

Armed Forces Covenant Fund Update – March 2018

Surrey has been very successful in bidding for grants from the Ministry of Defence Armed Forces Covenant Fund. Since the fund was first made available in 2012, Surrey has received £1,106,509.

The Covenant Fund has four main funding themes:

- Removing barriers to family life
- Extra support after service for those that need help
- Measures to integrate military and civilian communities and allow the Armed Forces community to participate as citizens
- Non-core healthcare services for veterans.

The administration of the Covenant Fund is in the process of being transferred from the MoD to an Independent Charitable Trust, which will enable additional flexibility. Priorities are set annually and we are awaiting the publication of these priorities for 2018/19, although the MoD has confirmed that there will be a priority to support Community Integration/Delivery of Local Services (for grants up to £20,000) as in previous years and this will open for applications in April 2018. Updates will be posted on

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covenant-fund-guidance-on-how-to-apply>

Funding Success since October 2017

- Brookwood and Pirbright Childrens Centre received £19,700 to support the mental and physical health of service children from pre-birth to 8 years old. It will support both adults and children within the families through enhanced parenting skills.
- Pirbright School received £20,000 towards construction of a new classroom where service children and their parents can be supported in their health and wellbeing needs.
- Peter Pan Pre-School at ATC (Pirbright) received £20,000 to install a natural woodland outdoor adventure area in the garden of the pre-school.
- Surrey County Council received £147,888 on behalf of the south east region to enhance local support for veterans (Surrey, Hampshire, Kent, East and West Sussex, Brighton & Hove and Medway. There are approximately 42,000 veterans in Surrey and 250,000 across the south east region. The funding is for a two year project to:
 - Carry out a needs and gap analysis looking at veteran drop in centres and similar provision across region including hubs
 - Develop a best practice guide for consistent sustainable veteran services across region
 - Roll out best practice, develop, share and promote locally tailored services that give consistent messages – this could include links to service charities and Regimental Associations, help accessing public services, support for families and Reservists as well as general advice and friendship

The project will be delivered by SMPL Solutions, who currently run two drop in centres – one in Woking and one in Aldershot. They will be working in partnership with ASDIC – Association of ex-Service Drop-In Centres – which will ensure consistent and high-quality delivery of services to veterans through existing and new drop-in centres in support of the Covenant.

Unfortunately the regional bid that was submitted to help improved the outcomes of young people from service families was unsuccessful.

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