

The Armed Forces Covenant

Copied from the Dorset Council website:

“What is the Armed Forces Covenant?”

The Armed Forces Covenant sets out the relationship between the nation, the Government and the Armed Forces. It recognises that the whole nation has a moral obligation to members of the Armed Forces and their families, and it establishes how they should expect to be treated. It considers the Armed Forces Community to include Regular Personnel, Reservists, Veterans, families of these and the bereaved.

The Government describes it as “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 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.

The Armed Forces Community includes:

- Regular personnel – Individuals currently serving as members of the Naval Service (including Royal Navy and Royal Marines), Army or Royal Air Force
- Reservists – Volunteer Reservists, who form the Royal Navy Reserve, Royal Marine Reserve, Territorial Army and the Royal Auxiliary Air Force, and Regular Reservists who comprise the Royal Fleet Reserve, Army Reserve and Royal Air Force Reserve
- Veterans – Those who have served for at least a day in the HM Armed Forces, whether as a Regular or a Reservist
- Families of Regular Personnel, Reservists and Veterans – The immediate family of those within the above categories
- Bereaved – The immediate family of Service Personnel and Veterans who have died whether or not that death has any connection with the service.
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How we support The Armed Forces Covenant

Dorset is fortunate to have a two-year MoD Funded Programme that employs a Programme Co-ordinator who is responsible for the delivery of specific projects identified to support the Armed Forces community across the pan-Dorset area.

The main partners in this programme are Dorset Council, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council, Dorset HealthCare University Foundation Trust, NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Dorset, Bournemouth University, Wessex RFCA, Royal British Legion and SSAFA.

The overarching aim of the programme is to raise the profile of and to embed the Covenant in the day-to-day activities of all partner organisations across Dorset, ensuring that all members of the armed forces community are treated fairly and equitably.”

If Corfe Castle Parish Council were to support by signing the Armed Forces Covenant, although there is physically little we can offer, what we are doing is showing our commitment to support the Armed Forces community.

Recommendation: To discuss and consider signing in a show of support the Armed Forces Covenant.

Copied from the Armed Forces Covenant website:

FAQs – Signing the Covenant and the Employer Recognition Scheme

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions about signing the Armed Forces Covenant and the Employer Recognition Scheme are provided below, under the headings of:

- Eligibility
- The process
- Customising your pledge
- Timings
- Promoting your pledge
- Finding signatories
- Resolving disputes
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Eligibility

1. What are the criteria for signing up to the Covenant?

To sign the Covenant, you must agree to demonstrate its two core principles: that no member of the Armed Forces community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to other citizens; and that special consideration may be appropriate for some members of the community, especially the injured or bereaved.

2. Who can apply to sign the Covenant?

Businesses of all sizes, charitable organisations, local authorities, and public sector organisations can all apply.

3. Do we have to be registered in the UK?

Foreign registered businesses can apply to sign the Covenant as long as they have a registered office in the UK. Some exceptions apply for UK Overseas Territories. For more information about this, please contact cdrmresearchquery@rfca.mod.uk.

4. What are the criteria to meet to be awarded the Employer Recognition Scheme's bronze, silver and gold awards?

The Employer Recognition Scheme guidance outlines the criteria to meet to be awarded the bronze, silver and gold awards.

The process

5. What is the process of signing up to the Covenant?

If you're interested in signing the Covenant, get in touch with your local Regional Employer Engagement Director, who will be able to guide you through the signing process. After expressing interest, you will receive a pledge certificate by email to print off and sign.

6. Do you have a template we can use?

Yes, a template can be found here: [Sign the Armed Forces Covenant and make your pledge](#).

7. How much does it cost?

There is no fee for signing the Armed Forces Covenant.

8. Where can we find our Covenant pledge?

You will receive a physical copy of your Covenant pledge after the signing.

9. Can an organisation go from a bronze Employer Recognition Scheme award straight to gold?

There is no fast-track process, organisations looking to enhance their Employer Recognition Scheme journey will start at bronze and move through each level of the award scheme.

10. Do Covenant pledges expire?

No, your commitment to the Covenant does not expire. Your Employer Recognition Scheme award is to be renewed every five years.

11. Our organisation has changed its name since signing the Covenant. Does this affect our pledge, and how can it be updated?

Pledges under old organisation names are still valid, but best practice would be to conduct a re-sign. This can be organised by engaging with your local Regional Employer Engagement Director.

Customising your pledge

12. Can we customise our pledges to fit our company?

Yes, your Covenant pledge can be tailored to your organisation's needs and capacity. You decide how you will demonstrate your support by writing your own pledges or by choosing pledges from a provided list of suggestions.

13. Can we arrange a signing event?

Yes, many organisations choose to hold a signing ceremony to publicly demonstrate their commitment to support the Armed Forces Community and sign the document in the presence of Armed Forces representatives, with the support of the local Regional Employment Engagement Director and representatives from local military units.

Timings

14. How long does it take for the entire signing process to be completed?

There is no definitive timescale for the process to be completed, as each request to sign the Covenant is taken on case by case basis.

15. How long do we have to wait for due diligence to be completed?

Due diligence is an integral part of the process. This enables us to understand the organisation, their commitment, and monitor their journey in receiving their correct accreditation. For this reason the process can take some time, but we aim to have it completed within a week.

Promoting your pledge

16. Can we get the Covenant logo?

On completion of your signing, you will be sent the Armed Forces Covenant digital toolkit, which includes the Covenant logo. If you require another toolkit please contact us. Please also see the Covenant brand guidelines.

17. When can we promote our Covenant pledge?

You will be able to promote your Covenant pledge once you have received your certificate of signing.

Finding signatories

18. Where can I find a list of the Covenant signatories, and what each organisation has pledged?

You can search for businesses who have signed the Covenant. This spreadsheet provides a list of the current Covenant signatories, and the specific pledges by each organisation.

19. Our organisation has signed the Covenant but is not appearing on your website. When will our organisation be listed?

Organisations are usually listed within a few weeks of signing, but this is subject to due diligence checks and processing.

20. Where can I find a list of the Employer Recognition Scheme's bronze, silver and gold award recipients?

The Employer Recognition Scheme guidance has links to lists of the bronze, silver and gold award recipients.

Resolving disputes

21. Who enforces Covenant pledges?

There is no formal enforcement mechanism, but organisations not fulfilling their pledge can have their Employer Recognition Scheme award reviewed and in certain circumstances removed.

22. Who do we contact to complain?

For enquiries and complaints about Covenant pledges, please contact afcovenant@rfca.mod.uk.



Organisation Name

**We commit to uphold the Armed
Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces
Community. We recognise the contribution that Service personnel,
both regular and reservist, veterans and military
families make to our organisation, our community and to the country.**

Signed on behalf of:

Organisation Name

Signed:

Name:

Position:

Date:

Add logo

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 1: Principles of The Armed Forces Covenant

1.1 We, **Organisation Name**, will endeavour to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant:

- *Members of the Armed Forces Community should not face disadvantages arising from their service in the provision of public and commercial services.*
- *In some circumstances special provision may be justified, especially for those who have given the most, such as the injured or bereaved.*

Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment

The following thematic areas may be covered by your pledges. Please pick from the suggested list of pledges or create your own. Delete, add or change any of the pledges to show how you can support the Armed Forces Community in ways best suited to you. Pledges may be changed at any time in the future to reflect your changing circumstances.

2.1 We recognise the contribution that Service personnel, reservists, veterans, the cadet movement and military families make to our organisation, our community and to the country. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant by:

- **Promoting the Armed Forces:**
- **Employment support to members of the Armed Forces Community:**
- **Communications, engagement and outreach:**
- **Commercial:**
- **Health**
- **Housing:**
- **Education:**
- **Civic responsibilities:**
- **Any additional commitment the organisation wishes to make.**

2.2 We will publicise these commitments through our literature and/or on our website, setting out how we will seek to honour them and inviting feedback from the Armed Forces Community and our customers on how we are doing. **[Amend as appropriate]**