



Dover District Civilian Military Partnership Board

REPORT

2016- 2018

“Recognise, Remember, Integrate and Support”

A. Introduction

The Dover District [Community Covenant](#)¹ is a voluntary pledge of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces community. It is intended to complement, at a local level, the national [Armed Forces Covenant](#)², which outlines the mutual obligations between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces.

The Dover District Armed Forces Community involves many different client groups - regular and reservist serving personnel, veterans, service leavers, dependants and carers and its level of presence varies greatly across the country. Here in the Dover District, although official figures are difficult to come by, given the significant size of the military footprint in the area over the years, we believe that the Armed Forces community is likely to be large, with many veterans living and working in the area.

The Dover District Community Covenant was launched on 4 June 2013 and updated by Cllr Keith Morris, leader of the council on 15 October 2018.



The government has encouraged Local Authorities and the Armed Forces community to work together to establish a Community Covenant in their area to:

- Encourage local communities to support the Armed Forces community in their area;
- Nurture understanding and awareness amongst the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces community;
- Recognise the contribution made by the Armed Forces community;
- Remember the sacrifices faced by the Armed Forces community;
- Encourage activities which help to integrate the Armed Forces community into local life;
- Encourage the Armed Forces community to help and support the wider community, whether through participation in events and joint projects, or other forms of engagement

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/fulfilling-the-commitments-of-the-armed-forces-covenant/supporting-pages/armed-forces-community-covenant>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/fulfilling-the-commitments-of-the-armed-forces-covenant/supporting-pages/armed-forces-covenant>

The Armed Forces Covenant exists to make sure service people, veterans and their families are on an equal footing with ordinary citizens when it comes to accessing public and commercial services. It is not about extra-special treatment for all the Forces, although it is about special consideration in some cases (for example, for those injured and the bereaved).

The Covenant is an obligation on the whole of society. It includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations and individuals, all of whom are asked to recognise our Armed Forces and offer respect, support and fair treatment.

Locally, the Dover District Community Covenant brings together the Armed Forces community and the civilian community. It encourages the integration of service life into civilian life and encourages the Armed Forces community to help their local civilian community.

B. The Annual Report

This report looks back at the past two year's involvement in Civilian and Military Partnership achievements across the Dover District (April 2016 to January 2019). Some of the key achievements have been a successful Armed Forces Day event held at Pencester Gardens; Dover District Council successfully achieving the Defence Employee Recognition scheme bronze award; and Skills Horizon receiving a grant from the covenant fund to set up an allotment with families and children of Lydden Primary school to give fruit and vegetables to the local veteran community.

C. Background

The Dover District signed The Community Covenant in June 2013 updated on 15th October by Councillor Keith Morris Leader of the council. The Covenant has provided the opportunity to bring different stakeholders together to better understand the particular issues that Armed Forces communities face.

A Dover District Civilian Military Partnership Board has been set up to champion the Community Covenant.

Board Representatives include:

- Ministry of Defence
- Royal British Legion
- Soldiers, Sailors & Airmen Families Association (SSAFA)
- South Kent Coast Clinical Commissioning Group
- Job Centre Plus
- Kent County Council Public Health
- A range of services across Dover District Council

The Board meets twice a year and has agreed a Terms of Reference and Action Plan to take forward the Community Covenant and address any needs identified.

EXTENT OF THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY IN THE DOVER DISTRICT

Given the significant size of the military footprint in the Dover area over the years, the Armed Forces community is likely to be large. In recent history, the District has been home to

regiments in both Deal and Dover (with the Royal Marines Barracks in Deal closing in 1996 and Connaught Barracks in Dover closing in 2007).

1. Serving Personnel

The Office for National Statistics 2011 Census includes information on the numbers of Armed Forces personnel living and working in an area and shows that at the time the Census was conducted, there were 343 residents employed in the Armed Forces (135 living in a household and 214 living in a communal establishment). This is a reduction from the 2001 Census, when Armed Forces in the Dover District totalled 674 on a resident basis and 634 as a workplace address.

2. Veterans

There are significant problems with estimating the size of the veteran population in the Dover District. There is no single reliable data source and a number of those who have served in the United Kingdom Armed Forces would not even identify themselves as veterans. In the main, this is the younger veterans who were involved in the conflicts occurring after 1990, which are principally the Gulf Wars, Iraq Conflict and Afghanistan.

The Ministry Of Defence does not hold a database of United Kingdom veterans. They hold data on recruitment locations, but they do not hold any information on where personnel go on leaving service or where they locate to.

The total declared number of veterans in Kent is approximately 73000.

It is believed that there are many veterans living and working in the Dover District. The following statistics detail a summary of veterans in the Dover District 2018:

Veterans of working age		Armed Forces claiming DWP	Armed Force War Pensions	Armed Forces Compensation
Number of working age	Veterans	All	All	All
68865	2149	1363	411	1074

Please note that individuals can be in receipt of payments under more than one of these schemes simultaneously and therefore numbers cannot be added together to attempt to provide a total.

This figure is only a brief overview, given the nature of people moving in and out of the Dover District.

Comparing these figures across Kent and Medway shows that:

- Dover District has the second highest number of Armed Forces Pension Scheme recipients behind Medway with 1,074,
- Dover District has the second highest number of War Pension Scheme recipients behind Medway with 411.

The Kent Joint Strategic Needs Assessment shows that the Dover District has a large proportion of veterans in Kent, with an estimated 11,064 veterans in 2010³, which equates to 12.5% of the population aged 16 and over. This is the second highest density in Kent and above the county average of 9.5%. The areas with the highest density, other than Dover, are Thanet (13.7%); Shepway (12.0%) and Swale (11.6%).

In the Dover District, although the Army presence now dominates amongst the three Armed Forces services due to Dover and Deal both being former garrison towns, there will be veterans from all three services living in the area. There are a number of veterans' organisations in Dover District including various branches/clubs of the Royal British Legion and regimental associations.

3. Families and Children

The Royal Gurkha Rifles regiment is based at the St John Moore Barracks, Shorncliffe in Folkestone. Families can join serving Gurkhas and there are established Gurkha communities living around the Shorncliffe area and also in the Dover District at Burgoyne Heights. These communities are also likely to make the area more attractive to Gurkha veterans choosing to make the United Kingdom their home following discharge.

The Duke of York's Royal Military School, which is a co-educational school, is located in Dover, next to the former military base. In 2010 they became the first full state boarding academy sponsored by the Ministry of Defence. They have a strong military ethos and heritage. The school has the rare privilege of having its own colours, first presented by King George VI in 1825. Trooped at special events and on Grand Day, they comprise the Queen's colour and the Duke of York's colour. The Duke of York's Royal Military School admit children of service personnel from all three services together with children from other families who choose this unique and iconic school.

In addition to the Duke of York's Royal Military School, there are other schools in the Dover District with children of service personnel on their school roll. However data showing the number of service children in schools is only available for Local Authority maintained schools, it is not available for academies. The primary school with the highest number of service children in the Dover District will be Guston Church of England Primary School due to its close proximity to the Gurkha community at Burgoyne Heights.

There are a number of Cadet Organisations in the Dover District and they are:

- Dover Detachment – Kent Army Cadets
- Deal Detachment – Kent Army Cadets
- Aylesham Detachment – Kent Army Cadets
- 354 (Dover) Squadron Air Training Corps
- 2235 (Deal) Squadron Air Training Corps
- Dover and Deal Sea Cadets

These community Cadet Organisations are national youth organisations sponsored by the Ministry of Defence and the relevant Armed Force. They offer training and experience based around a military theme including sports, promoting achievement, discipline and good citizenship.

- Duke of York's Royal Military School Combined Cadet Force
- Astor College Combined Cadet Force
- Dover Grammar School for Boys Combined Cadet Force

³ RBL/Combat Stress/Experian Mapping 2010

- Sir Roger Manwood's Combined Cadet Force
Each Combined Cadet Force is a parading unit and a unique extra-curricular educational partnership between the school and the Ministry of Defence. They offer young people aged 13 to 18 a broad range of challenging and educational activities.

Number of service children in schools across the district:

Name of School 2018/2019	No of service children
Duke of York's Royal Military School	224
Guston CEP School	63
Dover Grammar School for Girls	21
Dover Grammar School for Boys	19
Sandwich Technology School	14
Dover Christ Church Academy	13
River Primary School	10
Sholden CEP School	9
Astor College	9
Whitfield Aspen School	6
St. Marys Catholic School, Deal	5
Aylesham Primary School St Edmunds Catholic School Lydden Primary School Capel-le-Ferne Primary School Eastry CEP School St Marys CEP School Goodwin Academy Sir Roger Manwood's	3-4 Service Children
Total	420

D. Key Achievements

The Community Covenant reflects the many ways in which Dover District Council, the Armed Forces community and other partners work together to improve awareness, integration, understanding and engagement. Some of the most significant achievements in this regard in 2016 to 2019 are set out below:

1. ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT GRANT SCHEME

The Royal Marines Heritage Trail received £20,000 of grant funding to develop a Heritage Trail



In March 2016 a local man called Bill Butler had a simple idea whilst wondering what certain buildings were used for on the site of 'The Depot'- the prior Royal Marines site that

dominates North Walmer. A 6 page trail guide was created called the 'Globe and Laurel Trail' to maintain some of the important background history to these iconic buildings despite their modern use. Later this guide developed in to the Royal Marines Heritage Trail.

Skills Horizon was awarded £11,720 for a community allotment project.



Pupils from Lydden Primary School, along with the help of Skills Horizon brought back to life a derelict allotment to grow fruit and vegetables for the veteran community in Dover.

Community Covenant Grant Scheme 2019-2020

The Covenant Fund has moved to an independent trust from 1 April 2018. Information about new programmes and previous grants awarded can be found on the covenant fund website <http://www.covenantfund.org.uk/>.

The Community Covenant Grant Scheme funding priorities for April 2018-March 2019 includes:

- Armed Forces Covenant: local grants and digital development
- Armistice and Armed Forces Communities: supporting local communities to consider the Armed Forces Covenant and its relevance today in the context of the World War 1 commemorations

More priorities will be realised post March 2019.

Applications can be from Registered Charities (including Community Interest Companies); schools; Local Authorities and Armed Forces units with a UIN (Unit Identification Number). The bid size is up to £20,000 the fund opens again on the 7th of January 2019 for the first round of which there will be four rounds up until 2020.

Other funds:

It has been announced that £10M has been released to support Veterans' Mental Health and Wellbeing needs. This is being managed by the Covenant Fund Trust. The Veterans' Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund have two programmes: the Positive Pathways

Programme, and the Strategic Pathways Programme. The consultation on the Positive Pathways Programme is open now. The programme will open for applications in May 2019. The Strategic Pathways Programme is open for expressions of interest. This programme will fund a small number of national organisations who will provide support and mentoring to organisations delivering activities and opportunities under the Positive Pathways Programme.

2. SUPPORT AND SIGNPOSTING

a) Website

A dedicated '[Armed Forces Community Covenant](http://www.dover.gov.uk/communitycovenant)'⁴ webpage has been set up on the Dover District Council website. It is updated regularly.

b) Sign Posting

There are a wide range of services specifically designed for the Armed Forces community available from the Ministry of Defence, public sector and voluntary and community sector organisations. It can often be confusing when trying to find the best organisations to help. To make this easier, we have developed several '[Sign Post](http://www.dover.gov.uk/signpost)'⁵ pages on the Dover District Council website and an Armed Forces Covenant commitment leaflet.

Links to various aspects of support provided have been broken down into the following areas:

- Ministry of Defence
- Armed Forces Charities
- Financial
- Housing Support
- Health and Wellbeing
- Children and Families
- Skills and Employment

c) Forces Connect South East

Forces Connect South East is a cross border partnership comprising Surrey, Kent, East Sussex and West Sussex County Councils, Brighton and Hove, Medway Councils and Sussex NHS.

It is a two-year Ministry of Defence Armed Forces Covenant Funded Programme aimed at making it easier for servicemen and women and their families, as well as reservists and veterans, to access public sector services including healthcare, housing, schools, financial advice and support to find jobs.

The scheme will involve training hundreds of frontline staff across the region to meet the needs of armed forces personnel. Other strands include developing an app to make it quick and easy for members of the forces to find the right support, and establishing a mentoring programme to help those making the transition from military to civilian employment.

Members of the armed forces can find it harder to access public services than the general population because of frequent moves, extended periods away and a lack of

⁴ www.dover.gov.uk/communitycovenant

⁵ www.dover.gov.uk/communitycovenant/signpost

familiarity with support available. This project will ensure more staff are aware of their responsibilities under the Covenant, and provide the knowledge and skills to better enable them to help and support the armed forces communities.

The two-year project – the first of its kind in the country – is expected to form a blueprint to help other councils improve support for the Armed Forces. For more information contact Amanda Barnes, Programme Officer, Forces Connect South East: Amanda.barnes@surreycc.gov.uk.

Forces Connect South East is a cross border partnership comprising Surrey, Kent, East Sussex and West Sussex County Councils, Brighton and Hove, Medway Councils and Sussex NHS.

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d) Defence Employee Recognition Scheme

The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) encourages employers to support defence and inspire others to do the same. The scheme encompasses bronze, silver and gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the armed forces community, and align their values with the Armed Forces Covenant. Forces Recruitment Services is proud to be a silver award holder.

The ERS is designed primarily to recognise private sector support although public sector organisations such as the emergency services, local authorities, NHS trusts and executive agencies are also eligible to be recognised.

Dover District Council has received bronze award, Kent County Council has received gold award.

We aim to encourage local business and organisations to sign up to the Defence Employee Recognition Scheme.

e) Events- Highlights

➤ **Armistice Commemoration Poppy Appeal 2018**



To commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the signing of the Armistice of World War 1, the Dover White cliffs branch of the Royal British Legion, fixed poppies to lampposts from the war memorial to the Market Square in Dover Town Centre. This was a wonderfully innovative idea that truly created an environment of remembrance to the Armed Forces community in the Dover Area.

A special exhibition was set up in Dover Museum to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Zeebrugge Raid. The Exhibition also featured the poppy carpet that the local community had made in a project the previous year, led by Dover District Council. Dover Big Local and Dover Arts and Development.

➤ **Armed Forces Day 2017**



To mark the Armed Forces Day in 2017 the District Council along with the Armed Forces Community and wider community a flag raising ceremony was held at the Guildhall in Sandwich.

➤ **Armed Forces Briefing event November 2018.**

The Army Engagement Group organised a well-attended slick Armed Forces Briefing event on the 6th of November 2018. The event was held at Dover Town Hall with Brigadier TJ Bateman CBE, commander of the Army in this region. The highly informative event promoted greater awareness and understanding of the Army. The varied representatives from all over the district gained valuable information on how the army will be raising business awareness with regard to employing service leavers and the benefits of having Reservists working in organisations. There was also an opportunity for those connected with youth and education to receive information on Cadets and Army-led projects. Those from the wider community benefited from an update as to what the Army is today and how it is developing for the future. Over 150 community members attended this well thought out informative event. There are follow up events happening across the county that these attendees will be invited to such as a youth engagement briefing and networking for businesses.

➤ **There But Not There, over the Armistice period 2018**



Tommy Figures

Dover District Council received 4 Tommy Figures as part of the after national 'There But Not There' campaign that were photographed across the district. The Tommie's were placed in various events and museums over the armistice period. To remember those who lost their lives serving our country. One of the Tommie's went to an exhibition in Sandwich another went to the Deal Royal British legion for remembrance day.

Chair Silhouettes

The chair silhouettes are also part of the national 'There But Not There' campaign, to remember the fallen of the First World War. Dover was awarded 10 silhouettes from the Armed Forces Covenant. The silhouettes were given out to groups such as the Friday Folk Club in Deal, Capel Parish Council, Dover Rugby club, Aylesham Parish Council and more. The silhouettes enhanced remembrances events across the district with powerful visuals of those that had fallen.

3. Kent and Medway Civilian Military Partnership Board

The overall purpose of the Board is to implement the Kent & Medway Community Covenant. It will do this through overseeing the work of five sub-groups which each focus on particular themes within the Covenant. The Board will meet bi-annually to receive reports and progress

updates from each of the sub-groups, thus having a strategic overview of all activity and the ability to steer the implementation of sub-group work.

The terms of reference are as follows:

- To address countywide issues relating to the Kent Community Covenant.
- To review the Kent Community Covenant annually and propose amendments where necessary.
- To filter and endorse applications of strategic significance for the Ministry of Defence Community Covenant Grant Scheme.
- To oversee, and take responsibility for, administering such Community Covenant Grant Scheme grants.
- To ensure that evidence is collected for audit purposes.
- To provide a forum for the exchange of information between the civilian and Military authorities.
- To widen understanding of military and veteran issues, including those relating to families of current or ex-service men and women.

4. HOUSING

The Council's Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy which were developed around the same time this included recognition that service personnel have often experienced less settled accommodation than the civilian population, and that the Council would continue to offer veterans and their families lifetime tenancies of Council homes rather than the standard five year flexible tenancy.

For members of the Armed Forces, waiting time priority will be based on the total cumulative period of their length of military service rather than just time on the Housing Register. This will have the effect of raising their priority above applicants in similar circumstances who have not undertaken military service. Confirmation of commencement of service will be required at the time of registration.

Applications from those currently in Armed Forces housing will usually be suspended until three months before the end of service and details of financial resources at that time will need to be supplied

The Council is continuing to successfully apply all of these policies. The Allocations Policy was recently reviewed but no changes were made in respect of service personnel.

The Council continues to work with other Kent housing authorities through forums such as Kent Housing Group and the Joint Planning Policy Board on developing and sharing good practice. In recent years this has resulted in the development of a number of housing related initiatives relating to service personnel including:

- Dedicated information pages for service personnel being set up on [Kent Homechoice](http://KentHomechoice)⁶, the Choice Based Lettings system used by local authorities and housing associations across Kent.
- Kent Homechoice now collecting statistics on ex-service personnel housing applications.

⁶ www.kenthomechoice.org.uk/choice/

- Kent Joint Policy and Planning Board, of which the Council is a member, being a sub-group of the Kent Civilian Military Partnership Board.

The Council has stopped facilitating a quarterly Homelessness Forum, whose membership includes the homeless charity Porchlight⁷ and the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA), which provides a forum where issues relating to ex-service personnel can be discussed. However a new Homelessness Hub has been set up in collaboration with the Community Safety Partnership team. These meetings are held quarterly and are for everyone supporting the homeless to attend. Case review meetings are held for specific cases as and when needed, to give direct support to homeless. Dover Outreach recently had a case where a homeless veteran was successfully housed in Colchester in accommodation specifically for homeless veterans.

Armed Forces help to buy

On the 1st April 2014 the Government launched Forces Help to Buy, a deposit loan scheme from the Ministry of Defence (MOD) for regular Armed Forces members.

How it works:

The scheme aims to make it easier for Britain's regular Armed Forces personnel by enabling successful applicants to borrow their 5% deposit from the MOD and take advantage of Help to Buy – the popular scheme that has already helped so many on the property ladder across the UK giving the necessary boost to secure a 75% mortgage with a 20% Help to Buy equity loan funded by Government.

The scheme offers an interest free loan to applicants of up to 50% of their salary, with a maximum of £25,000.

The scheme is available to regular Armed Forces Personnel who are first time buyers and those who may need to move due to a change in circumstances.

Armed Forces leavers are also given priority over new build housing; Aylesham has the largest housing development in the district at the moment, houses are advertised as giving Armed Forces service leaders priority.

5. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The Gurkha Project

Earlier this year, the Kent & Medway Armed Forces Network was successful in securing Covenant funding to develop a healthcare toolkit for the Gurkha & Nepalese communities in Kent. The bid was developed through the needs highlighted via our partners in the Network and in respect to ensuring that the Gurkha/Nepalese community are able to understand and therefore appropriately access the support they need around health and wellbeing.

⁷ Porchlight is a Kent-based homelessness charity that provides practical help to ex-service rough sleepers. It has supported accommodation services across the county, including Dover, a homelessness prevention service and a dedicated rough sleeper team.

There is a significant Nepalese population in Kent with Shorncliffe in Folkestone being home to the 1st Battalion the Royal Gurkha Rifles Regiment (1RGR), and the Queen's Gurkha Engineers (QGE) 36 Engineer Regiment residing in Maidstone. The 1RGR figures are as follows:

- Families (wives only): 258
- Children: 284

Retired Gurkhas who have chosen to settle in Kent total approximately 2516

The Dover District houses excess Nepalese families at Burgoyne Heights from the 1st Battalion the Royal Gurkha Rifles Regiment (1RGR) and the Queens Gurkha Engineers (QGE) 36 Engineer Regiment residing in Maidstone.

6. EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT

Career Transition Partnership (CTP) is actively being promoted as part of the employee defence recognition scheme. This means that businesses have to sign up to the career transition partnership in order to achieve silver.

Depending on the length of service, CTP offer free resettlement services to all ranks of UK Armed Forces. They will provide support up to two years after discharge. The support includes courses, CV writing to learning interview skills.

The Jobcentre is also actively promoting current employment vacancies in the Armed Forces and has a presence from the Armed Forces Recruitment Team several times each year to promote careers in the military.