



## Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board

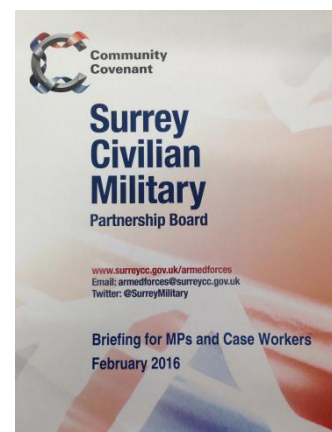
### Successes 2015/16

The Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board (SCMPB) has a high level remit to foster closer working relationships between a number of lead agencies and military partners, and meets twice a year. The Board is supported by two Task Groups which each meet quarterly – Recognise and Remember Task Group and Community Integration Task Group. The Board operates with the full support of 11 Infantry Brigade. Meetings, where appropriate, are held on military bases.

Set out below are some of the key successes of the Board, which have been achieved as a result of the work carried out by representatives on either the Board, or one of the Task Groups.

#### General

- The second countywide Community and Corporate Covenant Conference was held at RLC Deepcut on 10 November 2015. This was a very well received conference aimed at key partners in Surrey as well as front line staff. Keynote speeches were given by the Lord-Lieutenant of Surrey as well as Mr Julian Brazier TD MP, Minister for Reserves and Recruitment and Col Patrick Crowley, Chief Executive of SERFCA. During the conference there was the opportunity for small group discussion around key issues facing the armed forces community including education, employment, health and wellbeing and housing.
- Working with the Military, Service Charities and local MPs, the Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board has produced a briefing for MPs and their case workers to help identify members of the armed forces communities and sign post them to appropriate support. This was sent out by Anne Milton MP with her endorsement on behalf of the SCMPB, and has been well received by MPs across Surrey.



- The Board has been successful in helping bring in grants totalling nearly £100,000 from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund to Surrey. Six bids were successful in receiving funding for a wide variety of projects to promote adult learning, to support service children, ex-service personnel in the criminal justice system and the Gurkha community, as well as providing funding for a mobile exhibition vehicle to promote awareness and education around the First World War and comparisons to conflict today.

- 11 Infantry Brigade has assigned each district and borough council a Task Force Commander from an operational base covering Surrey. These Task Force Commanders provide a two way local link between the Military and the local authority. In order to promote relationships and links between the district and borough council Armed Forces Champions and the local Task Force Commanders and to help support them in their role in taking forward the Armed Forces Covenant locally, the SCMPB has hosted two meetings in September 2015 and March 2016. These meetings have been very well received and have been key for sharing best practice and knowledge. These will continue to be hosted by the SCMPB on a six monthly basis.



- SCMPB has promoted the role of the Armed Forces through numerous events across the County. Examples include a display stand at National Armed Forces Day in Guildford in June 2015, promoting military attendance at a number of other events including remembrance and commemoration events, Marches through town centres and Victoria Cross unveilings in Guildford, Woking, Reigate and Surrey Heath. Messages have been spread through a number of mechanisms including the Armed Forces calendar on the Surrey County Council website, the @SurreyMilitary twitter feed, direct emails and face to face contact.



- The SCMPB has facilitated a number of meetings during the year to look at closer working between the local authorities and the Military on joint priorities. An example of this is around youth, which is a priority for both 11 Infantry Brigade and Surrey County Council. The meeting explored how both organisations engage with young people especially those requiring extra support, and how we can work together to encourage more adult volunteers within the Cadets.

- Best practice from within Surrey and Woking was promoted by the Armed Forces Champion for Woking Borough Council to a national conference for Diocesan Champions in the Church of England at Lambeth Palace in November 2015. This was well received and work is ongoing to see how some



of the examples given can be used locally within the Dioceses.

- A number of Surrey authorities are promoting either Heroes Welcome or the Defence Discount Scheme with local businesses as another way to support the armed forces community in Surrey.
- 12 November 2015 saw the official opening of the Peace Garden at the Muslim Burial Ground in Horsell by HRH The Earl of Wessex KG GCVO. This four year project saw the restoration and creation of a Peace Garden at the Grade II listed site. This project was part funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Grant.



- Surrey History Centre was successful in winning a grant of £460,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for a project to immortalise the experiences of Surrey residents on the front line and at home during the First World War. This was launched by David Munro, the then Chairman of Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board on 18 May 2015 (<http://www.exploringsurreyspast.org.uk/themes/subjects/military/surreys-first-world-war/remembers/> )
- Following a successful £30,000 Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant application by the Surrey Archaeology Unit, volunteers from both the armed forces community and the civilian community worked together between July and October 2015 to uncover the secrets of a former Surrey military camp in Witley.



## Education

- A termly Newsletter for schools who educate the 1,100 service children in Surrey is produced. This newsletter sets out best practice and key contacts to help schools with service children support their needs. Input to the newsletter comes from a variety of sources including the Families Federations, Ministry of Defence, best practice from other Councils and examples from local schools. The information in the Newsletter has been very well received, and going forward it has been agreed that it will now be incorporated

into the regular newsletter to all schools to ensure they are all aware of the issues and support available should if they ever need to support a Service child.

- SCMPB facilitated a meeting between the RLC Deepcut, the Army Families Federation and Surrey County Council to increase the understanding of the school admissions and transport policies and procedures. This meeting resulted in a number of actions including a FAQ and case study being developed for Army families in relation to admissions and transport. When complete it will be shared with both the Naval and RAF Family Federations.
- Opportunities have been explored for promoting adult learning amongst service spouses through a successful Surrey Care Trust Covenant Grant bid, which gave a number of taster courses with the aim of increasing uptake and establishing need.

## Employment

- Surrey has been working with the Career Transition Partnership (the MoDs official provider of Armed Forces Resettlement) to advertise suitable vacancies on their website to encourage ex-military personnel to apply for vacant positions. Alongside this, a colleague from HR has been working with the Recovery Career Services and Headley Court which has resulted in assisting an injured ex-serviceman into employment within the Finance Directorate at Surrey County Council.
- Woking Borough Council has started to monitor the Reservist status/links to the Armed Forces on council job application forms to ensure appropriate support is available. Data from these forms will be monitored by HR and information passed to the Military Covenant Advisory Panel.
- Links have been created between Job Centre Plus and the Military to help ensure relevant signposting for vacancies to service leavers.
- Work has been carried out to identify skills shortages in Surrey (including engineers and caterers), with the aim of matching these type of roles to the skills of service leavers.
- The promotion of Reservists is a key priority for 11 Brigade. Board members, through their organisations, have been looking at promoting the benefits of employing reservists within Surrey organisations and businesses.
- The SCMPB has worked with local authorities and Surrey businesses to raise awareness of the benefits of signing the Armed Forces Covenant through attendance at Breakfast Business meetings in a number of boroughs across the county.
- On 7 October 2015 the Board was represented at the Woking Means Business Event at HG Wells. Businesses received a presentation from the Army Engagement Team on the benefits of employing Reservists and signing the Armed Forces Covenant.



- The Board has a liaison role with DMRC Headley Court over the forthcoming relocation to the Midlands and the implications for the local community.

### **Housing**

- A Surrey Housing Officers Group representative is leading the housing element of the Community Integration Task Group work. This will help to ensure that all members of the armed forces community have the same access to housing options, advice and support as any other citizen across the county.
- Many Councils in Surrey now welcome applications for housing from the Armed Forces Community from anywhere in the country (no local connection is required). For example, due to raised awareness of the Covenant in Woking, there have been several positive outcomes with provision of housing for ex-forces personnel in the Borough.

### **Health, Wellbeing and Welfare**

- Work has been progressed during the year to increase awareness of the role of Service Charities with colleagues in Adult Social Care and encourage greater links. The Board and Service Charities have presented to senior Adult Social Care managers, and a directory produced of the key service charities operating in Surrey, who they can support and the types of assistance they can offer. The document is available via the website (<http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/advice-guidance-and-support/armed-forces/support-for-current-and-ex-service-personnel> ). In the first three months we are aware of at least 10 referrals from Adult Social Care to ssafa Surrey.
- Work is ongoing to identify key issues and needs in relation to health and welfare for the armed forces community (including access to NHS GPs and dentists as well as welfare issues) and providing relevant signposting through appropriate websites.
- The implications of the Care Act for veterans are being considered.
- A pilot project to assess the number and needs of Service children acting as carers within their own families. This is being complemented by some national work being led by the Children's Society, which the Board is inputting into.
- An armed forces link officer for each of the six Surrey Clinical Commissioning Groups covering Surrey has been appointed. The role of these officers will be developed over the course of the year but will include being a key point of contact for GP practices within their area.

### **Local Authorities**

- Working jointly with the Armed Forces Champions in Waverley and Woking, SCMPB has produced a job profile for Member Armed Forces Champions across Surrey, which is being promoted by the Ministry of Defence as best practice nationally. All Surrey district and borough councils appointed an Armed Forces Champion for the year 2015/16. Along with the job description, a briefing document has been produced for the Armed Forces Champions setting out the issues that the armed forces community face, as well as signposting to relevant help and support.
- A number of Armed Forces Champions from Surrey are in the process of producing information to signpost members of the armed forces community to key services available in their locality. This is being produced in various forms including leaflets which can be handed out at council information desks as well as information on the armed forces pages of their council websites.

- Following a nomination by a Reservist who works within the Environment and Infrastructure Department of Surrey County Council (SCC), the authority was awarded the Silver Employer Recognition Award, which was presented to the County Council at an award ceremony on board HMS Victory in July 2015. As a Silver Award winner, SCC clearly demonstrated and communicated our supportive behaviour towards the Armed Forces within the County Council.



- Surrey, Woking and Mole Valley council staff have attended the Sandhurst Leadership Challenge which is held every six months in March and September. This is a leadership training day which offers a unique opportunity to develop the leadership and teamwork skills of young executives and managers under the expert guidance of the Reserve Forces.

