

## FUNDING SUCCESS - £146,000 BOOST FOR LOCAL ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY

ARMED FORCES  
COVENANT  
FUND TRUST



AF Champions from NWBC, NBBC and VCP (Cllr Andy Jenns, Cllr Barry Longdon and Len Hardy)

A partnership bid from organisations in the north of Warwickshire has been successful in securing £146,000 from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust. Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, working in partnership with North Warwickshire Borough Council, The British Gurkha Association Nuneaton Branch and The Veterans Contact Point (VCP) based in Nuneaton have secured 2 years of funding to:

- Develop an Armed Forces community hub in Atherstone and other localities
- Enable the VCP to employ a full time worker to work across Nuneaton, Bedworth and North Warwickshire, supporting the Veterans Hubs and enhancing the support delivered by the VCP
- Improve support for the Gurkha community in the north of Warwickshire to help community integration, and language skills as well as improving access to services such as health, social care and education.

### INSIDE:

MANCETTER BIG DAY OUT	2
DINNER ON HMS VICTORY!	4
ARMED FORCES DAY CELEBRATIONS	5
COVENTRY SUPPORTS THE RAF 100 CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS	6
XPO LOGISTICS SUPPORT 4 PARA RESERVIST	9
VETERANS GATEWAY	10
ORBIT SIGNS THE COVENANT	11

# WHAT'S COMING UP?



## MANCETTER BIG DAY OUT

SUNDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2018

MANCETTER, NORTH WARWICKSHIRE

The Mancetter Big Day Out will take place at the Mancetter Recreation Ground from 11am to 3pm. In celebration of 100 years since the end of WW1, a host of military attractions, services and personnel (past and present) will entertain and involve the public, including everything from WW1 re-enactments to PT drills.

This family event is being organised by North Warwickshire Borough Council in partnership with Veterans Contact Point, and is supported by various charities and organisations including Help for Heroes, the Royal British Legion, local cadet forces, and 30th Signal Regiment from Gamecock Barracks. It is hoped that the event will highlight the experiences of some of the 7,500 North Warwickshire veterans and raise awareness of the support services available should they need them.

The military theme will be present throughout the event with interactive activities, displays, music, food, stalls, clothing, equipment and vehicles. A military themed dog show will take place alongside free camouflage face painting, bouncy castles, and an inflatable assault course.

**This is being organised by the Community Development Team of North Warwickshire Borough Council with funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust.**  
**Contact:** [communitydevelopment@northwarks.gov.uk](mailto:communitydevelopment@northwarks.gov.uk)

Further information is available at [www.facebook.com/events/624760027878556/](http://www.facebook.com/events/624760027878556/)

**ARMED FORCES  
COVENANT  
FUND TRUST**



## WARWICK POPPIES DISPLAY 2018

St Mary's Church, Warwick will be displaying their poppy installation between 6th October and 9th December in commemoration of the end of the First World War and the 11,610 lives lost from the Royal Warwickshire Regiment during the War.

The display has been created using knitted or handmade poppies donated by members of the congregation and beyond. Beyond is a slight understatement as poppies have been produced and sent not just from across the UK, but also the world! Poppies have been donated from Warwick, Australia and Warwick in the US, as well as from across Europe and even Malawi!



This installation has included the work of Rowan Fisher from Warwickshire Culture and Heritage, who organised 9 very successful workshops in the Market Square Museum, the 'Happy Hookers' Crochet Group from Warwickshire County Council, and

many other WCC staff. The 'Happy Hookers' were challenged by the St Mary's Poppy Appeal to produce 1000 crocheted poppies by August 2018. Initially, they were well ahead of their schedule, but interest in purchasing the poppies by staff raised £100 for the British Legion, which meant they had to start again in December 2017!

Further information is available at [www.warwickpoppies.org.uk/](http://www.warwickpoppies.org.uk/)

## COMMEMORATION OF WWI LEAMINGTON SPA VC HOLDERS

Two heroes of Leamington Spa, awarded the Victoria Cross for conspicuous bravery at the end of the First World War, will be commemorated on Sunday 23rd September 2018 at 11.00 am. As part of a national commemoration, specially commissioned memorial stones will be unveiled at the War Memorial at Euston Place to commemorate the award of the Victoria Cross to:-

**Lieutenant John Barrett – Leicestershire Regiment**

**Private Henry Tandey – Duke of Wellington's West Riding Regiment**

The memorial stones are to be laid and unveiled to coincide with the centenary of the award of the V.C's – both recipients having been recognised with this highest award for valour in September 1918.

Representatives of the successor military regiments, relatives and civic guests will participate in a short ceremony of dedication.

## NUNEATON MUSEUM & ART GALLERY

### FOR VALOUR: THE FIRST WORLD WAR THROUGH THE EXPERIENCES OF KNOX AND BEESLEY 22 SEPTEMBER - 18 NOVEMBER



The Victoria Cross is the Highest Award in the UK Honours System. It is awarded for gallantry and is given for acts of extreme bravery. There were two Victoria Cross winners from Nuneaton & Bedworth in the First World War. Incredibly, both survived to receive them. 100 years on from Britain's victory, this exhibition casts light on the First World War through the experiences of these two men. Explore the stories of both Cecil Leonard Knox and William Beesley, and learn more about the War in which they fought.

### FIRST WORLD WAR - LIFE IN THE TRENCHES SATURDAY 13 OCTOBER

See the everyday food, equipment, uniforms and weaponry of the First World War trenches 1914-1918. Learn about everyday life in the trenches from an infantry officer. Fill in a postcard home, a daily trench log or a will. No need to book, just drop in between 11am and 4pm.

Further information is available at [www.nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk/downloads/file/2681/museum\\_whats\\_on\\_guide](http://www.nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk/downloads/file/2681/museum_whats_on_guide)



## BACK ON THE RIGHT FOOT; VETERANS MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER DEVELOPMENTAL COURSE

This is a brand new course designed for Veterans, or the families of Veterans, equipping them to understand and improve their skills to enable integration and general awareness of mental wellbeing, in a friendly, non-clinical way.

The course will cover:

- Ways to improve your health and mental wellbeing.
- Understanding how being a veteran can affect relationships.
- Adjusting to Civvy Street – to include Benefits & Accommodation.
- Improving employability.
- Dealing with the stigma of being a veteran.
- Understanding addiction and the support available to you.
- Understanding what support networks are available and how to use them more effectively.

The course is being delivered by Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust Ex-Armed Forces Service, in partnership with the Recovery and Wellbeing Academy, The Veterans Contact Point and Ubique Partnership.

The course sessions will vary in length and be delivered over 8 consecutive weeks starting later in the year.

If you are interested please contact Nancy Tomlinson (Ex Armed Forces Pathway Manager) on 07771 984394 or Len Hardy (Veterans Contact Point) on 024 7634 3793



## HELPING HANDS COMMUNITY PROJECT BIG SLEEP OUT 2018



Helping Hands are again organising a sponsored Big Sleep Out to coincide with the Armistice weekend. This year's Big Sleep Out will be on Friday 9th November.

The aim of the Sleep Out is to raise awareness of homelessness/rough sleeping in the area and to raise funds to continue the work of the charity. One aspect of this event is the recognition that some ex-Armed Forces personnel may be homeless/rough sleeping.

The event takes place in All Saints' Church and the de-consecrated grounds of the church. The event is open to the public, and local businesses/organisations are encouraged to send teams in. In each of the past two years there have been over 100 attendees for the presentations and approximately 70 people sleeping out in their shelters.

In previous years the sleepouts have been supported by a team from the Ammunition Technical Support group from Kineton Station. They support the public in shelter building and patrolling the area to ensure everyone is safe and comfortable during the night. As it is 100 years since the Armistice, we will be supporting the 'There, but not there' campaign, with silhouettes to represent the fallen during the Great War, the sacrifices they made, and the impact on communities of those who did not return.

Tickets for the event can be purchased for £27 at [www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/helping-hands-community-project-sponsored-bigsleepout18-tickets-28238786972?aff=erelexpmlt](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/helping-hands-community-project-sponsored-bigsleepout18-tickets-28238786972?aff=erelexpmlt)



# WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING

## ARMED FORCES FAMILIES DAY AT COMPTON VERNEY



Compton Verney was delighted to welcome members of the Armed Forces and their families to their Forces Family day on Sunday 8 April. Over 120 people took up the offer of free entry to the gallery and park, and to their exhibition 'Created in Conflict', which showcased artworks made by serving personnel during periods of war, and recovery from life-affecting injuries.

Visitors were welcomed by Susan Watt, Volunteer and Community Engagement Coordinator at Compton Verney, and Nicholas Caswell, the Community Action Team Leader with Voluntary Action Coventry, who made a real impact in his uniform. Families could make and decorate a memory box inspired by 'A Welcome Arrival' - a painting by John Dalbiac Luard in the exhibition, which featured a soldier opening a box of gifts from home.

Although the exhibition has now closed and the gallery has their summer shows, the involvement of the Armed Forces Covenant continues at Compton Verney. Over the next 12 months, visitors will be able to enjoy books chosen by Servicewomen which will feature in the Women's Library. The beautifully restored room was once a reading library dedicated to female authors, and the once empty bookshelves are now populated with titles chosen by six guest curators. Alongside those chosen by the Servicewomen of the British Army will be titles picked out by cookery writer and celebrity chef Sophie Grigson; Young Woman Engineer of the year 2017 Dr Osak Esu and artist and sculptor Susan Stockwell, whose work featured in Created in Conflict.

Armed Forces personnel and their families can enjoy discounted entry to Compton Verney throughout the season. Spend a day exploring Compton Verney's glorious parkland and their Summer exhibitions.... On now until the 30th of September!

Further details at [www.comptonverney.org.uk/](http://www.comptonverney.org.uk/)



Women's Library at Compton Verney

## DINNER ON HMS VICTORY!

**Warwickshire County Council has been recognised for its work on the Armed Forces Covenant with an invitation to a formal event on HMS Victory. The Second Sea Lord hosted the event to which Monica Fogarty - Joint Managing Director, and Mark Ryder - Head of Transport and Economy, of WCC were invited, along with other military, business and Government leaders. If you look closely you'll be able to spot Deborah Meaden of Dragons' Den fame!**

Monica Fogarty, Joint Managing Director of WCC said "As part of the Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire Armed Forces Covenant, Warwickshire County Council has worked hard over the last few years to ensure that our services are accessible to the Armed Forces and ex-Armed Forces community. It was wonderful that WCC was recognised in this way at such an iconic location"



Monica Fogarty (far right) and Mark Ryder (3rd from the left) at the celebration dinner on HMS Victory

# ARMED FORCES DAY CELEBRATIONS

Armed Forces Day was celebrated across the UK on Saturday 30th June. The lead up to these events begins with flag raising by Local Authorities and on famous landmarks. Armed Forces 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.



Warwickshire raised the flag on Monday 25th June and attending the flag raising ceremony were: Councillor Bob Stevens, Chair of the AFC partnership; Councillor John Cooke, Chair of Warwickshire County Council; Tim Cox, Lord Lieutenant; Clare Sawdon, Warwickshire High Sheriff; David Carter and Monica Fogarty, Joint Managing Directors of Warwickshire County Council.

To celebrate Armed Forces Day, a range of events took place across the region.

## NUNEATON ARMED FORCES DAY GALA

A gala event took place in Nuneaton organised by the Veterans' Contact Point with support from MOD Kineton, SSAFA and others. As in previous years cadets from 176 Air Training Squadron took on the gun run and competed against a team of veterans, winning as usual.

## SOLIHULL ARMED FORCES DAY

The AFD event in Shirley Park was the first of its kind to be held in the area. It was planned, organised, and carried out in a joint venture between the Shirley Branch of the Royal British Legion and Troop Aid. The day itself was centred around the Cadet Forces of the area; Sea Cadet Corps, Army Cadet Force, Air Training Corps, Boys Brigade and Girls Brigade. They represented their units with outstanding enthusiasm, skills, confidence and turn-out.

The cadets were involved in a number of events including tug of war, tent erecting and overland boat racing as well as various band displays. The Squibb Freestyle motorcycle team had the crowd enthralled as did the falconry display and singers.

It was a great turn out from public and volunteers alike, which raised funds for the work of both the Royal British Legion and Troop Aid.



**TROOP AID**  
supporting our injured troops

# WARWICKSHIRE HELPS OUT ARMED FORCES DAY IN CYPRUS

Sometimes it's not what you know, but who you know! The Commanding Officer for Episkopi & Troodos Station(s) wanted an Armed Forces Day flag to help raise the profile of Armed Forces Day in Cyprus. Enter Garrison Sergeant-Major WO1 Belcher-Marks of the Royal Logistic Corps. Prior to his posting to Cyprus he was the Regimental Sergeant-Major for Kineton Station where he represented the Station on the local Armed Forces Covenant partnership. He contacted the Covenant Lead Officer for Warwickshire County Council and put in his plea! Shortly afterwards a lovely Armed Forces Day flag was on its way to Cyprus!



## FAMILY FUN (ARMED FORCES) DAY

Families had plenty of fun at the Warwick (Armed Forces) Fun Day at St. John's House in Warwick on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> July. Approximately 400 people attended the event which saw children (and their parents) entertained by the climbing wall, circus skills, archery from MOD Kineton and a bouncy castle. Smaller children were able to frolic on the soft play area in the shade of some big trees.



Ruby Ann sings with WWI re-enactors

There was also a demonstration of a Section attack by the cadets of Warwickshire Army Cadet Force, music from the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers Band and displays from re-enactors of the Napoleonic era, World Wars I and II as well as the Home Guard.

St. John's House is the home of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers Museum which was open for free on the day.



Band of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers



# COVENTRY SUPPORTS THE RAF 100 CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

Coventry paid tribute to the RAF in a weekend of events to celebrate the force's centenary. Thousands of people thronged Broadgate in the centre of the city to see a Red Arrows Hawk and an array of military vehicles and displays while Coventry Airport played host to nine historic aircraft.

The event, which was sponsored by Rigby Group, and one of a series of RAF100 events taking place across the UK, culminated in a lunch for 100 dignitaries hosted by the Lord Mayor of Coventry, Cllr John Blundell, and Sir Peter Rigby at St Mary's Guildhall, followed by a service of celebration at Coventry Cathedral.

A special-edition red, white and blue RAF100 Aston Martin, RAF100 vehicles manned by military personnel, an RAF Regiment Display, the University of Birmingham Air Squadron, the RAF STEM team and RAF recruitment officers drew in thousands to the centre of the city.

Sir Peter Rigby, Chairman and Chief Executive of the Rigby Group whose headquarters are in Warwickshire said: "We owe so much to the men and women, past and present, who have defended and furthered our nation's interests in all corners of the world and who continue to do so today.

"We have worked closely with Coventry City Council and the RAF and I would like to thank everyone who has made such a memorable weekend possible." Sir Peter also paid tribute to Sir Frank Whittle, inventor of the jet engine, who was born in Earlsdon and whose work was commemorated throughout the event.



A Red Arrows Hawk in Godiva Square, Coventry

Whittle's original jet engine and his story were displayed in Broadgate in the city centre, courtesy of the Midland Aviation Museum, which today is its permanent home.

The Lord Mayor of Coventry, Cllr John Blundell, whose father served in the RAF, said it was fitting the event took place close to Coventry Cathedral.

"Our Cathedral and the Ruins alongside stand as a reminder of the horrors of war and the bravery of those who served," he said. "It has been wonderful to pay tribute to the men and women who have served in our beloved RAF over the years – whether in the air or as ground crew, in war time and in peace.

"Our city has been linked with the RAF and our country's amazing aircraft throughout the years and it is so appropriate that we staged this three-day celebration."

Air Marshal Stuart Atha, of the RAF, said: "I am enormously grateful to the City Council, Sir Peter Rigby and the Rigby Group and above all everyone from the city of Coventry for this wonderful tribute in honour of the RAF's 100th Anniversary."



RAF Band in Godiva Square, Coventry

## BRAMCOTE STATION OPEN DAY 2018

The weather was amazing for Bramcote Station Open Day on Sunday 22 July and so was the entertainment! Visitors were treated to displays by the Company of Horsemen, Stunt Riders, the Nottingham Royal Engineer Band and military displays. There was plenty of other entertainment from the fun fair to marching bands and about 6000 went through the gates.





# STRATFORD MP VISITS LOCAL EX ARMED FORCES MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE



**Mr Zahawi was keen to see and hear from those who helped create this innovative approach to service development, with veterans at the heart of the process from the outset.**

He was joined by Simon Gilby, Chief Executive of Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust. Mr Zahawi's visit granted him access to a number of key staff including Dr Dan Barnard, Lead Clinical Psychologist for the service alongside Lynne Davidson, Hub Lead. In addition he met with Jenny Bell, Mental Health Nurse and Nicholas Caswell, Ex Armed Forces Community Action Team Leader, all of whom spent time with Mr Zahawi explaining the importance of the approach and the impact the service is achieving.

The service launched as a collaborative partnership in 2017 between Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Partnership Trust, Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, North Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust, Walking with the Wounded, and Mental Health Matters. It was established to achieve joined up care pathways through a single doorway approach for veterans across the Midlands and East region. The service has made great strides and intends to be seen and recognised as an NHS exemplar service across England in its treatment pathway for ex armed forces personnel.

Dr Dan Barnard, Clinical Psychologist at Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Partnership Trust, said about the visit: "I'm grateful to Mr Zahawi for showing great interest in our service, recognising the importance of the work we are doing and the results we are achieving as a whole."

Mr. Zahawi commented on his visit: "I'm delighted I've had this opportunity to meet with some of the tremendous staff involved in this inspirational service."

"Clearly I recognise the difficulties often faced by the NHS to achieve what they and their partners want in service change. Evidently this collaboration with ex armed service personnel in understanding their unique needs, tailoring and delivering NHS services for veterans in collaboration with them, is working well and I'm pleased to promote their efforts back in Westminster."

Veterans' Mental Health TIL Service operate a 24/7, 365 days per year single point of enquiry (0300 323 0137) for initial triage and referral to appropriate local services.

## BEATING RETREAT AT KINETON STATION



Band of the Royal Logistic Corps

'Beating Retreat' comes from medieval times and was used to tell tavern keepers to close their taps and serve no more drinks to soldiers. This would have been with the firing of guns or beating of drums. Today it is a ceremonial occasion and Kineton Station had its 'Beating Retreat' in the evening of 24th July as part of a community engagement event.

Mayors, civic dignitaries and partners from Local Authorities and businesses were hosted at a reception in the Officers Mess before meeting members of the local community on the Parade Square to watch the Band of the Royal Logistic Corps 'Beating Retreat'. This included a fine display of marching, reading music and playing music all at the same time, which takes considerable practice to get it to the level that was performed on the night!

Well done and many thanks to all involved!



# COVENANT IN ACTION



## GOING GLOBAL WITH THE E-LEARNING!

The e-learning programme developed by the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Covenant partnership has gathered considerable pace over the last 6 months or so. Modules focused on the needs of Armed Forces personnel and Armed Forces families have been launched and promoted to the Armed Forces community through a social media campaign involving the MOD, Families Federations and Army Welfare service. They are now available through the national Covenant website at [www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk](http://www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk)

This means that, wherever Service personnel or their families are stationed around the world, they can still access the e-learning.

Also, the Housing, Homelessness and the Armed Forces Covenant module was launched to Local Authorities and other agencies involved in housing and homelessness work. Over 30 Local Authorities have taken up the offer and are implementing the course locally for their staff. This module is freely available at <https://www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/learning/housing-homelessness-and-the-armed-forces-covenant/#/>

In the past year, over 600 people have completed the Frontline Staff training across 12 Local Authorities, with another 40+ looking to implement the training for their staff during 2018-19. This module is also available for anyone to access on the national Covenant website at <https://www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/learning/front-line-workers/#/>



## REMEMBER VETERANS PROJECT HELPS 130 PEOPLE CAUGHT UP IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Remember Veterans was a 2 year project across Warwickshire (and West Mercia) funded through the MOD Covenant Fund. During the 2 years over 1000 Criminal Justice staff were trained in how to identify and support veterans involved in the Criminal Justice System. Those trained included Custody Staff, Probation Officers and staff in Community Rehabilitation Companies. Over 130 veterans were directly supported by this project with another 600+ supported by the Veterans Contact Point, SSAFA and other community organisations.

The legacy of the Remember Veterans project lives on with the referral, case management support systems, and networks established by the project.

## NEW VOLUNTEERS PROVIDING MORE SUPPORT TO VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES



The Veterans Integration Project was launched in July 2017 to recruit, train, and coordinate a group of individuals to be the next wave of Peer Support Workers and Support Volunteers for our Armed Forces Community.

The project has enlisted the services of 34 new volunteers for the Veterans Contact Point and its partners and they are now actively supporting veterans and their families through the Veterans Contact Point.

## ARMED FORCES COVENANT FUND TRUST: UP TO £20,000 LOCAL GRANTS PROGRAMME



The Armed Forces Covenant Fund has moved out of the MOD into being a completely independent grant making Trust. There is, however, no change to the Local Grants programme, which continues to provide grants of up to £20,000 for local projects that support community integration or local delivery of services.

Community Integration projects should create strong local links between the Armed Forces community, (who are current and former members of the Armed Forces and their families) and civilian communities; and be able to clearly demonstrate how they will have an impact in overcoming barriers to better integration.

Delivery of Local Services should be local projects which offer financial advice, housing, support with mental and physical health, employability or social support for serving Armed Forces personnel, veterans, and their families.

Applications need to have strong evidence of need and a clear project plan, as well as support from the local partnership. If you have an idea for a project please get in touch with us at [afcc@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:afcc@warwickshire.gov.uk)



# XPO LOGISTICS SUPPORT 4 PARA RESERVIST

Since being established in 2016, Rugby-based 4th Battalion The Parachute Regiment, D Company (known as 4 PARA) have drawn their Reservists from a wide range of local businesses and employers. A Reserve airborne unit whose officers and soldiers are prepared to deploy at short notice, 4 PARA rely heavily on the support of the employers and the wider community to ensure that they can achieve their mission – whether that be a short-term exercise or a lengthier operational deployment which can last months.

One company who has been at the forefront in supporting 4 PARA Reservists in the West Midlands is global supply chain company XPO Logistics, who have a significant presence in the area, and employs Lieutenant Leigh Crowden, a Reservist Officer, within their finance department.

Over 4 years ago Lt Crowden began his Reserve career as a private soldier with 4 PARA, having completed 11 weekends of basic training and the Combat Infantryman's Course. He then undertook a series of arduous physical tests during Pre-Parachute Selection, nicknamed P Company, to earn himself the coveted maroon beret and become a member of the Parachute Regiment.



Lt Leigh Crowden leads his men on Remembrance Day

Since completing his training Leigh has served on a number of exercises both in the UK and abroad, including Spain and Cyprus. More recently he made the decision to commission from the ranks to become an officer – this involved a lengthy selection process followed by a total of 6 weeks' worth of leadership training at the world leading Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. None of this would have been achievable without the backing of XPO Logistics who have been unwavering in their assistance to Leigh throughout his Reserve career by granting him additional leave to fulfil his Reservist commitments.

Leigh commented on the support that XPO had given him by saying "My civilian role would appear to be quite different from my role in 4 PARA, however, parallels can be drawn - decision making under pressure, presenting information to wide ranging stakeholders and coaching/mentoring staff. XPO recognise the value of recruiting an Armed Forces Reservist due to the changing environments that we operate in. The support from XPO has been fantastic, both at a policy level (allowing extra time off for exercises/courses) and

at a transactional level, by allowing me to work closer to the unit on working days to facilitate attendance on training nights and weekends. Without the continued support it would not have been possible to commission into The Parachute Regiment."

Miss Cheryl Kent, HR Manager at XPO, echoed Leigh's comments, "XPO takes their support to serving Reservists and veterans very seriously. First and foremost, it's morally the right thing for us to do as a company, hence the reason we support Reservists within XPO in as many ways as possible. We don't see it as 'losing' an employee when they are serving with the Reserves as the skills and training they receive are world class and can be directly integrated into their work within XPO."

If you're interested in serving with 4 PARA they are actively recruiting ex-regulars and civilians. They're looking for fit and motivated individuals, and the minimum commitment is only 27 days per year - with pay and benefits comparable to regular service. Call 01788 544177 for more information or email Andrew. Faupel187@mod.gov.uk



Enjoying the scenery in Brecon Beacons

# VETERANS' GATEWAY RECORDS OVER 10,000 ENQUIRIES AS IT CELEBRATES ITS FIRST YEAR IN SERVICE

**Veterans' Gateway, the 24-hour service that helps former service men and women to navigate their new lives as civilians, has recorded over 10,000 enquiries and 183,420 website users since its launch one year ago today.**

Designed to offer a one stop shop through which veterans can access advice on a vast range of areas, from housing to health concerns, Veterans' Gateway has seen over 37,000 click throughs to external sites, with the majority of users requesting advice on finance.

The service caters to veterans of all ages and backgrounds. 81% of users are under 65 years old, and 56% of web visitors access the site via mobile phones.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Tobias Ellwood visited the Veterans' Gateway service centre near Cardiff in South Wales. He met with veterans who now work as call handlers, using their experiences in the Armed Forces to benefit others, and giving back to the service community.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Tobias Ellwood said:

"I'm proud to see the great work that goes on behind the scenes of the Veterans' Gateway, and I've been inspired by the community spirit of all who dedicate their time and knowledge to supporting those in need."



Minister for Defence People and Veterans Tobias Ellwood with Paul Mathias and Callee Andrew from the Veterans' Gateway

The 24-hour service is delivered by a Royal British Legion-led consortium with Poppyscotland, Combat Stress, Connect Assist, the Ministry of Defence and SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity.

Charles Byrne, Director General of The Royal British Legion, on behalf of the Veterans' Gateway consortium, said:

"The number of people contacting Veterans' Gateway continues to grow and we are reaching new groups of people including young veterans who need our support in finding the right information, advice and help.

"We have also seen increasing numbers of users being able to self-refer and gain better access to the services available to them. Veterans' Gateway can become a key resource for veterans and their families seeking support. With over 30 referral partners, it is truly a team of teams."



## VETERANS' GATEWAY

The first point of contact  
for veterans seeking support

### 1ST YEAR FACTS



Over 37,000 clicks from users of Veterans' Gateway website onto external referral sites



9% rise in the number of web sessions in the second half of the service



Tuesday is the most popular day of the week for the Veterans' Gateway website



Wednesday is the busiest day of the week for our Contact Centre



Finance is the most common area of concern



41% of people visiting the Veterans' Gateway website are female



56% of people visiting the Veterans' Gateway website do it via mobile phone



45-54 is the most common age range of those requesting help via Veterans' Gateway



Requests for help have come from as far afield as Thailand, South Africa and St Maarten in the Caribbean

**For more information on Veterans' Gateway, or if you are in need of support, visit [www.veteransgateway.org.uk](http://www.veteransgateway.org.uk), call 0808 802 1212 or text 81212.**





## ORBIT SIGNS THE COVENANT AND PLEDGES TO HELP DEFENCE PERSONNEL INTO HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT

The Covenant recognises organisations, businesses and charities across the UK that actively work with former Service personnel, their families, and members of the Reserve Forces. By signing up, Orbit, as a 40,000-home landlord, commits to providing employment, training and skills support to those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces.

Paul Richards, Group Customer Services Director - signed the Covenant on behalf of Orbit in the presence of Lieutenant Colonel Stuart Hitchman TD RA, witnessing on behalf of the Ministry of Defence.

Paul said: "We are proud to join the growing number of organisations across the UK which are actively supporting this country's Armed Forces personnel. As one of the UK's leading social landlords and housebuilders, we are committed to building communities and are very pleased to officially extend our offer and support to those in the armed forces."

Lieutenant Colonel Stuart Hitchman TD RA, from 11 Signal and West Midlands Brigade co-signed the Covenant. He said: "I am delighted to sign on behalf of the Ministry of Defence. By signing the Armed Forces Covenant, Orbit is pledging ongoing support to the Armed Forces community, encompassing veterans, reservists and serving personnel."

Orbit currently offers a £1,000 discount to serving members of the Armed Forces when buying an Orbit outright sale property. Orbit is also working in partnership with Stoll, a leading provider of supported housing for vulnerable Veterans to provide access to Orbit accommodation in line with agreed lettings criteria.

Did you know that more than 2,600 businesses, charities, and other organisations have now signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant, just like Orbit? If you want to know more about their commitments to support the Armed Forces community, or find out how your company can sign up too, visit the Covenant website below.

## HOW WE HELP: THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

At a recent 'stay and play' session at Gamecock Barracks, Bramcote (home of 30 Signal Regiment) the Advice and Information Officer from the Royal British Legion met a new family. The family has a daughter with Special Educational Needs, who was previously on a waiting list to access services in their old location. As they had moved from one Local Authority area into Warwickshire they feared being bottom of the waiting list.

The Covenant has a principle of 'no disadvantage', and being moved from one location to another can disadvantage some members of the Armed Forces and their families. To reduce this disadvantage, time spent on a waiting list in one Local Authority or NHS area can be taken into consideration in the receiving area. With help from the Royal British Legion and the Covenant the previous waiting time has been taken into account.

## HOW WE HELP: THE COVENANT TEAM AT WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

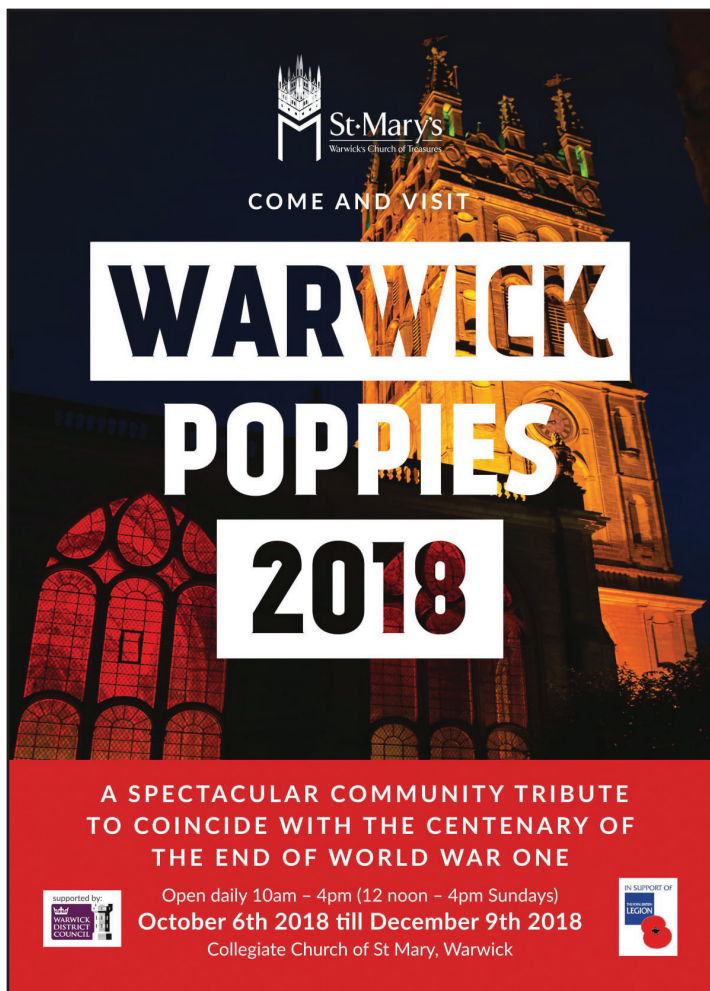
The Covenant Worker for WCC was contacted by a Senior Social Worker from the MOD Department for Community Mental Health (North East Region), with a situation where a Service family were being denied an application for Social Housing by a LA within the CSW area.

The LA he was applying to were insisting he apply for accommodation in the locality in which he was currently based, (contrary to the Covenant), and that he apply in the context of homelessness as opposed to social housing. There were also some additional factors ('Special Considerations' from a Covenant perspective) to the application, which didn't appear to be fully understood.

Clarification was sought from the MOD Covenant Team and the Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government, before supplying the Armed Forces Lead and AF Champion in the LA with information to enter into discussions regarding the case.

Information and advice on how the Serviceman's application can be progressed was shared with the Social Worker, who is supporting the individual with their application for housing. This included explaining the limitations and capacity issues around social housing with the likely support to be provided.

Following discussions the application is being accepted as a Social Housing application, with the additional 'Special Considerations' being applied.



St-Mary's  
Warwick's Church of Treasures

COME AND VISIT

# WARWICK POPPIES 2018

A SPECTACULAR COMMUNITY TRIBUTE  
TO COINCIDE WITH THE CENTENARY OF  
THE END OF WORLD WAR ONE

supported by:  
WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL

Open daily 10am – 4pm (12 noon – 4pm Sundays)  
October 6th 2018 till December 9th 2018  
Collegiate Church of St Mary, Warwick

IN SUPPORT OF  
THE  
LEGION

## Back on the Right Foot; Veterans moving forward together

This is a brand new course designed for Veterans, or the families of Veterans, to equip them to understand and improve their skills to enable integration and general awareness of mental wellbeing in a friendly non-clinical way.

The course sessions will vary in length and be delivered over 8 consecutive weeks

If you are interested please contact Nancy Tomlinson (Ex Armed Forces Pathway Manager) on 07771 984394 or Len Hardy (Veterans Contact Point) on 024 7634 3793



## Mancetter Big Day Out World War One Centenary Celebration

Sunday 23 September 2018  
Brook Walk Recreation Ground



11.00am  
Until  
3.00pm



Lots of Free Activities  
Bouncy Assault Course  
Army Vehicles  
WW1 Themed Stalls  
Dog Show  
Fitness Tests  
Veterans Support



North Warwickshire  
Borough Council



ARMED FORCES  
COVENANT

e: [lcdd@northwarks.gov.uk](mailto:lcdd@northwarks.gov.uk)  
[www.northwarks.gov.uk](http://www.northwarks.gov.uk)

 @NWBCcommunitydevelopment



## BIG SLEEP OUT 2018



## FRIDAY 9TH NOVEMBER