



## RUNNYMEDE BOROUGH COUNCIL

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We, the undersigned, commit to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and military families contribute to our business and our country.

Signed on behalf of:

Runnymede Borough Council

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Signed:

Name: Cllr Tom Gracey

Position: Leader of the Council

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan 2024

Signed:

Name: Col Crowley MBE DL

Position: CE SERFCA

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan 2024



Ministry  
of Defence



## **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 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.

## Section 2: Principles of The Armed Forces Covenant

- 2.1 The Armed Forces Covenant is a voluntary statement of support to our local Armed Forces Community. This Covenant encompasses the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces at the local level.
- 2.2 We, **Runnymede Borough Council** will endeavour in our business dealings to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, which are:
- No member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services.
  - In some circumstances special consideration is appropriate, especially for those who have given the most, such as the injured and the bereaved.
- 2.3 We, **Runnymede Borough Council** will encourage support for the Armed Forces Community working or in residing in the Borough, and will recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of our 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 Runnymede.
- 2.4 For **Runnymede Borough Council** and partner organisations, the Armed Forces Covenant presents an opportunity to work together to bring their knowledge, experience and expertise to bear on the provision of help and advice to members of the Armed Forces Community.

## Section 3: Demonstrating our Commitment

- 3.1 We, **Runnymede Borough Council** recognise the value serving personnel, reservists, veterans, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers, cadets and military families bring to our business and to our country. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant by:

**Forces Friendly HR Policies:** improving our HR policies to ensure they are inclusive and supportive of staff and potential staff who are Reservists or CFAV's in the work environment.

**Veterans:** supporting the employment of veterans, recognising the military skills and qualifications in our recruitment and selection process: working with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) and Forces Families Jobs (FFJ) portal.

**Reserves:** supporting our employees who are members of the Reserve Forces; granting additional paid/unpaid leave for annual Reserve Forces training; supporting any mobilisations and deployment; encouraging staff to consider becoming Reservists.

**Cadet Organisations:** supporting our employees who are volunteer leaders in military cadet organisation, granting additional leave to attend annual summer training camps; encouraging staff to consider becoming a volunteer leader in cadet organisations; supporting local military cadet units; recognising the benefit of employing cadets/ex-cadets within the workforce.

**Service Spouses & Families:** supporting the employment of Service spouses and partners; partnering with the Forces Families Jobs Forum; providing flexibility in granting leave for Service spouses and partners, before during and after a partner's deployment, providing work experience and mock interview opportunities for spouses and partners in order to improve skills in order to enter the workforce.

**Procurement:** advocate the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme by encouraging suppliers and potential suppliers to engage in the scheme; ensure that standard procurement/ tender documents include information about the scheme; including statements on purchase order confirmations to suppliers to promote the AFC.

**Community Development:** supporting the Armed Forces community within the Borough by promoting Veterans Hubs, free places on holiday club schemes and sporting activities to forces families.

**Community Services:** providing support where required via our Social Prescribing service and following the guidance set out in the Armed Forces Covenant when working with and dealing with applications for Disabled Facilities Grants with families and individuals in the Armed Forces

**Housing:** ensuring that no member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage compared to other citizens; housing Allocations Policy to waiver 3-year connection to the Borough for any serving armed forces person if they have served for the last 5 years, bereaved spouse and existing/previously serving if they have a serious injury; provide signposting services to relevant housing charities and advisory services.

**National Events:** supporting Armed Forces Day, Reserves Day, the Poppy Appeal and Remembrance activities.

**Communications:** promoting the fact that we are an Armed Forces-friendly organisation to our staff, residents, suppliers, contractors and wider public.

**General awareness:** attending relevant events including Recognise and Remember Task Groups, Regional Employer Engagement Groups, Surrey Military Partnership Conference to continue improve our knowledge, connections and share ideas and experiences with other forces-friendly organisations.