

## ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS WELCOME FROM THE GURKHAS AND NUNEATON

**Joanna Lumley OBE and 'National Treasure' visited Nuneaton on Sunday 24th April for a special service to celebrate the first anniversary of the Gurkha Memorial in Riverside Park, Nuneaton. The service commemorated the Gurkha's 201 years of outstanding service and loyalty to the British Sovereign and people. The service also remembered the 40,000 Gurkha's who have made the ultimate sacrifice in conflicts over the past 201 years.**

Joanna Lumley spoke of the warm welcome she had received from the Gurkhas and people of Nuneaton and paid tribute to Om Gurung MBE, who had led the townsfolk of Nuneaton in raising £51,000 to create and install the Memorial for last year's 200th Anniversary.

Joanna Lumley said "Nepal runs in my blood, now here in Nuneaton, you have been the warmest hosts and friends, the most welcoming family, to the Gurkhas and Nepalese who have come to live amongst you and that is such a proud thing, which is now established in this absolutely beautiful memorial.



Parade at the Gurkha memorial in Nuneaton



Joanna Lumley lays a wreath at the Gurkha memorial

The things that we most admire, steadfastness, good humour, friendship, loyalty and bravery, are all manifest in the Gurkha soldier and this touching inscription, 'Better to die than live as a coward', says exactly what it means to be a Gurkha soldier."

Prior to the service on 24th April, Om Gurung MBE was awarded a Nuneaton and Bedworth Community Award for his efforts in raising the money for the Memorial and in organising the commemorative events. The event will now be an annual parade on the Sunday closest to the 24th April.



Joanna Lumley with Mr Om Gurung and Mr Bakhat Bahadur Gurung

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# REMEMBER VETERANS RECEIVES £300,000



The Offices of the Police and Crime Commissioners (OPCCs) across Warwickshire and West Mercia have recently been successful in securing £300k from the Armed Forces Covenant fund to provide a 'Remember Veterans' project. The OPCCs will work with criminal justice agencies to deliver a 2 year project providing a range of services and support to frontline practitioners and veterans engaged with the Criminal Justice System.

The 'Remember Veterans' project will provide:

- A dedicated referral and helpline service operating Monday to Friday between 10am and 3pm, with an evening service on Tuesday and Thursdays between 6.30pm and 7.30pm
- FREE training for frontline staff in criminal justice and other agencies on veterans and the Armed Forces Community and their needs
- Peer to Peer support for veterans in custody or on Probation
- Support to access a range of military charities who can help with welfare and other needs
- Support to access training and employment opportunities

The 'Remember Veterans' confidential advice and referral line is 02476-348227. Confidential advice and support can also be gained through the Veterans' Contact Point in Nuneaton. Their email is [contactus@veteranscontactpoint.co.uk](mailto:contactus@veteranscontactpoint.co.uk). You can also drop in to them at the Horsa Building, Bentley Road, Nuneaton, CV11 5LR.

The 'Remember Veterans' project will launch on  
Friday 22nd July at Hindlip Hall, Worcester.



# GET YOUR HANDS ON SOME LOLLY!

## APPLICATIONS TO THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT FUND NOW OPEN!

The Covenant fund has £10 million each year to support the Armed Forces Covenant by funding projects which meet specific priorities. The priorities for 2016-17 and 2017-18 include Community Integration/Local Service Delivery.

The MOD is seeking projects which help integrate Armed Forces and Civilian communities and/or deliver valuable local services to the Armed Forces community. These local projects will offer support around issues such as finance, housing, mental health, physical health, employability or social support. The beneficiaries are expected to be serving personnel, ex-service personnel and their families.

Organisations can apply for up to £20,000 and will be subject to a single stage application process with a closing date of noon on **Wednesday 2nd November 2016**.

Further information can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covenant-fund-guidance-on-how-to-apply>

## ARMED FORCES COVENANT IN THE COMMUNITY CONFERENCE SUCCESS

A sub-Regional conference on the Armed Forces Covenant in the Community across Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire took place in Coventry on Tuesday 21st June 2016. This brought together over 100 delegates from statutory, voluntary, community and military organisations to hear about the latest developments on the Covenant and its impact locally.

The conference was opened by Cllr Stephens, Armed Forces Champion for Warwickshire County Council and followed by a range of presentations from serving, ex-serving personnel as well as agencies providing support to the Armed Forces Community.



Speakers and VIPs at the AFCC Conference

These included Brigadier van der Lande CBE (MOD Head of Reserves) with a national picture, an insight into 'A Life in the Forces' by WO1 Johnstone, issues faced by ex-service personnel from the Royal British Legion and Service Family Life from a representative from the Naval, RAF and Army Families Federations.

The conference was a great success providing a wealth of learning across the military-civilian dimension.



# HONOURS AND VISION OF A D-DAY VETERAN

Coventry D-Day hero Dennis Davison was awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) in the New Year's Honours list this year in recognition of his service towards WWII Commemoration and Memorialisation. Dennis served in the Royal Army Service Corps and took part in the D-Day landings, being involved in the forward advance and setting up mass landing stages. Dennis was de-mobbed in 1947, but his drive and energy to remember those who had fallen, 'all me mates', has never left him.



Dennis with his medals

After a successful business career Dennis retired to Normandy and was a key member of the Normandy Day charity helping to organise annual peace picnics and other events. Dennis returned to the UK and, at the age of 84, set up Normandy Day UK and continues as the Chairman today.

Normandy Day UK is a Coventry based peace education charity. They aim to "advance the education of the public about the impact of war and the sacrifices made by all service people, in particular those made at the landings in Normandy on 6th June 1944."

Normandy UK has previously run two Armed Forces Covenant fund projects during 2013-14. The first of these brought together Armed Forces veterans, 6 Secondary schools from across Coventry and Warwickshire and others to develop a film and other pieces of art. Working with professional artists, the students produced poems, graphic art and graffiti art about war, peace and reconciliation. The film included school children interviewing the veterans to create a piece of oral history as well as capturing a pilgrimage to Normandy by D-Day veterans.

'To the Fallen' was a pop up shop in Coventry, which enabled visitors to research armed forces connections in their family history and write a postcard to express their appreciation 'to the fallen'.

Dennis was also presented with the Chevalier de l'Ordre National de la Légion d'Honneur by the Lord Mayor of Coventry on 29th January 2016. This is in recognition by the Government and people of France of the selfless acts of heroism and determination shown by the UK Armed Forces in the liberation of France in 1944.

Dennis's current vision is for a Cider Apple orchard in Coventry to be planted as a permanent peace memorial to those on both sides who fell during World War II. The Normandy beaches led onto cider apple orchards.



Dennis, with his daughter Heather, at Buckingham Palace

## COUNCILS RAISE THE FLAG FOR ARMED FORCES WEEK

Armed Forces Week began in Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire with flag raising ceremonies across the sub-region, involving all the Local Authorities (Unitary, County, District and Borough), military representatives and veterans. Each area had its own ceremony with the handover of the 'Armed Forces Day' flag from the military to the civilian representatives, before it was hoisted and displayed from a Council building.



D-Day veteran Cecil Jeffcoate raises the Armed Forces Day flag in Warwickshire

Armed Forces Week and Day is an annual national campaign that gives communities the opportunity to show their support for the men and women of the Armed Forces including currently serving troops, Service families, Reservists, veterans and cadets.

For more information and photos please go to:  
[www.warwickshire.gov.uk/armedforcescommunitycovenant](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/armedforcescommunitycovenant)

## JEN WINS BIG AT THE INVICTUS GAMES

Dr. Jen Warren has returned from the Invictus Games with one Gold and 8 Silver medals across 3 different disciplines! Jen competed in hand cycling, wheelchair racing and swimming and won something in every event she took part in. Jen, a former Major in the Royal Army Medical Corps had previously served in Germany and Afghanistan, before a horrific skiing accident in 2008. Jen recovered at Headly Court, re-trained as an anaesthetist and left the Army in 2013. She currently works for University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire.

Jen was amazed at how well she did in the Invictus Games. She said it was 'empowering' and 'such an amazing experience'. Jen uses sport as a way of coping with her disability and is now back in training for more events.

# FAMILY FUN

## AT THE ARMED FORCES DAY

Despite the 'best' of British weather people turned out to show their support for the Armed Forces on Armed Forces Day on Saturday 25 June.



Lord Lieutenant presenting Veterans Badge to W01 Karl Whopples

The event was held at Carnival Fields in Nuneaton and co-hosted by the Veterans Contact Point of Nuneaton and SSAFA Warwickshire & Coventry. During the morning an Armed Forces Day flag was presented to the Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire, Mr Tim Cox, who is HM the Queen's representative for Warwickshire. The flag was exchanged as a symbol of continuing respect and support for Her Majesty from the ex-Service community and presented by Mr Kevin Bowman, SSAFA Branch Secretary. The Lord Lieutenant then presented a number of ex-servicemen, including 5 Gurkhas, with their Veterans Badge.

The highlight of the afternoon was a 'gun run' competition between a team of cadets from 121 (Nuneaton) Squadron Air training Corps and a combined team of Veterans and 'Wasps in the Community' players. In line with previous AFD 'gun run' competitions, the cadets won! Well done the cadets!



Cadets gun run

ACCESS TO LOGISTICS  
AUTUMN CHALLENGE 2016  
159 REGIMENT, THE ROYAL LOGISTIC CORPS

## ACCESS 2 LOGISTICS GETS MOVING

An innovative programme has been developed providing a new way to take advantage of everything the Army Reserve has to offer. Access to Logistics (A2L) is run by 159 Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps (RLC), who have their headquarters in Coventry and Companies across the West Midlands. The course, based on a course developed by 159 Field Company Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, offers ten weeks of consolidated training – training which otherwise would be spread out over several months or years – to turn civilians into Army Reserve logisticians.



159 Regiment on exercise in Cyprus

Training will include basic soldier training; trade-specific training as a logistician, chef, or HR specialist; driver training, including basic cat. B licences for those who need them and more advanced licences for those who already have a cat. B. At the end of the course the new soldiers will be offered an unconditional job interview with DHL supply chain and will join the regiment as Army Reservists. Candidates will earn a daily wage and bonuses, together totalling about £5500 over the ten weeks. The course is being run over the summer, and has attracted great interest – candidates have undergone pre-training and selection, and have started training at an Army Training Regiment.



DHL supply chain

159 Regiment is already recruiting for the next iteration of Access To Logistics, which will run throughout the Autumn. Those interested should email [159RLC-recruitment@mod.uk](mailto:159RLC-recruitment@mod.uk) or call 0782 691 4960.



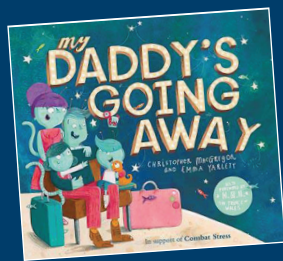
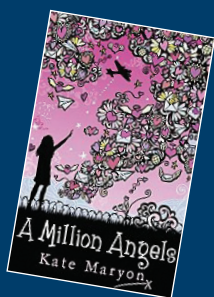
# READ ALL ABOUT IT

## BOOKS ABOUT ARMED FORCES FAMILY LIFE

The Armed Forces Covenant Team in Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire has been working with library colleagues in the 3 areas to stock a selection of books, covering issues which impact on children and families of those serving within the Armed Forces. These books are also appropriate for children from ex-serving and non-serving families, to help foster a greater understanding of the issues faced by their peers.

In Warwickshire, the school's library service and the mobile library service have also taken up this initiative. These have been a great success with the books being very popular at Bramcote barracks. The recommended reading list includes:

- A Million Angels by Kate Maryon
- Lilly Hates Goodbyes by Jerilyn Maler
- My Daddy's Going Away by Lt.Col Christopher MacGregor



More information can be found at:

[www.warwickshire.gov.uk/armedforcescommunitycovenant](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/armedforcescommunitycovenant)

[www.coventry.gov.uk/info/126/libraries/2753/search\\_the\\_library\\_catalogue/6](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/126/libraries/2753/search_the_library_catalogue/6)

## FREE TRAINING

### ON THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT AND COMMUNITY!

**Are you a manager or member of staff who wants to know more about the Armed Forces Covenant and Community?**

**Did you know you and your staff group could have an hour's FREE training to help you deliver your support and services to the Armed Forces Community more effectively?**

This training is provided by the Covenant team and is available across the whole of Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire to statutory and voluntary organisations.

#### The FREE training covers:

- What the Armed Forces Covenant is and how it relates to people's work
- Who comprises the Armed Forces Community
- Differences between military and civilian 'worlds' and life experiences
- Key issues for members of the Armed Forces community
- Sources of support and further information

This training is FREE and comes with goodies. Training has already been provided to over 180 staff from across statutory and voluntary organisations as part of team meetings or as multiple sessions throughout the day.

**Interested?** Email [afcc@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:afcc@warwickshire.gov.uk) with your details and requirements and a member of the Team will get back to you.

## CRAFTY CAMO PROJECTS

### UNCOVER LEAMINGTON'S CAMOUFLAGE PAST

Leamington's camouflage past is being brought out into the open this summer. Two creative camouflage projects are running in Jephson Gardens and the Leamington Spa Art Gallery is running an exhibition on Leamington's camouflage role during World War II.

In 1939, Leamington Spa was made the main base for the Governments 'Directorate of Camouflage' bringing together 250 artists, designers and technicians who secretly worked on designing camouflage for strategically important locations such as airfields, factories and power stations.



Czech Memorial Fountain

The 'Art in the Park' festival will take place on 6th-7th August in Jephson Gardens, Leamington Spa. As part of this festival the Czech

Memorial Fountain will be gradually hidden with panels, which people will decorate over the weekend. The Czech Memorial Fountain commemorates Czech paratroopers from the Free Czechoslovakia Army, who carried out secret missions during World War II from which they didn't return.

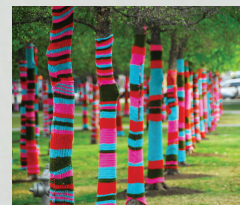
The second project is a secret 'yarn bombing' project involving 9 different groups creating stripey stockings and flowers to 'camouflage' trees near the Aviary café.

These will be on show 5th-19th August.

Concealment and Deception: the art of camouflagers of Leamington Spa in World War II is running from 22th July to 16th October at the Leamington Spa art gallery.

Other events as part of the 'Camouflage festival' include community murals, school projects, a camouflage trail as well as music and performance events.

Further information can be found at [www.artinpark.co.uk](http://www.artinpark.co.uk) and [www.leamington-camo.co.uk](http://www.leamington-camo.co.uk)



Yarn bombing

# COVENANT IN ACTION



ARMED FORCES  
COVENANT

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise from the nation that those who serve, and who have served, and their families will be treated with respect and fairness in the community, economy and society that they serve. This means that they should not be disadvantaged in their day-to-day lives. This includes offering injured servicemen and women and bereaved families extra support where appropriate.

It sounds great in principle, but what about in practice?

Below are examples of Local Authorities and other agencies doing their bit to make it real!

- **North Warwickshire Borough Council** supported Mr B into a one bed flat when he became homeless, which is in line with the Armed Forces Covenant. Mr B struggled with his tenancy and was at risk of becoming homeless again. With additional support Mr B was able to engage with the Council and also with the **Royal British Legion**. The Royal British Legion provided Mr B with access to the Warrior Programme: a 3 day residential course to provide him with new skills to go back into the workplace and 12 months of backup support. Mr B. is now feeling more settled and experiencing a better quality of life.

- The husband of Mrs S is being posted from Bramcote Barracks in Warwickshire to Herefordshire. Mrs S works part time for **Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council** so commuting is not an option! Mrs S asked if NBBC would consider allowing her to work from home due to her husband's posting. NBBC considered this and agreed a way for Mrs S to continue in her role working from home and visiting the office 2 days a month. Everyone is happy with this solution.

- Mr D was a 32 year old ex-Army soldier without a home and struggling with suicidal feelings. He visited A&E a number of times due to these feelings and also contacted the Mental Health Crisis Team. With support from his **GP** he was able to engage with the **Ex-Armed Forces Mental Health project** provided by **Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust**. With additional support from **SSAFA** and the **Veterans' Contact Point** in Nuneaton he has been able to secure his own private rented accommodation and is now undergoing psychological therapy

- A school in Solihull with a low number of pupils from Service families wanted to find the best way of supporting them. They approached the **local Covenant Team** for information, who put them in touch with **Wolvey School** in Warwickshire. Wolvey has a large intake of Service children due to their proximity to Bramcote Barracks and, as such, has extensive experience in this area. The teachers were able to discuss and share 'best practice' and work out ways in which to support the Service children.

## COUNT THEM IN!



Count Them In is the Royal British Legion and Poppy Scotland's campaign to influence the Government to include questions in the next census on former members of the Armed Forces. The Office of National Statistics is currently planning the questions to be used in the census in 2021 and the Royal British Legion and Poppy Scotland want questions to help improve our understanding of this unique community and ensure that politicians, charities and service providers fully meet the needs of our serving personnel, veterans and their families.

You too can be part of this campaign by visiting <http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/campaign/count-them-in/>, hitting the red Pledge Your Support button and following the instructions on screen to send a letter to your MP.

## CALLING ALL MILITARY SPOUSES OR CIVIL PARTNERS WHO WENT ABROAD FROM 1975 ONWARDS BECAUSE OF A PARTNER'S POSTING!

Did you know a new National Insurance credit is available for spouses and civil partners who accompanied their partner on an overseas posting? As your State Pension is based on personal contributions this new credit enables you to claim for years when you may have been unable to work and pay National Insurance.

The new Class 3 credit covers the years spent abroad from 6 April 1975 onwards and counts towards the new State Pension.

For information about the new credit and how to apply, visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-insurance-credits-for-partners-of-armed-forces-personnel-overseas-after-6-april-1975>



# DR. DAN LEADS THE WAY ON EX-ARMED FORCES MENTAL HEALTH!



Dr. Dan Barnard (on the right) with Prof. Kevin Fenton from Public Health England

Dr. Dan Barnard is a leading light in the world of ex-Armed Forces mental health. He's a Consultant Clinical Psychologist with Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust and the National Clinical Lead for Mental Health Care and Military Veterans for the Positive Practice Mental Health Collaborative Organisation. Dr. Dan and a former patient presented at a national conference on Mental Health in London talking about their experiences and how services have been developed to improve support for former Armed Forces personnel. Delegates from the NHS, Local Government and Third Sector agencies went away with ideas of how to improve services and develop Armed Forces Champions in their own organisations.

The success of the Ex-Armed Forces project is the identification of over 40 'Champions' within the Trust with either personal or clinical experience of working with mental health issues of Ex-Service personnel. An enhanced 'care pathway' has been developed to support individuals to access Mental Health and other services.

**If you, or someone you know, are ex-Armed Forces and would like to speak to someone about these services please contact Lynne Davidson on 07768130502 or [exarmedforces@covwarkpt.nhs.uk](mailto:exarmedforces@covwarkpt.nhs.uk)**



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

## RETURNED FROM BEING POSTED ABROAD OR GOING TO BE POSTED ABROAD?

### DON'T FORGET TO CLAIM THE NEW NATIONAL INSURANCE CREDIT!

If you've returned from accompanying your partner on a posting abroad since 6 April 2010 or are going to accompany them on a posting abroad then make sure you claim the new Class 1 National Insurance credit.

This National Insurance Class 1 credit is for individuals who accompany their spouse or civil partner on an overseas posting as a member of the armed forces. You need to apply for the credit and it can help to protect your entitlement to Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance, as well as the State Pension.

Applications for this credit must be made by the end of the tax year (5 April) following that in which the posting ends and must be signed and stamped by the Career Manager. So, for example if a posting ends in June 2016, the credit would need to be applied for before 5 April 2018.

**The application form can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-insurance-application-for-national-insurance-credits-modca1>**

# COVENANT IN ACTION NATIONALLY!

**It's not just local agencies who are doing their bit; the Government and others are looking at ways in which current and former servicemen and women and their families are being disadvantaged and putting things right.**

The MOD has made it possible for three of the UK's leading credit unions to join forces and make simple savings accounts and loans available to the armed forces and their families. Credit Unions are "not for profit" financial cooperatives, owned by, and run for, their members, based on the ideal of "people helping people". The credit unions are:

- Planesaver Credit Union <http://planesavercu.co.uk/MOD/> or tel: 0208 607 5020
- Serve and Protect Credit Union for the Armed Forces <http://serveandprotectcu.co.uk/> or tel: 0845 266 1113
- London Mutual Credit Union <http://creditunion.co.uk/Military.htm> or tel: 020 7787 0770

The **Forces Help to Buy** scheme was launched in April 2014 with the aim of supporting and encouraging home ownership amongst Service Personnel. Since then over 7,000 service men or women have benefitted from the scheme, borrowing over £106 million. Regular Service Personnel can borrow up to 50% of their gross annual salary (to a maximum of £25,000) to buy their first home, extend an existing property or move to another.

Further information can be found at <http://www.moneyforce.org.uk/Managing-money/Spend/Buying-a-property/Forces-Help-to-Buy-Scheme>

## WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

There's a number of ways in which you can be involved in supporting the Armed Forces Covenant in the Community. These include:

- Participating in the Warwick District Armed Forces Survey: the aim of the survey is for Warwick District Council to get a better understanding of the numbers and needs of the Armed Forces community in Warwick District. The survey can be found at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ARMEDFORCESCC>
- Planning your own commemorative event for Remembrance Day in November
- Contacting us at [afcc@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:afcc@warwickshire.gov.uk) and telling us your ideas

# SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY

There are over 2,000 military charities and Regimental Associations providing support to the Armed Forces community; serving, ex-serving and their families.



The Big White Wall is an online mental health support service for veterans and those currently serving, their families and carers as well as other communities. It's an online support group which aims to reduce the stigma of mental ill health.

This is a free and anonymous service for serving and ex-service personnel. All they need to do is register.

**[www.bigwhitewall.com](http://www.bigwhitewall.com)**



The Warrior Programme is a 3 day motivation and training programme with 12 month structured support and signposting.

The Warrior Programme runs residential programmes in London, SW and NW for Veterans and adult Family Members of Veterans. The programme is ideally suited to individuals who are: not fulfilling their potential, stuck, frustrated, angry, guilty, unsure, lacking in confidence, struggling with the transition post operations, in civvy street or returning to 'normality'.

The 3 day coaching programme teaches participants practical, effective tools, techniques and coaching strategies to improve performance and motivation and overcome the above.

**<http://www.warriorprogramme.org.uk/>**  
**+44 (0)56 0204 3180**



BLESMA, The Limbless Veterans, is dedicated to assisting serving and ex-Service men and women who have suffered life-changing limb loss or the use of a limb, an eye or loss of sight. BLESMA support these men and women in their communities throughout the UK.

BLESMA work for their Members when the conflicts that have affected their lives are no longer the focal point in the nation's media.

Modern medicine transforms the physical injury, but it is a complicated process to treat the emotional trauma and related lifelong problems.

**<https://blesma.org/>**

**020 8590 1124**



Help for Heroes has Recovery Centres in Tidworth (Wiltshire), Catterick, Colchester and Plymouth. These Recovery Centres offer the next stage of care after clinical treatment. The Recovery Centres aim to 'inspire, enable and support' the injured or ill to piece their lives back together. They do this through lifeskills courses, education and training for employment, welfare support and physical activity.

**<http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk/>**

**0845 6731760**