintenance Unit at RAF Quedgeley. This link ceased in 1996 when 7MU was disbanded.

On 9th November 1985, the Council granted the Freedom of the District to the Gloucestershire Regiment. This Freedom ended in 1994 when the Regiment was merged into the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire & Wiltshire Regiment.

The Council granted the Freedom of the Stroud District to the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment on 6th November 2004. The Freedom was granted to the Regiment "and its successors" so the 1st Battalion of The Rifles continues to enjoy this privilege.

The Council will continue to pay special attention to the needs of Armed Forces personnel, their families and former service personnel in such matters as council tax, benefits, housing, electoral registration and voting.

Reservists employed by the Council are supported and events organised by SaBRE (Supporting Britain's Reservists and Employers) are attended by senior officers. The Council's Employee Handbook will incorporate specific reference to reservists during 2012.

9. Tewkesbury Borough Council Measures

Tewkesbury Borough Council has historically provided a range of support for the armed forces community within the borough and also for joint armed forces/community activities. Examples have included:

- Supporting the transition from RAF Innsworth to Imjin Barracks in Innsworth and the subsequent relocation of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) to Imjin Barracks. This included supporting the integration programme through provision of information, advice & guidance on a range of issues such as housing, benefits, local services & community activities.
- Recognising the role and achievements of the armed forces through support for Armed Forces Day and Help for Heroes activity
- Involvement of armed force personnel in community activities such as Community Days of Action
- Jointly running 'Boot Camps' targeting local young people in a range of sports/fitness activities

Tewkesbury Borough Council will continue to forge links with the armed forces and promote a range of joint activities to help develop strong relationships with the local community. Examples include:

- Discussion on developing enhanced sporting facilities on the MoD Sports Field in Innsworth. These would provide enhanced facilities for armed forces training and also for the community to use. The armed forces have already set up and run a junior football club in Innsworth and would support development of additional local sports clubs and activities on the back of any new facility
- Running a 'Look at Life' programme which enables local young people to learn more about army life through experiencing it on a weekend of activities.
- Running a cookery training programme where armed forces chefs teach basic cooking skills to a group of local youngsters, culminating in a showcase event where they prepare a three course dinner for a group of local dignitaries.
- Further involvement in Community Days of Action in spring 2012, through helping community clear ups and running activities for local people to try.
- Continuing support for Armed Forces Day, Help for Heroes activity and any homecoming ceremonies.

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