



# Armed Forces COVENANT

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The Armed Forces Covenant is an obligation on the whole society to recognise their Armed Forces, offer respect, support and provide fair treatment. For our part we must continue to live by our values and standards and support the communities in which we live. If you identify an opportunity to take forward a local initiative within the Community and Corporate Covenants, engage with your chain of command or contact PS4(A) direct.

*Colonel Didi Wheeler, AD PS4(A)*



**The Covenant is making a real difference to all of us in the Armed Forces community. Over the last 12 months the Government has, amongst other things:**

- Given a further **£3M for State Schools with Service children**;
- Increased the **Service Pupil Premium** to £300 per service;
- Provided £150M for the purchase of over 700 high quality properties for us as Service accommodation in areas of high demand;
- Launched **MoneyForce**, in conjunction with the Royal British Legion and Standard Life Charitable Trust, to provide financial advice for Service Personnel.

**And still to come.....**

**Over the year ahead the Government will among other things:**

- Launch a new £200M **Forces Help to Buy Scheme** in April 2014;
- Establish a fully operational Defence Primary Healthcare Service to improve patient care;
- Review the provision of Service accommodation as part of the New Employment Model to consider whether there could be more flexibility in the provision of Service accommodation, such as extending entitlement to those in long-term relationships;
- Extending access to the **Standard Learning Credits Scheme** to all members of the Reserve Forces.



## Covenant Long Term Funding

**Up to £100M more has been set aside for spending on good causes, including a £40M Veterans' Accommodation Fund.**

The Chancellor also recently announced that a further £10M would be allocated every year in the future. The Covenant Team are currently drawing up proposals of the new scheme which will be presented to the Covenant Reference Group in June, and which will commence in FY 2015.

## The Covenant "Family"

**Since the Covenant was published in 2011, the Community and Corporate Covenants have been added.**

Around 400 local authorities have signed **Community Covenants** and are building links between units and the communities in which they are located. To help with that there is the

**Community Covenant Grant Scheme** valued at £30 million over four years.

The **Corporate Covenant** was set up in June 2013 so that employers and other organisations can register their support to the Armed Forces Community. Since its launch, over **100 organisations**, big and small, have signed up. There are lots

of examples of companies introducing innovative HR policies, offering discounts, and interacting with local Armed Forces communities.

The Covenant LIBOR Fund has so far given £35M to support **96 charitable projects** that work with the Armed Forces Community.

**Another successful project which met the criteria to apply for funding through the Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant Scheme.**

## Grand Opening of the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) - Montgomery Junior School

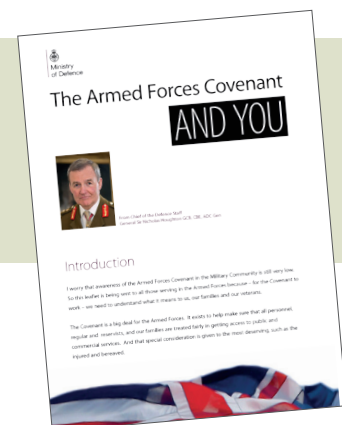
One of Montgomery Junior School's key improvement priorities focuses on health and wellbeing and quickly identified that its pupils would benefit enormously from the installation of an all weather multi function sports court in its grounds. But faced with reducing budgets and increasing costs the school was aware that it would need to generate £64,000 additional income to realise its dream.

With over 65% of their pupils from families who have a parent who serves in the British Armed Forces, they met the criteria to apply for funding through the Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant which was successful in achieving funding of over £32,000. The school also applied to Colchester Borough Council for a match-funding contribution which was successful.



The MUGA was supplied and installed by Sportsafe UK, who also offered free inspections and maintenance as well as a supply of sporting equipment. It has enhanced the physical education curriculum, outdoor break times and extended the extra curricular activities that are offered to pupils, families, local schools and the wider community.

**The Armed Forces Covenant and You Leaflet**, signed by the Chief of the Defence Staff, General Sir Nicholas Houghton was issued on 20 March 2014. The purpose of the leaflet is to improve recognition of the Covenant and to provide members of the Armed Forces Community with information about where to go if they want to know more.



**AFF's Employer of the Year Award will be launched in April 2014 with the winner being announced in September 2014**

**aff**

**AFF is launching an exciting new award to identify employers who support Army spouses in the workplace.**

The aim of this award is to share best practice amongst employers and also to raise awareness of the barriers some Army spouses can face when looking for employment. They will be looking for employers who support good working practices for spouses including; supporting flexible working opportunities

especially during periods where the Soldier is deployed, having a supportive workplace that understands the unique demands placed on Armed Forces families, providing portable careers if there are offices or branches in multi geographic areas and, if possible, providing unpaid career breaks when a soldier is posted.

To nominate for this award please encourage employers to go to the AFF website: **[www.aff.org.uk](http://www.aff.org.uk)**

**The HIVE is an information network available to all members of the Service community.**

It serves both married and single personnel, together with their families, dependants and civilians employed by the Services. The Army HIVEs across UK are very much involved in a wide and diverse number of projects and initiatives under the Armed Forces Covenant umbrella.

