

Forces Connect South East



Outline of the project

The Forces Connect South East project is intended to promote a greater understanding and awareness of the issues affecting the Armed Forces Community within public authorities and to embed and mainstream the delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant across the South East.

The aim of the project is to deliver fair and consistent access to public services for the Armed Forces Community across the South East and to avoid them facing any disadvantage compared to any other citizens in the provision of public services

A cross border partnership comprising the NHS, County Councils of Kent, East and West Sussex, Hampshire as well as Brighton and Hove and Medway Unitary Authorities worked together in partnership to submit a successful bid for £321,300 to the Ministry of Defence's Armed Forces Covenant Fund to take this crucial work forward.

Funding will be used to develop and deliver a range of training packages for staff and councillors, as well as increased online information and referral pathways across the region for the Armed Forces Community and Veterans with the ultimate aim of rolling it out nationally

The Approach

This project builds upon the core infrastructure already established to support consistent delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant and aims to spread the exemplary practice already in place across participating partners. The FCSE project comprises of 6 complimentary elements, delivery against which will contribute to the overall success of the project:

1. To strengthen the role of Elected Councillor Armed Forces Champions
2. Increase the number of Officer-Covenant Service Champions (points of contact)
3. Develop and deliver bespoke Covenant training to customer-facing staff
4. Promote the Covenant and educate staff within public authorities
5. Support newly-recruited Service Leavers and Reservists to succeed in employment
6. Develop an electronic platform to share information

Project Outcomes

Full Details of project Outcomes and Milestones are set out in Annex 1, the Outcomes for the project are summarised in the table below:

Table 1. Project Outcomes

1. Councils have a good understanding of the needs of the Armed Forces Community and the expectations associated with effective delivery of the Covenant.
2. Clear integrated pathways ensure the Armed Forces Community benefit from improved access and signposting to relevant information, advice, guidance and support to ensure no disadvantage.
3. A partnership approach between the Armed Forces and Local Authorities is embedded within our ways of working
4. Delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant within public sector organisations across the South-East region is embedded and sustained.
5. Disadvantage in accessing crucial public services such as housing, schools and adult social care is reduced as there is wider awareness of the issues the Armed Forces Community face

Project Benefits

The Armed Forces Community

- Will have access to clear information and signposting
- Will be able to access support in transitioning to Civilian Life
- Will have support, if needed in their day-to-day dealings with public services 'outside the wire'.
- Will have clarity as to what can realistically be provided.

Front-Line Local Authority Staff

- Will be well-trained in the aims of the Covenant.
- Will understand areas of potential disadvantage such as housing, school admissions and access to health services.
- Will be given new referral pathways to enable the Armed Forces Community to access appropriate and timely support.
- Will have clarity and consistency as to what is required by the Armed Forces Community.

Project Specifics

Duration. 2 years June 2017 - June 2019

Timescales

Set Up	- 2 months June– July 2017
Mobilisation	- 2 months August – September
Delivery	- October 2017 – 30 th June 2019

Partners:

Table 2. Forces Connect South East partners

Partner	Lead Responsibilities
Surrey CC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lead Authority responsible for Project & Budget Mgt• Armed Forces Champions• Front Line Staff Training
Sussex and Kent Armed Forces Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Referral Pathways• Training Packages
Kent CC and Medway Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• App Technology
Hampshire CC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mentoring & Coaching, Admissions
SSAFA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Links to Service Charities and Case work
Royal British Legion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Links to Veterans Gateway
11 Brigade	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Links to Armed Forces (Tri-service)

For Further information contact:

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