



## Plymouth City Council

We, the undersigned, agree to work and act together to honour the Armed Forces Covenant. We recognise the value Serving Personnel (Regular and reserve) Cadets, Veterans, and military families contribute to our business/school/charity and our country.

**Date:**  
**Name:** Brigadier Mike Tanner OBE RM  
**Position Held:** Plymouth Naval Base Commander – on behalf of Defence  
**Signature:**

**Date:**  
**Name:** Councillor Mark Shayer  
**Position Held:** Plymouth Lord Mayor  
**Signature:**

**Date:**  
**Name:** Councillor Pauline Murphy  
**Position Held:** Plymouth City Council Armed Forces Champion  
**Signature:**

**Date:**  
**Name:** Tracey Lee  
**Position Held:** Chief Executive Plymouth City Council  
**Signature:**



## **THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT**

An Enduring Covenant Between

The People of the United Kingdom  
Her 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 Navy, 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.

## **Section 1: Principles of the Armed Forces Covenant**

1.1 We, Plymouth City Council, will endeavour in all our dealings to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, which are:

- No member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen.
- In some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured or bereaved.

## **Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment**

2.1 Plymouth City Council recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of the armed forces community. The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise made by Plymouth City Council to support in-service personnel, ex- service personnel, their families and children to receive fair and consistent service. We seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant by:

- Removing disadvantage from our Armed Forces Community with regards to accommodation, employment and school provision.
- Raising awareness through engagement, celebration and commemoration.
- Encourage business community engagement with the Armed Forces community.
- Expand Transitions, Employment and Skills opportunities
- Improve Healthcare provision to the Armed Forces Community.
- Building and supporting the Covenant in the city

## **Section 3: Plymouth City Council support to the Covenant**

### 3.1 Supporting servicemen/women and ex-servicemen/women to secure suitable accommodation:

- The Council will offer suitable advice to Armed Forces applicants who present in Plymouth so they are able to apply to access affordable housing in the City
- The Council has a nominated housing lead and single point of contact for the Armed Forces
- Accepts the UK Armed Forces Veteran ID Cards as proof of status.
- The Council will offer preference for those requiring social housing who are currently in the Armed Forces or leaving the forces when allocated to the waiting list
- Develop appropriate housing schemes to meet Veterans' needs.
- Assisting with requests for adapted homes for wounded injured and sick service personnel and Veterans, the Council will offer relevant advice and support to injured service personnel and Veterans to help them access home adaptations

### 3.2 Support the employment of Veterans young and old:

- Welcoming applications from, and guaranteeing interviews with, Veterans who meet the criteria in the job specification.
- Recognising military skills and qualifications in our recruitment and selection process.

### 3.3 Striving to support the employment of Service spouses and partners:

- Welcoming applications and guaranteeing interviews from spouses/partners who meet the criteria in the job specification.
- Endeavoring to offer a degree of flexibility in granting leave for Service spouses and partners before, during and after a partner's deployment.

3.4 Seeking to support our employees who choose to be members of the Reserve forces, including accommodating their training and deployment where possible:

- Up to 2 weeks per year of special paid leave is available to attend annual training camps.
- Fully supporting and accommodating mobilised deployment of Reservist employees if required.

3.5 Offering support to our local cadet units, either in our local community or in local schools, where possible:

- Up to 2 weeks per year of special paid leave may be available to attend annual training camps and courses.
- Accommodation of Cadet training commitments where possible.
- Considering sponsorship bids to support worthwhile Cadet Projects.

3.6 Seek to maintain the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme - Gold Status

- Maintain our existing relationship with our National Account Manager/REED/appropriate defence representative
- Continue to proactively demonstrate our forces-friendly credentials as part of our recruiting and selection processes - engaging with Career Transition Partnership (CTP) in the recruitment of service leavers and have registered for the Forces Families Jobs (FFJ) portal
- Actively ensure that our workforce is aware of their positive policies towards defence people issues.
- Be an exemplar within their market sector, advocating support to defence people issues to partner organisations, suppliers and customers with tangible positive results
- Within the context of Reserves, we demonstrate support to mobilisations or have a framework in place. Provide at least 10 days' additional leave for training, fully paid, to the Reservist employee
- Not have been the subject of any negative public relations or media activity
- Actively encourage a positive environment for Reservists by ensuring that positive policies in support of Reservists within the workforce are communicated to line managers

3.7 Champion the needs of service and Veterans' children and their families in Plymouth

- Provide support and assistance to service families requiring appropriate school placements for their children.
- Support Children's Education across the Armed Forces Community.
- Ensure that children's EHCP's are respected and every effort will be made to meet the needs set out even if conducted in a different local authority
- Changing perceptions - Educating providers at local level to broaden understanding of the service context.
- Incorporate the 'families' strategy' core work streams, family life, service life, family home and children's education into Plymouth's education policies.
- Seek to support the importance of a trauma informed approach across all areas of the covenant in line with city policy, and specifically that due regard is given by the Council to the mental health of children and young people of service families
- Council champions the children of service families have their voices heard. For example via the youth participation team and via partner organisations like the

Military Kids Club (MKC) and inviting Children and Young People to attend the Leadership Group and City Partnership in person

### 3.8 Support the Armed Forces community in Health and Adult Social Care

- Following assessment provide support and assistance to meet Veterans' eligible needs; including those needs that relate to their service. Also, providing advice, information and signposting onto other services where eligibility criteria is not met.
- Promote the Armed Forces Community in commissioning arrangements with ONE Devon and the relevant Local Care Partnership (LCP).
- To ensure Veterans and their families with caring responsibilities are able to access timely carer support within the City.
- Public Health will promote the AFC when we are helping to shape new policies or services, both as a commissioner and a health and care system partner.
- Encourage organisations to recognise "Having Served" and support Veterans and service leavers in this process

### 3.9 Encourage business community engagement with the Armed Forces Covenant

- Promote the Armed Forces community in Council dealings with the business community.
- Promote the Armed Forces community in Council dealings with the Military to facilitate transitions into the business community
- Support businesses to actively recruit and promote local job/ career opportunities to the Armed Forces community through delivery of Skills Launchpad Plymouth activities
- Encourage businesses to sign the Armed Forces Covenant.

### 3.10 Create and sustain an Armed Forces Network for staff

- Create a staff network for anyone connected to the Armed Forces community
- Ensure staff are able to share ideas and connect with others in the armed forces community
- Offer the staff network the opportunity to feedback views and ideas to Council Members and Policy colleagues
- Give the network feedback mechanisms and routes into Partnership and Community groups if required

### 3.11 Offering a discount to members of the Armed Forces Community

- Explore how we can introduce a city wide Armed Forces Covenant Card which will offer more than a service personnel card or discount card
- Proactively work with the local business community to ensure the city wide Armed Forces Covenant Card can be successfully implemented

### 3.12 Promoting that we are an armed forces-friendly organisation

- Promoting our work, activities and events through our own digital and social media channels as well as working with the press.
- Publishing our Covenant pledge on a dedicated Covenant section/page on our web site
- By becoming the lead Armed Forces Day(AFD) partner: In advance; promoting AFD through the web, social media, membership and other networks.

- Encouraging the wearing of uniform to work, by Reservists and Cadet Force Adult Volunteer(CFAV) employees, to mark Reserves Day
- Publishing stories of the day on the web, social media, through our own membership and other networks as well as working with the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations(RFCA) Communications lead & the press.

#### **4. City Partnership and the Armed Forces Community**

The covenant is built around partnership and collaboration with veteran's organisations, wider public service providers, businesses and the armed services. Plymouth City Council is committed to working with and encouraging other organisations to understand the challenges of military life and encourage them to provide the services and support members of the armed forces, ex-service personnel, Veterans, cadets and their families receive.

##### 4.1 Supporting the Covenant in the city by promoting, raising awareness and facilitating engagement across all sectors

- Raising awareness through engagement, celebration and commemoration.
- Identify and promote the Plymouth Armed Forces Covenant in the city and beyond
- Reinforce closer ties with Serving personnel in all Services
- Encourage business community engagement with the Armed Forces community
- Gain better understanding of local Armed Forces Community needs, including families and children

##### 4.2 Continue to build and develop relationships with the Business Sector

- Proactively engage with the Business sector to achieve agreed outcomes
- Work with Business Sector to create and secure jobs for those in the Armed Forces Community
- Facilitate and support access to services each offers
- Promote signing the Armed Forces Covenant

##### 4.3 Continue to build and develop relationships with the Voluntary, Charity and Community Sector

- Proactively engage with the Voluntary, Charity and Community sector to achieve agreed outcomes
- Facilitate and support access to services each offers

##### 4.4 Continue to build and develop relationships with the Social Enterprise Sector

- Proactively engage with the Social Enterprise Sector to achieve agreed outcomes
- Facilitate and support access to services each offers

##### 4.5 Improve Healthcare provision to the Armed Forces Community by working closely with those who can deliver the best outcomes

- Greater promotion of Op Courage to the Armed Forces community
- Support the Plymouth Armed Forces Partnership to increase the number of Veteran friendly GP practice accreditations in the City
- Support the Plymouth Armed Forces Covenant Group to lobby for better access to dental health care

- Help to ensure that family members maintain their relative position on any NHS waiting list, if moved around the UK due to the Service person being posted
- Ensure that local Veterans receive priority treatment (subject to the clinical needs of others) in respect of NHS hospital treatment relating to a condition resulting from their service in the Armed Forces
- Make sure that Veterans are able to access mental health professionals who have an understanding of Armed Forces culture
- Guarantee that members of the Armed Forces Community enjoy the same standard of, and access to, healthcare as that received by any other UK citizen in the area they live
- Greater promotion of Op Restore in the Armed Forces Community
- Encourage the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee to include Armed Forces Friendly GPs and Dental Surgeries to their work programme

#### 4.6 Ensure that Service Leaver transitioning into employment, and civilian life, are fully championed

- Promotion of the Skills Launchpad Plymouth service connecting Veterans and serving members of HM Armed Forces and their families with opportunities for skills, training, education, careers and jobs
- Maintain and enhance the city partnership with Department for Work And Pensions(DWP), the Career Transitions Partnership(CTP) and Regular Forces Employment Association (RFEA)
- Fully support and engage with the Royal Navy leavers programme
- Maintain and enhance the engagement with city businesses

#### 4.7 Facilitating opportunities for greater collaboration with all City organisations engaged with the Armed Forces

- Convene a partnership leadership team
- Appropriately support task and finish activity set up by the leadership or partnership
- Organise and lead regular Plymouth Armed Forces Covenant Partnership meetings each year
- Identify Armed Forces provision in the city
- Promote networking and information exchange between partners