



# **Dover District Civilian Military Partnership Board**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2015- 2016**

**“Recognise, Remember, Integrate and Support”**



## A. Introduction

The [Community Covenant](#)<sup>1</sup> 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](#)<sup>2</sup>, which outlines the mutual obligations between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces.

The 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.




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

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

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



- 
- 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.

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 Annual Report looks back at the past year April 2015 to March 2016, highlights considers the launch, timetable and priorities for the 2016 Community Covenant Grant Fund, looks at any gaps that have been identified and the next steps for the Dover District Civilian Military Partnership Board.

## **C. Background**

The Dover District signed its Community Covenant in June 2013. The Covenant has provided the opportunity to bring together different stakeholders and better understand the particular issues that Armed Forces communities face.

A Dover District Civilian Military Partnership Board (the 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 three times 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.

Kent and Medway have strong military links and local modelling suggests that there are approximately 130,000 veterans with the highest density being in Thanet, Dover, Shepway, Medway and Swale.

It is believed that there are many veterans living and working in the Dover District. The [Defence Analytical Services Agency](#)<sup>3</sup> (DASA) does not hold information on the number of veterans living in an area but are able to provide the following statistics detailing a summary of individuals in receipt of an occupational pension under the Armed Forces Pension Scheme, an on-going pension under the War Pension Scheme and those that have been awarded compensation under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme as at 31 March 2015:

Summary		Armed Forces Pension Schemes	War Pension Scheme			Armed Forces Compensation Scheme		
All	Veterans	All	All	Disablement Pension	War Widow(er)s	All	In-Service	Post-Service
1420	1330	1090	465	395	70	45	20	25

*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.*

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-defence/about/statistics>



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 1,930,
- Dover District has the second highest number of War Pension Scheme recipients behind Medway with 515.
- Dover District with Ashford has the joint third/fourth highest number of Armed Forces Compensation Scheme recipients behind Shepway with 120, Canterbury with 85 and Medway with 80.

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 2010<sup>4</sup>, 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
- Sandwich Detachment – Kent Army Cadets
- Aylesham Detachment – Kent Army Cadets

---

<sup>4</sup> RBL/Combat Stress/Experian Mapping 2010



- 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 base 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
- 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.*

## **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 2015 to 2016 are set out below:

### **1. ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY COVENANT GRANT SCHEME**





**The East Langdon Playing Field Association received £69,950 for the development of their Playing Field.**

They wanted to provide a recreational area for the Armed Forces community at Burgoyne Heights and the civilian communities in the surrounding villages. Included in the recreational area is play equipment, outdoor gym equipment for adults and a picnic and barbeque area for families and groups to enjoy whilst retaining the natural environment

The official opening of the East Langdon Playing Field was on 5 June 2015.



**The Deal Memorial Bandstand Trust received £10,000 towards the costs of their annual Royal Marines Band Memorial Concert.**

On 22 September 1989 the IRA exploded a bomb at the Royal Marines School of Music in Deal killing eleven musicians and seriously injured eleven more. The Deal Memorial Bandstand Trust exists to maintain The Memorial Bandstand to stage a series of 'free' public concerts on the Bandstand between May and September each year. Since the opening of the bandstand in 1993, The Royal Marines Band has performed a Memorial Concert that includes a Re-dedication Service each year at the Bandstand. The Concert has grown in popularity over the years and now attracts crowds in excess of 10,000. In 2014 it was thought that 12,000 people attended the 25th Anniversary concert

The Royal Marines Band Memorial Concert took place on 12 July 2015.





**The Big Reveal received £20,500 towards the costs of their specially commissioned oratorio; Dancing on Armistice Day.**

Approximately one hundred and fifty performers from Dover and East Kent combined with performers from Dunkerque, Calais, and Ypres to perform the specially commissioned oratorio. There were four performances and they took place in Dover, Ashford, Dunkerque and Ypres.

The work which was not set in any particular time or place recognised and explored the sacrifices made by military families in conflict, and the pivotal role of children in conflict resolution. Children of serving families worked with the composer and librettist to help shape the final story during workshops held in local schools.

The performance in Dover was at The Duke of York's Royal Military School in The Nye Hall on 8 November 2015.

### **Community Covenant Grant Scheme 2016-2017**

Details of the Community Covenant Grant Scheme for the coming year 2016-2017 were released at The 3rd Annual Kent and Medway Civilian Military Covenant Conference.

There are four main priorities and they are:

#### **1. Veterans' Gateway**

This is funding for a pilot project to set up a single 24/7 multimedia point of contact for veterans. It will refer callers to existing service providers across the UK and then follow up with the caller to ensure that they got the advice they needed. It will be funded as a two year project with the aim that it will become self-financing within those two years.



Applicants can apply either individually or on behalf of a consortium. The bid size is up to £2 million.

## 2. Families in Stress

This funding is for projects that support families of serving personnel who are experiencing a significant stressful life event. Applications can be from local charities or community interest companies that provide specialist services, working in close partnership with military bases. The bid size is £20,001 to £300,000

## 3. Improving Local Covenant Delivery

This funding is to materially improve the experience of local Armed Forces communities (serving personnel, families and veterans) and ensure that they are not disadvantaged. The review of the delivery of local Covenant pledges will report at the Local Government Association conference in early July. This will inform the guidance for this priority. Applications will be encouraged from clusters of Local Authorities to share best practice and implement practical support for the local Armed Forces community through the training of frontline staff and improved website information and presence, and to embed those improvements into their main stream services. Applicants must be Local Authorities working in clusters. The bid size is £20,000 to £500,000

## 4. Community Integration/Delivery of local services

This funding is for projects that respond to the local needs of the Armed Forces community and improve recognition of the Armed Forces Covenant, and that:

- Help integrate Armed Forces and civilian communities across the united Kingdom, and/or
- deliver valuable local services to the Armed Forces community.

Applications can be from Registered Charities (including Community Interest Companies); schools; Local Authorities and Armed Forces units with a UIN. The bid size is up to £20,000.

## 2. SUPPORT AND SIGNPOSTING

### a) Website

A dedicated '[Armed Forces Community Covenant](#)<sup>5</sup>' 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](#)<sup>6</sup>' pages on the Dover District Council website.

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

---

<sup>5</sup> [www.dover.gov.uk/communitycovenant](http://www.dover.gov.uk/communitycovenant)

<sup>6</sup> [www.dover.gov.uk/communitycovenant/signpost](http://www.dover.gov.uk/communitycovenant/signpost)



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

c) Sign up to show your support

As at March 2016, forty-six organisations and six individuals have signed up to show their support for the Community Covenant and its aims. We would like to encourage more people to do this and have a 'Sign Up' link on our '[Armed Forces Community Covenant](#)'<sup>7</sup> webpage.

### 3. KENT AND MEDWAY CIVILIAN MILITARY PARTNERSHIP BOARD

The 3rd Kent and Medway Civilian Military Conference was held at the Woodville Halls in Gravesend on Wednesday 2 March 2016. It provided an opportunity for networking, discussion, shared learning and a platform upon which we can collectively continue to level the playing field and ensure Armed Forces personnel can access services.

During the year, Kent and Medway Civilian Military Partnership Board carried out a research project to identify the needs of the military community in Kent and in order to be more effective in delivering the Armed Forces Covenant across Kent. The aim of the research was to understand the issues facing service personnel, reservists, ex-service personnel and their families living and working in Kent. The research was also to find out how the needs of the Armed Forces communities differ from that of the civilian community. It was also to gain a deeper understanding of what life is like for the Armed Forces community living and working in Kent and to learn about their strengths and what they can offer to the communities they live in. The project included a review of national research, an online survey and qualitative research.

The areas explored were: Transition, Employment and Skills, Finance, Housing, Education, Support Services and Health and Mental Wellbeing.

The results of the research project were launched at the Conference and the results can be found at <http://www.kentcouncilleaders.org.uk/military/research/>

### 4. HOUSING

In 2013, the Council adopted a new social housing allocation policy that includes a number of measures designed to assist service personnel. These include:

- Prioritising applications based on their total, cumulative period of service rather than the date of their housing application thereby enabling them to acquire additional priority under the choice based letting scheme for their period of service.
- Implementing the regulations in respect of local connection assessment.
- Ensuring the service personnel can be awarded 'additional preference'.

At the time the Department for Communities and Local Government Council highlighted the work the Council had done in this area as an example of good practice around the granting of additional preference to service personnel.

<sup>7</sup> [www.dover.gov.uk/communitycovenant](http://www.dover.gov.uk/communitycovenant)



The Council's Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy which were developed around the same time also 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.

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.

We anticipate that it will be necessary to review the Tenancy Strategy and Tenancy Policy later this year to take account of legislative changes relating to social housing tenancies introduced in the Housing and Planning Act 2016. We are currently awaiting further statutory guidance and we will seek to try and retain the measures currently in place for service personnel provided the regulations allow the necessary flexibility.

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](#)<sup>8</sup>, the choice based lettings system used by local authorities and housing associations across Kent.
- Kent Homechoice leaflet 'Helping the Armed Forces' with details of the alternative housing options that are available and useful contacts.
- Kent Homechoice now collecting statistics on ex-service personnel housing applications.
- Kent Joint Policy and Planning Board, of which the Council is a member, being a sub-group of the Kent Civilian Military Partnership Board.

Currently, Kent Housing Group is in the process of finalising a 'housing pathway' for service personnel in Kent

The Council continues to facilitate a quarterly Homelessness Forum, whose membership includes the homeless charity Porchlight<sup>9</sup> and the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA), which provides a forum where issues relating to ex-service personnel can be discussed.

## 5. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

NHS England (NHSE) has agreed to transfer the funding and responsibility to Kent CCG's to commission an Armed Forces Network, to continue to raise awareness and in response to the need for mental health services to be accessible to ex-military personnel in Kent. They are currently in discussions with Sussex Armed Forces Network to provide the Network support. By joining up with the Sussex Network this will provide economies of scale and help maximise the funding investment. The Sussex model is a multi-organisational group which includes members from the NHS, MOD, The Royal British Legion, SSAFA and other

---

<sup>8</sup> [www.kenthomechoice.org.uk/choice/](http://www.kenthomechoice.org.uk/choice/)

<sup>9</sup> Porchlight is a Kent-based homeless 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.



interested charities. The network is made up of champions who are advocates for the Armed Forces community and have the skills and knowledge to support through direct service provision. Each model will have its own separate identity (i.e. own dedicated website, logo etc.) and they are aiming to finalise details by early July.

South Kent Coast CCG continues to have identified Armed Forces Network (AFN) and mental health clinical leads and is fortunate to have two, Dr Tara Hoshyar and Dr Joe Chaudhuri providing depth and capacity to support CCG mental health commissioning.

The CCG has continued to provide regular updates at GP and Practice Nurse education and training sessions throughout the year, to keep practices informed of the range of services that can provide specifically, mental health support to veterans and other services such as Navigators and Health Trainers etc.

In addition to the NHSE AFN funding, Kent CCGs have received additional Murrison fund monies to send three champions to attend the Armed Forces instructor training on Mental Health First Aid taking place in June and July. This is a specialist seven day course. A further small allocation of funding has been provided and it has been agreed to invest in Mental Health First Aid, train the trainer training. They have been allocated three spaces, available to their previously trained champions. This will then allow for more champions to be trained in Mental Health First Aid.

The South Kent Coast CCG, and the other three East Kent CCGs (Thanet, Ashford and Canterbury), have re-procured mental health psychological services (Talking Therapies) where they have specified in the service specification, that the new providers will provide services to support the needs of veterans and their families and that services are accessible. All providers have a base of clinicians who can provide Post Traumatic Stress Therapies (PTSD) and Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing (EMDR) therapies that are recommended as first line treatment for trauma victims in addition to services to support generalized anxiety, depression, relationship issues, anger management etc.

Lastly the CCG have supported the Live Well Kent procurement and contributed financially working with KCC the lead Commissioner. The new service started on the 1st April. Live Well Kent is an integrated service that helps Kent residents to improve their mental and physical health and wellbeing, giving them the support, information and skills they need to build a healthy, independent life. Services and support range from understanding and managing thoughts and emotions, connecting people to social enterprises and community projects, managing money, housing support and guidance and improving relationships with family and friends that are accessible to veterans and their families.

## **6. EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT**

The Jobcentre nationally is committed to identifying and offering all available and tailored support to ex-Armed Forces personnel. The identification of relevant Jobcentre Plus (JCP) customers who may be eligible to receive additional help and support has been facilitated by the additional marker on the JCP Labour Market System (used to administer all attendance and contact with JCP customers) to quickly and easily identify ex-members of the Armed Forces or their partners. At the new claims stage customers are asked if they have previous service or links to the Armed Forces and a marker is placed on the Labour Market System so Work Coaches can refer or inform relevant people of any new assistance or support as it is offered.



An Armed Forces Community Factsheet has been produced to share the support on offer and is made available to relevant customers. This factsheet holds useful information on a variety of support (including things like specific debt advice for ex-Forces personnel) in one place for ease of reference.

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.

## E. Partner Updates

Additional information received for inclusion in the Annual Report:

### 1. MINISTRY OF DEFENCE: ARMY

Kent comes under 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade and the HQ for 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade is in Aldershot and HQ South East is in Folkestone.

The following map shows the wide geographical area covered by 11 Brigade:

**Geographical Area Covered by 11 Brigade**



The Army is committed to continuing its community engagement responsibilities, and its Civil Engagement Strategy identifies Civil Engagement Task Force Commanders to cover the South East. The areas of Ashford, Lydd, Dover and Margate in Kent and Medway come under CO 2 RGR.

### Reservists

Another key element of the army transformation is the expansion of the Reservists.

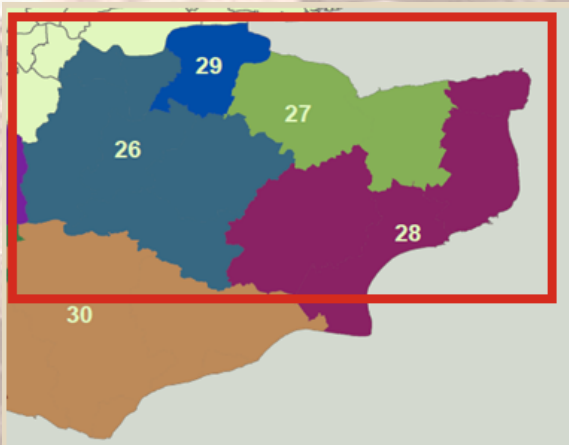
Op FORTIFY is an army-wide operation to recruit reservists, who will no longer be used sporadically for national emergencies, but more frequently and predictably as part of a seamless army. This could potentially place greater stress on individuals, families and employers.



Changes are also being made over time to expand the army cadets, and encourage a broader range of young people to become involved.

### Task Force Commanders

The Commanding Officer continues his role at County Level, with the new Task Force Commander taking responsibility for local districts/boroughs in areas where their units occupy. Dover, Thanet and Shepway fall within 2 Royal Gurkha Regiment stationed at Folkestone, the patch of responsibility is numbered 28 on the map.



26. Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge, Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Gravesham, Dartford: **CO 36 Engr Regt**

27. Canterbury, Swale: **CO 3 PWRR**

28. Ashford, Lydd, Dover, Margate: **CO 2 RGR**

29. Medway Towns: **Comdt 1 RSME**

## 2. DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Dover District Council is committed to working with partners to make sure that no serving or retired Armed Forces service man or woman is disadvantaged as a result of serving their country. We have appointed two Armed Forces Community Covenant champions to take the lead for this work within the Council. These are Councillor Paul Watkins, Leader of Dover District Council and Brinley Hill, Head of Communication and Engagement.

In addition to our housing responsibilities previously mentioned; the Council's package of support includes:

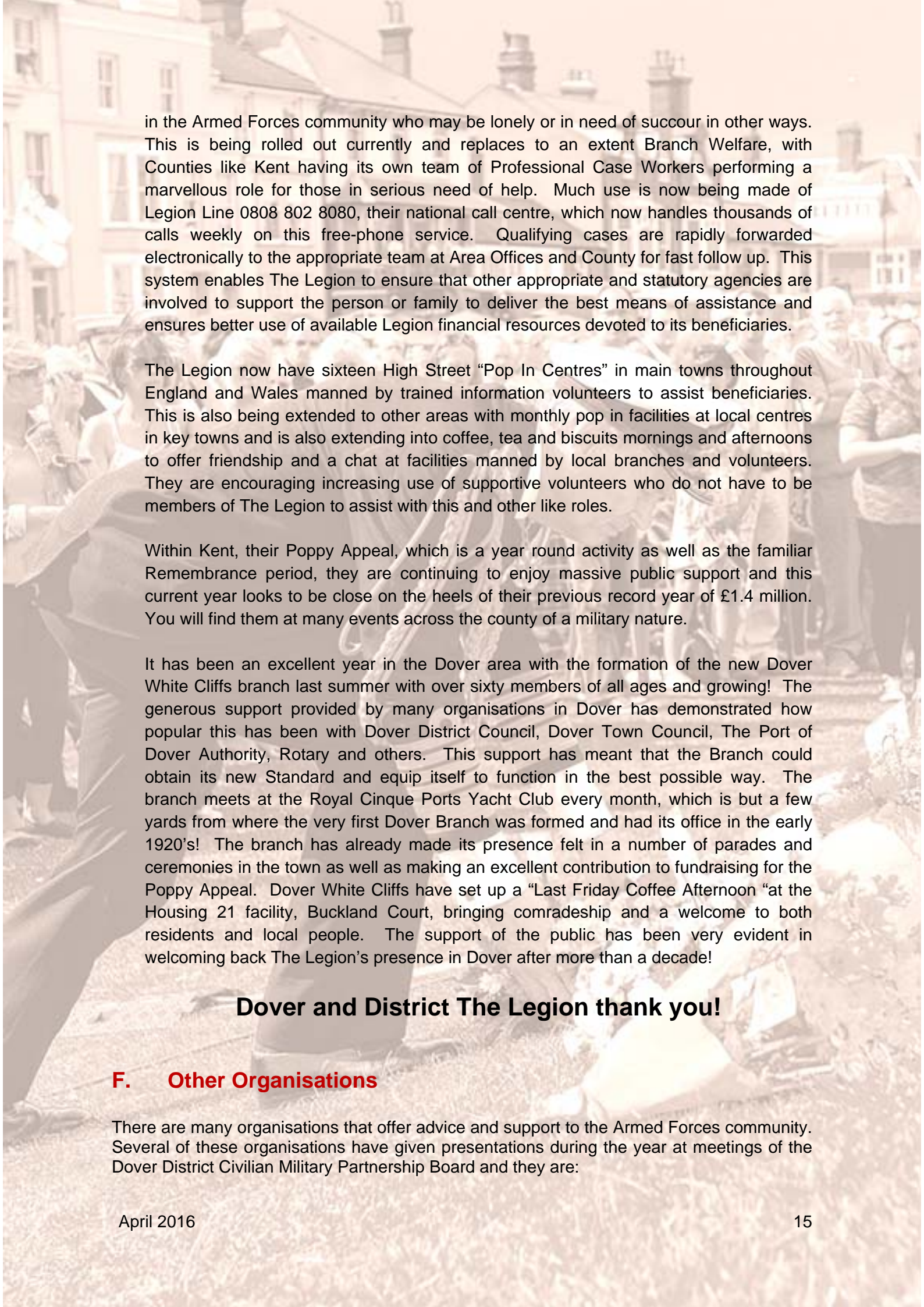
- Administering the Dover District Civilian Military Partnership Board;
- Assisting groups to complete applications to the Community Covenant Grant Scheme;
- Hosting training events;
- Maintaining a dedicated webpage and signposting information.
- The Chairman of the Council<sup>10</sup> is also committed to representing the Council at Armed Forces events and cadet events.

## 3. THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

A lot has happened since the report from The Royal British Legion a year ago. The Legion is importantly giving greater significance to Branches nationally becoming more widely involved with "Care in the Community"; where they are actively befriending those

<sup>10</sup> The Chairman of Dover District Council is the First Citizen in the District of Dover, Deal and Sandwich and takes precedence over all others including the Town Mayors, but excluding royalty and Her Majesty's deputy, the Lord Lieutenant of Kent ([www.dover.gov.uk/Council--Democracy/Councillors,-Decisions--Meetings/Chairman/Chairman.aspx](http://www.dover.gov.uk/Council--Democracy/Councillors,-Decisions--Meetings/Chairman/Chairman.aspx))





in the Armed Forces community who may be lonely or in need of succour in other ways. This is being rolled out currently and replaces to an extent Branch Welfare, with Counties like Kent having its own team of Professional Case Workers performing a marvellous role for those in serious need of help. Much use is now being made of Legion Line 0808 802 8080, their national call centre, which now handles thousands of calls weekly on this free-phone service. Qualifying cases are rapidly forwarded electronically to the appropriate team at Area Offices and County for fast follow up. This system enables The Legion to ensure that other appropriate and statutory agencies are involved to support the person or family to deliver the best means of assistance and ensures better use of available Legion financial resources devoted to its beneficiaries.

The Legion now have sixteen High Street “Pop In Centres” in main towns throughout England and Wales manned by trained information volunteers to assist beneficiaries. This is also being extended to other areas with monthly pop in facilities at local centres in key towns and is also extending into coffee, tea and biscuits mornings and afternoons to offer friendship and a chat at facilities manned by local branches and volunteers. They are encouraging increasing use of supportive volunteers who do not have to be members of The Legion to assist with this and other like roles.

Within Kent, their Poppy Appeal, which is a year round activity as well as the familiar Remembrance period, they are continuing to enjoy massive public support and this current year looks to be close on the heels of their previous record year of £1.4 million. You will find them at many events across the county of a military nature.

It has been an excellent year in the Dover area with the formation of the new Dover White Cliffs branch last summer with over sixty members of all ages and growing! The generous support provided by many organisations in Dover has demonstrated how popular this has been with Dover District Council, Dover Town Council, The Port of Dover Authority, Rotary and others. This support has meant that the Branch could obtain its new Standard and equip itself to function in the best possible way. The branch meets at the Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club every month, which is but a few yards from where the very first Dover Branch was formed and had its office in the early 1920's! The branch has already made its presence felt in a number of parades and ceremonies in the town as well as making an excellent contribution to fundraising for the Poppy Appeal. Dover White Cliffs have set up a “Last Friday Coffee Afternoon “at the Housing 21 facility, Buckland Court, bringing comradeship and a welcome to both residents and local people. The support of the public has been very evident in welcoming back The Legion's presence in Dover after more than a decade!

## **Dover and District The Legion thank you!**

### **F. Other Organisations**

There are many organisations that offer advice and support to the Armed Forces community. Several of these organisations have given presentations during the year at meetings of the Dover District Civilian Military Partnership Board and they are:



## **1. Dover Boat Shed – Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club**

The Dover Boat Shed meets regularly in Dover Marina and welcomes men, women and ex-service personnel to discover the 'six way to well-being' through shared activities, socialising and friendship in a supportive environment. It gives people the opportunity to connect with their Maritime Heritage and engage with each other in the unique environment of a boat.

The shed links with the club's connection with ex-service personnel, Sea Cadets, Merchant Navy and the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports (former Chief of Defence Staff) is president of the Club. There is a need for a smaller caring, group environment which the Shed offers. It enables friendships to reach deeper and more supportive levels, which is not always possible in a larger group. They want to be part of the bigger shed movement and will encourage and support other sheds to come along and enjoy the experience of their Boat Shed.

The Club attended the Armed Forces Network Military Mindset training. The project will support veterans, ex-service personnel and serving personnel.

Some of the activities that the shedders undertake are:

- Clearing rubbish on the local beach and marina areas.
- Learning new skills, first aid, rope work, navigation and boat maintenance.
- Activities such as cooking, games, crafts and maritime and local history.
- Safety at sea.
- Marine Wildlife.

## **2. Career Transition Partnership**

The CTP is a strategic partnership agreement between the Ministry of Defence and Right Management, a global career development and outplacement specialists and part of the Manpower Group. The partnership was formed in 1998. They provide resettlement support to all ranks of the Army, Royal Navy, Royal Marines, and Royal Air Force regardless of time served or reason for leaving the service. Armed Service personnel can access the service from two years prior to discharge and up to two years after. This timeline can be extended for wounded, injured and sick personnel depending on the nature of their condition and medical pathway. The support assists personnel to enter the civilian job market and to make a successful transition to employment or to achieve the wider vocational outcome that they seek.

They have ten resettlement centres in the UK and one in Germany. Their flagship Resettlement Training Centre is located in Aldershot. Workshops and briefings include interview techniques, self-employment awareness, new horizons in retirement, financial aspects of resettlement, housing and networking.

The CTP brings together service leavers and employers. This includes company presentations, open days, employment fairs, information presentations and online events. They have a team of Employer Relations Managers who are available to advise and assist with employer's recruitment needs. Employers they are currently working with include Tesco, Rolls Royce, British Gas, Siemens, Balfour Beatty, Nissan, National Grid and the Royal Mail.



### **3. Royal British Legion Industries**

The RBLI are progressing a number of initiatives to support veterans and their families. They have recently received significant funding via the LIBOR fund to progress services for veterans who have engaged with the criminal justice system and aging veterans, particularly those living with dementia. These include:

- £958,000 to deliver intensive employment support to long term unemployed veterans across the UK, particularly those who have a background in offending;
- £2,700,000 to expand their nursing facilities to provide specialist nursing care through flexible care suites and day-care facilities;
- £1,900,000 to build twenty-four flexible accommodation units which will provide one and two bed accommodation for veterans with carers, single veterans in crisis and those with small families awaiting a more permanent accommodation solution.

In addition, they are progressing plans to develop a residential work academy providing paid work experience, training and accommodation for veterans, particularly young early service leavers. This will enable them to develop the skills required by local businesses. They will work in partnership with a number of local training providers to deliver skills and qualifications as well as personal development programmes to build confidence and work place skills.

#### **Employment & Skills Sub Group Update**

The Employment & Skills Sub Group has a remit to review the employment and skills requirements of the Armed Forces communities across Kent.

The attendees include representatives from the Military, Local Authorities, Employers, Jobcentre Plus and Training Providers.

The current objectives for the Group focus on a number of initiatives:

#### **1. Workforce Skills Research Study**

Kent County Council has commissioned a research study on the skills requirements of Kent employers, undertaking a gap analysis regarding skills shortfalls.

The Study reported the following key findings:

- There are 57,000 business enterprises in Kent & Medway employing over 630,000 people. The vast majority of these are micro businesses employing fewer than 10 staff, with 45% of employment being attributable to businesses employing 50+.
- Kent & Medway has a lower job density than other areas as it provides over 100,000 workers to London/Greater London. Higher salaries in the capital provide significant competition for local businesses.
- High concentration of employment in construction, retail (including motor trades) and education.



- Employment is expected to grow by around 6% by 2022 – i.e. an additional 31,000 workers.
- There are over 1 million people of working age; the age profile being slightly younger than the UK as a whole.
- Whilst unemployment and economic activity rates are similar to the national average, there are pockets of high unemployment. Long term unemployment and youth unemployment remain priority issues; the unemployment rate for 18 – 24 year olds is double that for all areas and significantly higher than the national average in Thanet, Dover, Gravesham, Medway, Shepway and Swale, where residents are more likely to be claiming out of work benefits and have low or no qualifications.
- The general analysis reported that the minimum age of skilled workforces in some sectors is high (manufacturing and construction particularly). A need to develop skills in younger employees was identified.

The next step for the Employment & Skills Group is to consider a further piece of work to apply the likely future demand evidence from the research with what the group knows about the skills profile of service leavers. This may help to inform both the MOD and those providing training for service leavers regarding the skills development needs of service leavers and veterans more generally.

## **2. Initiatives to Support Young People:**

The MOD has developed a programme of training and development for young people, particularly those who are deemed to be NEET (i.e. not in education, employment or training). This includes outward bound activities, personal development workshops etc. based on military disciplines. Participants will also be encouraged to consider initiatives such as cadetships to further develop confidence and skills. The first of these pilots has been delivered in Aldershot. The MOD representative will present back to the next meeting of the group regarding the effectiveness of the first pilot. The aim is to roll this out across Kent & Medway. As such, both the Medway Youth Trust and the Prince's Trust have been invited to attend future meetings of the group.

## **G. Priority Areas and Next Steps**

The Board has identified a number of priority areas to look at:

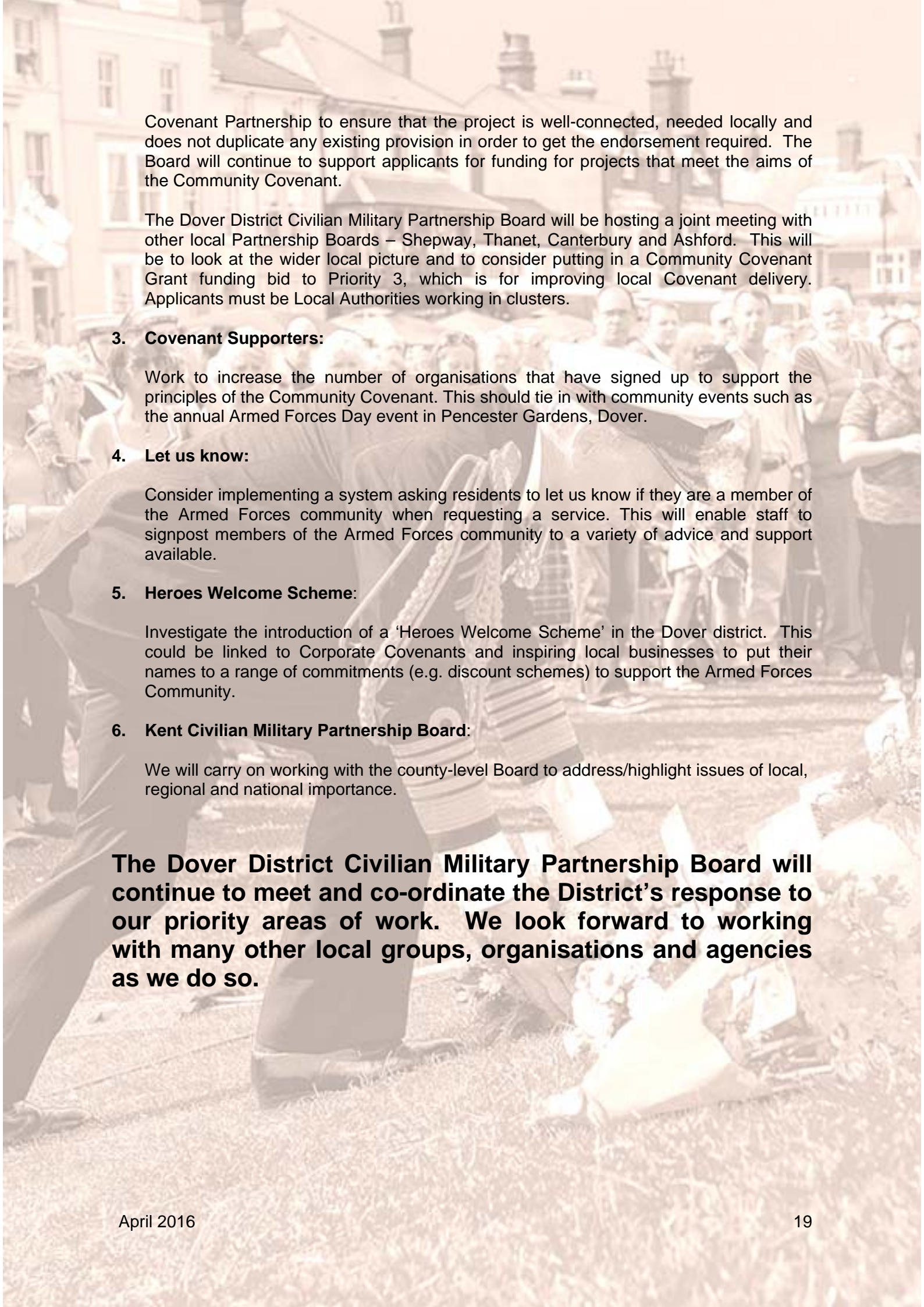
### **1. Profiling:**

We still need to develop a better understanding of the needs and opportunities in relation to local Armed Forces communities, in particular veterans, as we lack quantitative data. This is an issue highlighted at a regional and national level.

### **2. Community Covenant Grant Funding:**

Details of the Community Covenant Grant funding for 2016 to 2017 have been released. Registered charities, Community Interest Companies, Local Authorities, Schools and Armed Forces Units with a UIN can apply for priority 4, but applications have to be endorsed by the Local Covenant Partnership. Applicants have to work with their local





Covenant Partnership to ensure that the project is well-connected, needed locally and does not duplicate any existing provision in order to get the endorsement required. The Board will continue to support applicants for funding for projects that meet the aims of the Community Covenant.

The Dover District Civilian Military Partnership Board will be hosting a joint meeting with other local Partnership Boards – Shepway, Thanet, Canterbury and Ashford. This will be to look at the wider local picture and to consider putting in a Community Covenant Grant funding bid to Priority 3, which is for improving local Covenant delivery. Applicants must be Local Authorities working in clusters.

**3. Covenant Supporters:**

Work to increase the number of organisations that have signed up to support the principles of the Community Covenant. This should tie in with community events such as the annual Armed Forces Day event in Pencester Gardens, Dover.

**4. Let us know:**

Consider implementing a system asking residents to let us know if they are a member of the Armed Forces community when requesting a service. This will enable staff to signpost members of the Armed Forces community to a variety of advice and support available.

**5. Heroes Welcome Scheme:**

Investigate the introduction of a 'Heroes Welcome Scheme' in the Dover district. This could be linked to Corporate Covenants and inspiring local businesses to put their names to a range of commitments (e.g. discount schemes) to support the Armed Forces Community.

**6. Kent Civilian Military Partnership Board:**

We will carry on working with the county-level Board to address/highlight issues of local, regional and national importance.

**The Dover District Civilian Military Partnership Board will continue to meet and co-ordinate the District's response to our priority areas of work. We look forward to working with many other local groups, organisations and agencies as we do so.**