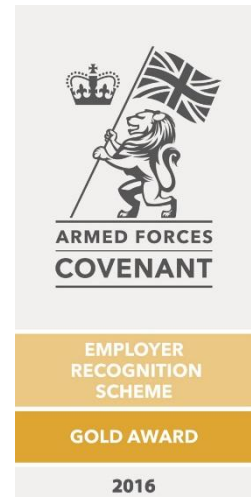


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Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board

Armed Forces Covenant Successes 2016/17



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 (SE). 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 during the 2016/17 municipal year.

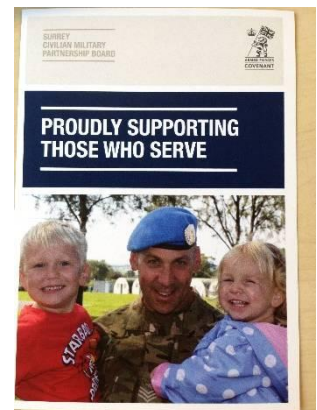
In addition, all Surrey local authorities have appointed an Armed Forces Champion and 11 Infantry Brigade has assigned each district and borough council, a Task Force Commander from an operational base covering or adjoining Surrey. Joint working between the Task Force Commanders and the Armed Forces Champions has developed over the last 12 months with work being progressed on a local basis under the priorities of Community Engagement, Youth Engagement and Employer Engagement. Examples of achievements are contained within this paper.

General

- The annual Surrey Armed Forces Covenant Conference was held on 15 November at The Princess Royal Barracks, Deepcut. It had a particular focus on exploring issues in relation to service families and health. Presentations were given on the challenges facing Naval families; support to service children; understanding the health provision for Armed Forces and their families and support for Military Young Carers in Surrey. Delegates were able to explore issues further during a series of workshops. In addition, the Conference provided an opportunity to celebrate successful Remembrance activities including Surrey in the Great War and a celebration of the first two minutes silence in Farnham, one hundred years ago.
- The Army Sergeant Major presented his 'Green Lines' to the Covenant Conference – these are a guide for soldiers based around the Army Leadership Code. Delegates were keen to see how these could be used within their organisations.



- The sharing of best practice is a key priority of SCMPB. As part of this work, the County Council is working closely with the Ministry of Defence Communications Team to develop resources to promote the benefits of the Armed Forces Covenant and the skills of Reservists and Veterans. This has included work on a video clip involving Surrey Fire and Rescue highlighting the transferable skills of ex-service personnel and veteran; and a video from the former Armed Forces Champion of Runnymede Borough Council sharing her experiences of being a Champion from her new life as an Army wife in the Falkland Islands – this was shared at the National Armed Forces Covenant Conference in November 2016.
- A Surrey Case Study has been published within the National Armed Forces Covenant Report (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-covenant-annual-report-2016>) in December 2016 setting out how Surrey and the district and borough councils have worked closely together through their appointed Armed Forces Champions who have led the way in the effective implementation of the Covenant across the County.
- The Armed Forces Champion role description developed through the SCMPB is now an exemplar and advertised as such by the Ministry of Defence and by MoD Ministers
- During the course of the year, a further £25,021 of Armed Forces Covenant Grants were brought into Surrey through successful projects. This brings the total awarded to date over the past two years since the new Covenant Fund was introduced to £121,127. (Awaiting announcement at end of March for further successful bids for this year.)
- Following the launch of the new Armed Forces Covenant brand, the SCMPB has developed new publicity materials to promote the Covenant in Surrey.



Education and Young People

- A regular newsletter is circulated to all Surrey schools containing guidance for schools with service children, this includes for example information on the use of the Service Pupil Premium, funds that can be applied for to support armed forces families. In addition, a special newsletter was circulated in September 2016 promoting the benefits of young people joining the Cadets.
- An annual census of the number of Service children in Surrey schools enables information and support to be focussed on particular schools, as and where appropriate.
- The Borough and District Councils are continuing to establish strong links with local Cadet Units. This is being achieved through attendance at Cadet parades and annual inspection visits. These visits allow officers from the Cadets to build strong and effective links with the Task Force Commander and Armed Forces Champions. For example, in Mole Valley better partnership links are being developed which include



offering all Cadets work experience at the district council, a tour of the offices, inviting representative to attend the Council's annual Armed Forces Flag Raising ceremony and identifying ways in which the Council can support the important role cadets play in our communities.

- Ash Manor School's application for a Combined Cadet Force (CCF) was successful and the school have been granted permission to establish an Army only section CCF. Training, security checks and medicals are underway.

Employment

- Promotion of Reservists is a key priority for 11 Infantry Brigade. This has been carried out locally via a number of breakfast briefings, including Woking Means Business on 5 October 2016 and an event at The Runnymede Hotel on 10 February 2017 attended by Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP. Seven companies completed expressions of interest for signing the Armed Forces Covenant at Woking Means Business which are being followed up by SE RFCA (South East Reserve Forces and Cadet Association).
- 3PWRR has been working closely with Woking Borough Council recruiting Reservists via a stand in Woking Town Centre.
- Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council are both members of the Regional Employer Engagement Group hosted by SE RFCA which brings together key businesses from across the region to look at taking forward the relationship between business and Defence.
- Skanska, a Silver Employer Recognition Award holder gave a presentation to the Surrey Armed Forces Champions setting out the general benefits of employing ex-service personnel and the specific benefits to Skanska as an organisation.
- Surrey local authorities recognise the benefits of employing ex-service personnel and Reservists. For example, Reigate and Banstead Borough Council is a veteran friendly employer and is positive about employing people who have served in the Armed Forces. They guarantee an interview to any applicant who meets the essential requirements of the role and has served in the Armed Forces within the past 3 years.
- 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.



Housing

- Acknowledging that service personnel can find themselves in a position where they have no connection to a local area(as a result of being posted abroad or in another part of the country), Surrey authorities continue to support the exemption to the Local Connection criteria in the Housing Allocation Scheme for armed forces personnel. Other support is also in place, for

example and in addition to the priority given on the Housing Register, Reigate and Banstead offer extra income disregards for people receiving war pensions. This also applies to the local Council Tax Support scheme.

- The Surrey Housing Officer Group has co-ordinated the addition of a question on all housing application forms across the county asking if applicants were as ex-service personnel.
- Borough and district council websites have been reviewed for accessibility, accuracy and consistency of information including links to the Joint Service Housing Advice Office.
- Borough and District Housing Teams attend 11 Infantry Brigade Transition Road Shows.

Health, Wellbeing and Welfare

- In partnership with the Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board, Surrey Young Carers established a new post in September 2016 to support the needs of military young carers. Young carers in military families can experience different responsibilities from other young carers in that they may be caring for a parent who has been injured in service or has post-traumatic stress disorder, as well as potentially caring for a parent or a sibling. As many military families live away from their extended family and support networks, these young carers often face more caring responsibilities than their non-military peers. For a variety of cultural reasons, including the need for frequent relocation and the tendency to try to look after themselves, carers tend not to readily reach out for external support, resulting in young carers in military families being harder to identify.
- Action for Carers Surrey in partnership with members of the Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board have identified a gap in service in the support provided to Armed Forces carers. Funding has been awarded via the Armed Forces Covenant Fund to improve community integration across all service providers by raising awareness and helping them to identify carers coming from an Armed Forces background or anyone who is being cared for by someone who comes from an Armed Forces background.
- The SCMPB has recently supported 'Together for Carers' a draft Memorandum of Understanding between Health and Social Care partners to provide an integrated approach to the identifying, assessing and meeting of Carers' health and wellbeing needs, including the needs of military families.
- The SCMPB formerly agreed to support a proposal to establish a part-time additional staffing resource to support the six Surrey Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's). This additional resource will assist in the understanding of the particular health needs of the military community and the implementation of the Covenant.
- To ensure that members of the Armed Forces Community contacting the County Council receive excellent customer service, training has been provided to 50% of Surrey County Council officers within the Contact Centre on the types of issues facing the Armed Forces Community and other sources of support available should the County Council not be the most appropriate organisation to assist. As a large proportion of the clients that Adult Social Care engage with may be veterans, an officer within the Adult Social Care Contact Centre has been designated as the

Armed Forces Lead for the Team with specific responsibility to promote awareness and best practice.

- There are a number of local support groups for veterans in Surrey including the Surrey Heath Veterans Listening Project and Veterans Support Association that are linked in to the network through the annual Covenant Conference. In February 2016, an event was held at the Town Hall Reigate to raise awareness of local support services and to explore how local organisations could work better together to support the Armed Forces community. The meeting enabled organisations to form new links and networks. "Ben's Place" launched in October 2016. is an example of an initiative that came about as a result of connections that were made at the February event. This public, private and voluntary sector partnership initiative offers pro bono support and advice to ex-forces personnel and their families and includes legal, housing, financial, employment help and mental health support.

Recognition and Remembrance

- The Recognise and Remember Task Group is working with the Armed Forces Champions across the county to photograph all of the Surrey war memorials for the First World War (WWI) Centenary Project "Surrey in the Great War: A County Remembers".
- Guidelines have been produced for Freedom Marches and a Protocol has been drawn up for Public Military Events to ensure all such events can be properly assessed and ample advanced notice given well in advance of the planned event, such as a Freedom March via the Assistant Chief Constable.
- Guildford Borough Council and Woking Borough Council have both resolved to grant the Freedom of the Borough to Army Training Centre (ATC) (Pirbright). ATC (Pirbright) will exercise their right in Woking on 23 April 2017 and in Guildford on 24 June 2017.
- Draft Orders of Service have been prepared for a number of military services including for Victoria Cross 100th Anniversaries; the Laying up of Standards; Dedications and Armed Forces Day Flag Raising.
- All Surrey local authorities celebrated National Armed Forces Week with flag raising events on Monday 20 June 2016. The Lord-Lieutenant with the High Sheriff and all Surrey's Mayors and Chairmen attended Surrey Joint Services' Charities Choral Mattins at Guildford Cathedral on Sunday 19 June 2016.
- On Sunday 26 June 2016, Guildford BC with the support of ABF Surrey The Soldiers' Charity held its 2nd Historic Military Vehicles Rally and Show at Loseley Park as part of Guildford BC's legacy in hosting National Armed Forces Day in June 2015. The Lord-Lieutenant and Mayor of Guildford jointly opened the event at which 2,000 people visited to see 100 military vehicles.
- SE RFCA hosted an event to commemorate the Battle of the Somme on 1 July 2016 at Surrey Sports Park which involved Army and Cadet football teams playing against schools, Fire



Service and local football teams. Nineteen teams took part. In addition to this countywide event, a number of local events were held. For example, in Surrey Heath 14-19 year olds were encouraged to submit a monologue from Corporal Edwin Harry Parker, a local soldier who died on the first day of the battle. The winning entry was read at the opening of the Surrey Heath Museum exhibition.

- Surrey Fire and Rescue have erected a memorial plaque to remember 100 serving Fire Officers who gave their lives in the First and Second World Wars.
- Reigate and Banstead Borough Council has established a First World War (WWI) working group to develop and coordinate a commemorative centenary programme of events and initiatives such as Adopt a Grave and the inclusion of local school children at Armistice Day services at 6 memorials across the Borough.
- Tandridge District Council co-ordinated the laying up of the Whyteleafe RBL Standard with 4 Armd Med Regt at St Luke's Church on Sunday 3rd May 2016.
- Mole Valley District Council has facilitated and organised a number of commemorative events throughout the year. This includes Remembrance Sunday services at Dorking and Leatherhead and Armed Forces Day 'Fly the Flag' ceremony. The Council also supported Merchant Navy Day in September 2016 by participating in the 'Fly the Ensign' campaign.



Local Authorities

- Surrey County Council has developed highly effective cross border relationships with neighbouring councils including Kent County Council, East Sussex County Council, West Sussex County Council, Hampshire County Council, Medway Council and Brighton and Hove Council and has established a South East Regional Cross Border Working Group, comprising both officers and councillors from Councils and the NHS. This has provided an effective mechanism for ensuring consistency of approach and the sharing of expertise developed by individual authorities. For example, Surrey and Hampshire County Councils are recipients of the 2016 MoD Gold Employer Recognition Scheme Award; Sussex Armed Forces Network hold National Military and Civilian Health Partnership Awards for education, training and research and Kent County Council's work on Sheds Projects improving Veteran's mental health, Service Children's Voice Conference and wider research.
- The South East Regional Cross Border Working Group has submitted an application to the Ministry of Defence Armed Forces Covenant Fund to promote understanding and awareness of issues affecting the Armed Forces Community within public authorities and other sectors in order to ensure that the Covenant is embedded in mainstream service delivery through the sharing of and building on best practice. The funding will be used to develop training packages for staff and councillors, increased online information and referral pathways. The outcome of the bid will be known in March 2017.

- Surrey County Council was recognised for its support to the Armed Forces with a coveted Gold Award from the Ministry of Defence. Surrey is among the first councils nationally to receive the highest award under the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. It was presented by HRH Prince William and Defence Secretary Rt Hon Sir Michael Fallon MP at a ceremony at the Royal Hospital Chelsea in London. The scheme rewards employers who actively support and promote the interests of former servicemen and women and their families as well as members of the Reserve forces. Surrey County Council employs over 25 reservists and many veterans, and is in the process of establishing a monitoring system to chart progress. Woking Borough Council was awarded the Silver Award in July 2016 at a prestigious event onboard HMS Victory, and Mole Valley District Council was awarded the Bronze Award.



- Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council were interviewed as part of the 'deep dives' to ascertain how the Covenant was being implemented within local authorities across the UK. The outcome of the research, which was carried out by Shared Intelligence on behalf of the Local Government Association and Forces in Mind Trust was written up within the 'Our Community Our Covenant' report and presented to the National Armed Forces Covenant Conference in November 2016. The full report can be viewed via <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-community-covenant/armed-forces-community-covenant#improving-the-delivery-of-local-covenant-pledges>

- On 1 December 2016, Surrey Armed Forces Champions and Task Force Commanders held a very useful and successful seminar sharing best practice and networking. The event, kindly hosted by 27 Regiment RLC, identified / looked at the three key actions that would be jointly taken by each of the local authorities and the Army over the coming months. These included future timetabling of key events, and provision of transport for the Army to remembrance events



within the county. In addition to these countywide meetings, the local authorities meet regularly with their Task Force Commander to take forward the identified work locally.

- 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.

- Points of Contact and Signposting Leaflets for both front line staff and the Military have been prepared in Guildford, Runnymede and Reigate and Tandridge
- A briefing document on the key issues facing the Armed Forces Community and local contacts has been produced and circulated to all Surrey County Councillors and district and borough councils, as well as being shared cross border with other County Councils as a template which others may wish to use.
- Local authorities have reviewed their Armed Forces web pages to promote community events and provide links to other relevant services.
- Briefings have been given to the majority of the Local/Joint Committees in Surrey on the achievements gained from taking forward the Covenant at a local level. In addition, a briefing on the Military was made to Tandridge Full Council on 21st July 2016 by 4 Armoured Medical Regiment and the Chairman and Advisor of Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board.
- Surrey County Council, Mole Valley District Council and Woking Borough Council attended an event at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst examining how the Army can more fully reflect the demographics of the UK in relation to the Black and Minority Ethnic Community (BAME).
- To acknowledge the sacrifices that members of the Armed Forces give for their country, Mole Valley District Council provides concessionary rates for Armed Forces personnel at Dorking Sports Centre, Leatherhead Leisure Centre and Dorking Halls.
- As part of a wider awareness campaign led by Surrey County Council, Borough and District Councils as well as other business and voluntary organisations were made aware of the benefits of volunteering as an Adult Volunteer within the Cadets. This included adverts on line, through the "*Surrey Matters*" magazine and advertising on local buses.