



Community Covenant

AN ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT FOR ESSEX

BETWEEN

**ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL, UNITARY, CITY, DISTRICT & BOROUGH
COUNCILS, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHARITABLE AND
VOLUNTARY SECTORS,
THE CIVILIAN COMMUNITY OF ESSEX**

AND

THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY IN ESSEX



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 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.

PARTICIPANTS



This Armed Forces Community Covenant is made between:

The serving and former members of the Armed Forces and their families working and residing in Essex

~ and ~

Essex County Council and Essex City, District & Borough Councils

~ and ~

The Charitable and Voluntary Sector

~ and ~

The Business Community of Essex

~ and ~

Other members of the civilian community

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INTRODUCTION



The Armed Forces and the local authorities throughout Essex have a long and enduring history of support and collaboration. This publication is a further example of our joint working. It has been produced by Essex County Council and outlines our approach to the delivery of the Armed Forces Community Covenant throughout the County.

We are immensely proud of the relationship our armed forces have with the local authorities throughout Essex, the work we have done and will continue to undertake in support of Service personnel, their families and Veterans. Essex has a large military presence. The County Council has long recognised the economic and social impact of the Armed Forces and has built strong collaborative links with its garrisons, stations and RAF bases, the Regional Army Brigade and Veteran Associations, Cadet and Reserve units.

Like all public sector organisations the Armed Forces are subject to significant change. These changes will increase demands on schools, health facilities and housing as well as providing jobs, shared facilities, and significant income to local economies. Essex is richer for the unique opportunities the Armed Forces bring to the County. The Community Covenant is a very positive way of helping us to work closer and more innovatively together.

This publication explains how we will deliver the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT



Background

On 16 May 2011 the Secretary of State published the Armed Forces Covenant, the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces. A key initiative in the Armed Forces Covenant is the Community Covenant, which is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community. Its aim is to encourage local communities to support the Armed Forces Community in their area and promote understanding and awareness amongst the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces Community.

Local support for the Armed Forces Community takes many forms, from initiatives by local authorities to the actions of individuals. It may be through supporting service charities; through fundraising, military celebrations and open days, attending homecoming parades and repatriation ceremonies and offering commercial discounts. Simple demonstrations of support, such as displaying the Armed Forces Day window stickers have had a positive effect and boosted the morale of our Armed Forces Community. The Community Covenant scheme aims to build on this local level of support.

The Community Covenant is not intended to be one-way. It also recognises how much the

Armed Forces Community can do to help and support the wider Community, whether through participation in events and joint projects, or other forms of engagement.

The Community Covenant Grant Scheme

In August 2011 the Government announced that £30 million in funding had been allocated over the next four years to support the Community Covenant scheme. Details of the Community Covenant Grant scheme are available at www.mod.gov.uk.

THE ESSEX ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT

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The Armed Forces Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community. It is intended to complement the Armed Forces Covenant, which outlines the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces, at the local level.

The purpose of this Community Covenant is to encourage support for the Armed Forces Community working and residing in Essex and to recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of this Armed Forces Community, particularly those who have given the most. This includes in-Service and ex-Service personnel their families and widow/er(s) in Essex.

For Essex County Council and partner organisations, the Community Covenant presents an opportunity to bring their knowledge, experience and expertise to bear on the provision of help and advice to members of the Armed Forces Community. It also presents an opportunity to build upon existing good work on other initiatives such as the Welfare Pathway.

For the Armed Forces community, the Community Covenant encourages the integration of Service life into civilian life and encourages members of the Armed Forces community to help their local community.

The Essex Armed Forces Community Covenant aims to encourage charities, local authorities, businesses, communities and individuals to work together with the military to offer support that is appropriate to Service personnel, Service families, Reservists and Veterans in their area.

All military services are party to the Covenant which currently embraces the County Council and all Unitary, City, District and Borough Councils in Essex, Veterans Associations, the Health Authority, Mental Health Services, Police, Fire, Voluntary Sector

and the Private Sector. This is just the start and we will continue to encourage partners and other organisations to offer their support to the Covenant.

The Essex Community Covenant uses the five themes set out in the government's Covenant guidelines as follows:

- a. Encourage local communities to support the Armed Forces communities in their areas and vice versa.
- b. Nurture public understanding and public awareness amongst the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces Community.
- c. Recognise and remember the sacrifices faced by the Armed Forces Community.
- d. Encourage activities which help to integrate the Armed Forces Community into local life.
- e. Encourage the Armed Forces Community to help and support the wider Community.

CIVILIAN MILITARY PARTNERSHIP (CMP)



Acting on behalf of the participants, Essex County Council will establish a Civilian Military Partnership to provide oversight of all of the activity within Essex relating to the Armed Forces. It will drive strategic direction, monitor progress and create a cohort of civil/military liaison delivering a dynamic outcome focused partnership.

The Civilian Military Partnership will establish a programme of work that has a focus on: -

- Health and Wellbeing
- Economy and Skills
- Safer and Stronger Communities
- Education, Children and Young People
- Environment and Infrastructure

The Partnership will work together to identify, resource and deliver joint civilian and military projects to improve support facilities and services.

Action Plan

In Development