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# ARMED FORCES COVENANT ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

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# FOREWORD

## Peter Martin

Chairman of Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board

Chairman of Surrey County Council



As Chairman, it gives me great pleasure to present to you our annual report for the Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board. We are proud of all we have accomplished on the Armed Forces Covenant during the financial year April 2017- March 2018 through working in partnership with 11 Infantry Brigade South East, the Lord-Lieutenant, the borough and district councils, Police and Crime Commissioner, Surrey Fire and Rescue, Service Charities, business and with our partners in Health, Education and Employment. As you will see, much has been achieved to build on our success after being awarded the Ministry of Defence's Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award last year, and I hope it gives you a greater understanding of the work we do to support our residents who are members of the Armed Forces community.

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise by the nation ensuring that those who serve or who have served in the armed forces, and their families, are treated fairly. We signed the Covenant in Surrey back in 2012, and work hard to ensure the Armed Forces community does not face disadvantage compared to any other citizen when accessing our services.

We have accomplished a lot, with not only our partners within the county, but also those across the south east region.

One major success has been Forces Connect South East, a cross border partnership led by Surrey to make it easier for members of the Armed Forces community to access public services through training provided to our front line staff.

I am delighted that our work in Surrey is seen as a national exemplar by the Ministry of Defence, and we have provided case studies for the national Covenant Annual Report for the second year running.

In both my roles as Chairman of the County Council and Chairman of the Partnership Board I have attended many commemorative events during the year. These have included the Farewell March to DMRC Headley Court in Dorking in September and the dedication of a new War Memorial for 101 firefighters who lost their lives during the First and Second World Wars in October.

I conclude by saying that it has been yet another successful year as we continue to work in partnership with the Military as one body to support members of the Armed Forces family and the community within which they live. It is a true partnership on both sides of 'the wire' as we work to ensure that no one is disadvantaged because of their service to the Nation.





# INTRODUCTION

This document sets out some of the key successes of the Board during the 2017-18 financial year. Achievements are themed under Engagement, Education and Young People, Employment, Health, Wellbeing and Welfare, Housing and Recognition and Remembrance. The report aims to promote a greater understanding of the work being carried out for the Armed Forces community in Surrey as well as enabling ideas and good practice to be shared.

All Surrey local authorities have appointed an elected councillor 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 our achievements are contained within this report.



# ENGAGEMENT

## Chairman's Priorities

In May 2017 Peter Martin was appointed Chairman of Surrey County Council. In his first speech as Chairman he highlighted that the Military would be one of his two priorities during his term of office. As Chairman of the County Council, he was also appointed Chairman of the Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board (SCMPB).

## Forces Connect South East

Surrey County Council has led a successful cross border partnership with Hampshire, Kent, East and West Sussex County Councils, Brighton and Hove and Medway Councils, the Sussex, Kent and Medway Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), Royal British Legion and SSAFA looking at sharing best practice and promoting joint opportunities. This partnership has been successful in applying for a £321,300 Covenant Fund grant to help us to continue to support members of the armed forces, their families and ex-servicemen and women by providing training opportunities for staff and partners. The project, known as Forces Connect South East (FCSE), has six key elements:

- To strengthen the role of Elected Councillor Armed Forces Champions
- Increase the number of Armed Forces Service Champions within public authorities
- To develop and deliver bespoke Covenant training to customer-facing staff
- Promote the Covenant and educate staff within public authorities

- Support newly-recruited Service Leavers and Reservists to succeed in employment
- Develop an electronic platform to share information.

The FCSE project, which started in the summer, is going from strength to strength. Following the appointment of a Programme Officer, a training package has been agreed, delivery partners appointed and an e-learning module launched. Face to face training began in March 2018.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) is planning to roll the whole training package out nationally and has provided additional funding to help do this.

## Armed Forces Covenant Conference

The annual Surrey Armed Forces Covenant Conference was held on 1 February 2018 at The Princess Royal Barracks, Deepcut. It considered the current national and local priorities, including Women 100 and the centenary of the First World War. Delegates were able to explore issues further during a series of workshops looking at accessing the Armed Forces Covenant Fund and the benefits of signing up to the Ministry of Defence's Employer Recognition Scheme.

## Armed Forces Covenant Audit

An audit has been carried out to look at progress against the commitments made by Surrey County Council when it signed the Armed Forces Community Covenant in 2012. The audit confirmed that Surrey County Council has taken their commitments seriously and that consistent and enthusiastic progress has been maintained over the past five years. A number of short, medium and longer term actions have been recommended which will be incorporated into the appropriate action plans. The Ministry of Defence has expressed an interest in the approach.





# ENGAGEMENT CONTINUED

## Sharing Best Practice

Surrey County Council gave a presentation to the County Council Network Localism Group to share some of the work that has been done to implement the Covenant and to see how best practice can continue to be shared between authorities wider than the south east region.

The sharing of best practice is a key priority of SCMPB. Two Surrey case studies were published in the 2017 National Armed Forces Covenant Report. The first sets out the impact of funding provided for classrooms and outdoor learning for Blackdown Pre-School at Princess Royal Barracks on the Deepcut Station which provides a much needed service to the local Service families and acts as a hub for the local community. The second sets out some of the work that Surrey County Council has carried out to support Reservists as an Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award holder.

@SurreyMilitary Twitter account continues to grow.

## Grant Success

During the course of the year, a further £547,636 of Armed Forces Covenant Grant funding was brought into Surrey through successful projects. This brings the total awarded to date since 2012 to £1,106,509.

## Building Relationships

Positive relationships between the local authorities and their local Army links (Task Force Commanders) have continued to enhance over the past year. A successful training/networking event was held at the Welsh Guard's Officers' Mess where a number of examples of best practice were shared, followed by a Team Bonding Command Tasks exercise which saw teams of delegates compete as 'countries' against each other in a battle for security and key resources.

Surrey County Council has developed an excellent relationship with 256 (City of London) Field Hospital, which although part of London District in terms of Army structure, is geographically located a few hundred metres from County Hall. This relationship has resulted in soldiers in uniform being able to attend appropriate ceremonial events at County Hall. Additionally, as a result of the relationship, the Field Hospital has made good links with The Royal Surrey County Hospital, Guildford.

## Armed Forces Covenant Signings

Surrey Police and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner signed the Armed Forces Covenant with the Deputy Commander of 11 Infantry Brigade and the Commanding Officer of DMRC Headley Court. Frimley Park Hospital and Surrey Association of Local Councils also signed the Covenant during the year.



# EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE

## Cadet Force Expansion

The new Combined Cadet Force (CCF) established under the Cadet Expansion Scheme at Ash Manor School in partnership with the Grenadier Guards is now up and running. This is the first state school CCF in Surrey established under the scheme.

## Cadet Inspections

Task Force Commanders have continued to carry out Annual Cadet Inspections within their linked authorities in Surrey.

## Education Support

Primary schools in the catchment of Army Training Centre (Pirbright) have come together to consider bids to the Covenant Fund to support service children and their integration within the wider community.

A number of successful bids have been received covering pastoral support, reading support, parenting support and a capital project to create an additional room where service children can be supported and families can come together.

The regular newsletter to schools with service children setting out advice and guidance continues to be produced.

## Challenge Week

Woking Borough Council, working with 11 Brigade and Institute of Statecraft via a Shared Outcomes programme, helped to engage with three local schools, Winston Churchill, Woking High and Bishop David Brown School to run a Challenge Week at Longmoor Training Camp for 14-16 year olds during Autumn half term. Twelve students participated in the programme, which is likely to be rolled out Surrey wide in future.



# EMPLOYMENT

## Reserve Forces

Newly formed on the 1 September 2017, 4th Battalion Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment currently Headquartered in Crawley, will move to Redhill in April 2018. They have already developed close links with Surrey Fire and Rescue Headquarters at Wray Park, Reigate. Recruiting numbers are very high already, especially at the newly re-badged Farnham Reserve Centre.

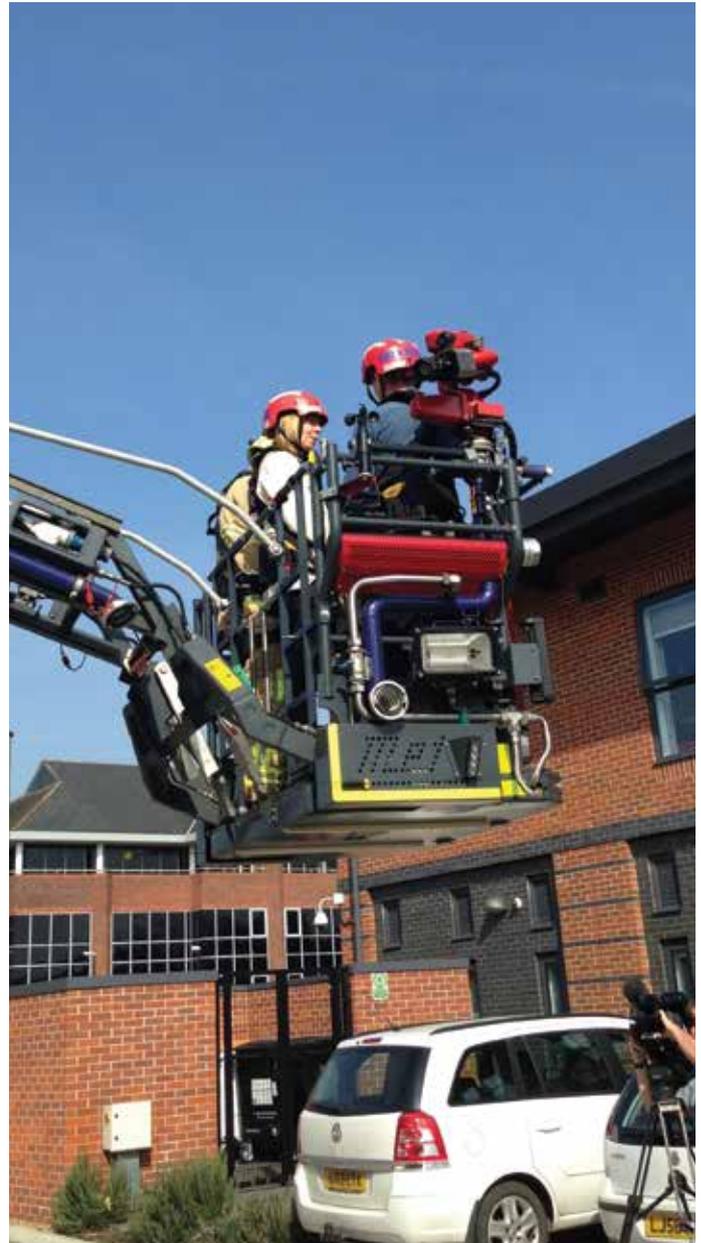
## Transferable Skills

A number of veterans and Reservists on Surrey Fire and Rescue's Guildford Green Watch worked with Forces Welfare TV to create a video clip shared via social media on the benefits of employing members of the Armed Forces community, highlighting some of the transferrable skills they bring to Surrey. This received over 30,000 views on Forces Welfare Facebook, and was shared widely through Surrey's social media.

## Armed Forces Employment Plan

Surrey County Council has developed a new Strategic Armed Forces Employment Plan and Working Group to ensure the Council has an evidenced, programmed and organised approach to current and ex-armed forces, in relation to employment and has resources committed to its delivery. The plan includes the following key activities:

- Advertising jobs on Career Transition Partnership website - across different grades and careers
- Promoting Gold Employer status on all job adverts – every advert now includes the logo, as well as the disability confident and Business Disability Forum logos
- Supporting Reservists and ex-service personnel with new policy, guidance and online staff network – modelling best practice of welfare and support and time required to undertake training and development. Using our new Jive space to create a private group for staff to share experiences and provide peer support
- Better monitoring and progress reporting – creating new recruitment and employee codes and monitoring progress of applicants and staff from a military background.



## Supporting Reservists

As an Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award winner, Surrey County Council is a strong advocate of the Armed Forces community, employing over 25 Reservists and many Veterans. It recognises the huge value and contribution that staff who are Reservists and Veterans make to the Council.

The Council held a thank you reception for its Reservists (and those working in the district and borough councils and Surrey Police), which it used to explore further ways in which it could support them. It also provided an opportunity to meet Reservist colleagues.

## Gold Employer Recognition Scheme Award

Building on the Gold Employer Recognition Award, Surrey County Council is now a member of the Gold Alumni Group which aims to identify and share best practice and promote the benefits of the Gold award. The group is chaired by WS Atkins working in partnership with Lt-Gen Richard Nugee as a sounding board for new initiatives from the Ministry of Defence.

## Employee Survey

During January 2018, Surrey County Council undertook an internal survey asking colleagues whether they have any connection to the armed forces – whether a close family member or partner was, or is in the armed forces, whether they were in the armed forces or are a Reservist. The results of the survey will be used to keep in touch and further target support available. In spring 2018 Woking Borough Council will undertake a similar survey.

## Guaranteed Interviews

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council has introduced guaranteed interviews for ex-service personnel who meet the minimum criteria.

All recruitment application forms received by Woking Borough Council are monitored at regular intervals and Woking has pledged at least an interview to anyone with links to the Armed Forces including spouses, subject to meeting the minimum requirements for the post.



## Sandhurst Leadership Challenge

Each year up to 10 Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council employees attend the Sandhurst Leadership Challenge course. This is of great benefit to attendees:

*“The Sandhurst Leadership Challenge was great fun and a really good opportunity to think about leadership in a different environment. Undertaking a range of different challenges with people you have never met before, was a great test of teamwork and leadership skills and in the debrief after each challenge it was interesting to see what had worked well or more often where we had gone wrong! I’ve been able to use lots of learning from the day to think about how I can work more effectively on collaborative projects with colleagues from across the council and in partner organisations.”*

*“Attending the Sandhurst Leadership Day has had a big impact on me: I constantly find myself reflecting on my approach to team work and leadership, using my experiences from the day, and learning from the other participants”.*

## Employer Engagement

Surrey County Council and Woking Borough Council continue to be active members of the Regional Employer Engagement Group hosted by SE RFCA (South East Reserve Forces and Cadets Association) which looks at ways of promoting the benefits of the relationship between defence and business.

Business Breakfasts continue to be a key way of promoting the benefits of a good relationship between defence and businesses. Woking Means Business is a great example of such a breakfast briefing which was held in October 2017 at the HG Wells Conference Centre, where Defence Relation Management attended to promote key messages first hand.

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.



# HEALTH, WELLBEING AND WELFARE

## Health Champions

The Surrey based CCGs have been working with the Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board to take forward the Armed Forces Covenant within Surrey. The Community Integration Task Group hosts the newly formed Surrey Armed Forces Health Champions Group whose purpose is to ensure that health delivers on the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant. This has now expanded to include working across Sustainability and Transformation Plan footprints including Surrey Heartlands which represents 75% of the Surrey population. New commissioning intentions will be published in April 2018 and these will include specific details of how they will demonstrate support to the Armed Forces Covenant.

## Armed Forces Carers

Building on the commitment to the Surrey Carers Memorandum of Understanding 'Together for Carers' the Armed Forces Carers Support service hosted by Action for Carers Surrey has supported over 80 families including 22 young carers during the past year.

A new 'whole family' coordinator for the service has been recruited which has allowed an expanded reach into the community to offer a wider range of services including manual handling, GP Carer Break payments via Defence Medical Services and Healios which is an online family intervention service delivering high quality evidence-based psychological intervention and skill-building to Carers of people with mental health problems including PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder).

Resources continue to be developed including a staff Armed Forces Training resource for professionals who work with carers, some new armed forces specific carer information leaflets and carer webpages. In addition, funding has been received from NHS England to produce an animated armed forces young carers film resource to be launched April 2018.

## Unit Welfare Officers

A successful workshop with key service managers from Health, Education and Housing was held with 11 Brigade and Unit Welfare Officers to review current actions to implement the covenant and focus work going forward. This work will be built into the SCMPB action plan going forward.

## Veterans' Hubs

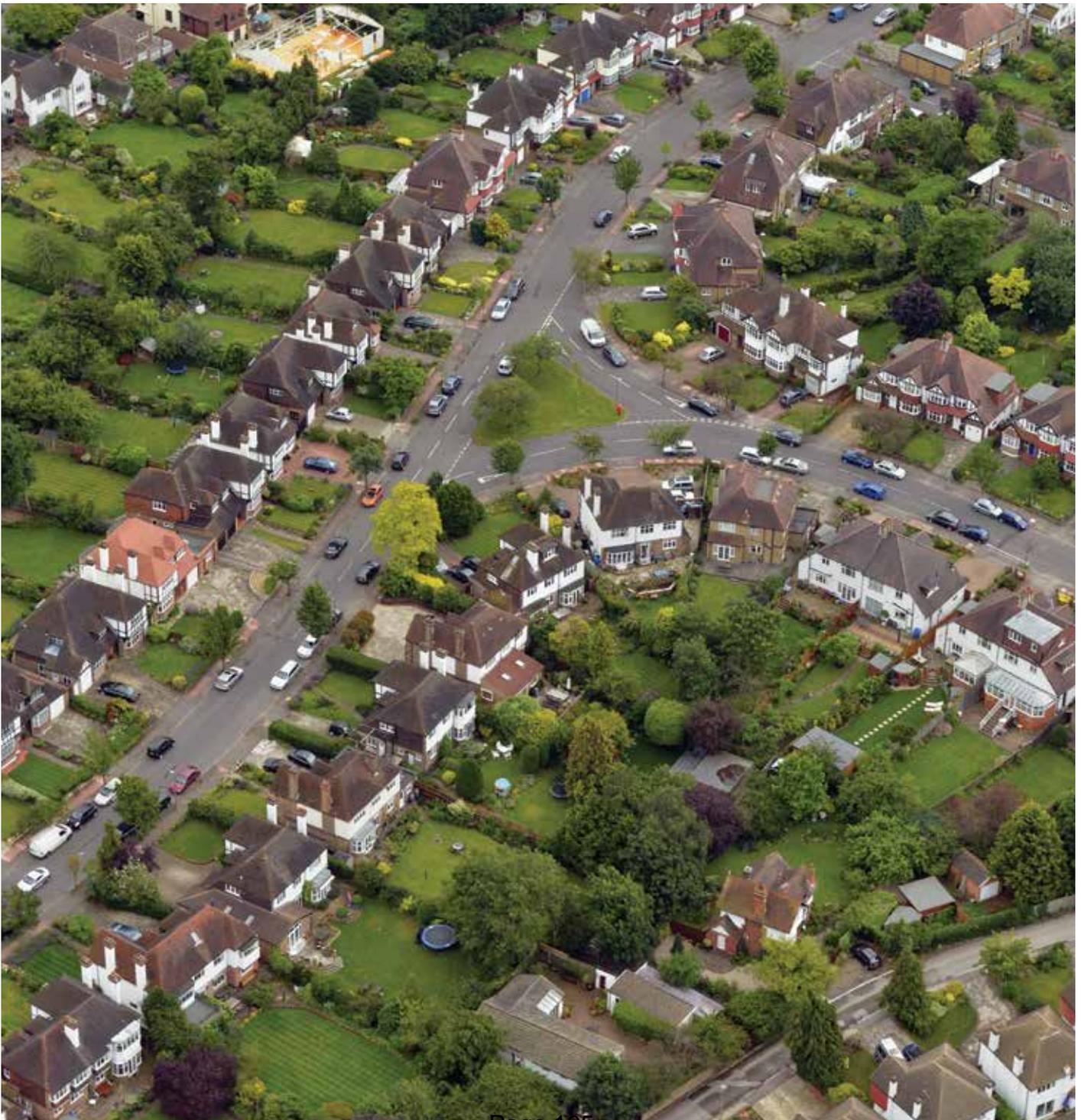
A successful cross border Covenant Fund bid was submitted to the Ministry of Defence to carry out a needs/gap analysis of veteran hubs and drop-ins across the South East region, develop a drop-in toolkit and promote additional hubs, where appropriate across the region. This project will be taken forward for a two year period from April 2018.

# HOUSING

## Housing Liaison and Allocation

Housing liaison across Surrey is working well, and to date there are no strategic housing issues outstanding. This has been achieved through having a nominated Housing Lead on behalf of all the local authorities in Surrey, based at Woking Borough Council.

Woking Borough Council monitors its housing allocation on a quarterly basis for applicants with links to the Armed Forces.



# RECOGNITION AND REMEMBRANCE

## Memorial Dedication

Surrey Fire and Rescue Service held a memorial dedication service to the 101 Surrey firefighters who lost their lives in WWI and WWII. Across Surrey there was no single place to remember and reflect. The Cricket Pavilion at Surrey Fire and Rescue Headquarters in Reigate, which was in need of repair, was identified as an appropriate site with a vision for it to be completed by 2018 at the end of the 100 years of remembrance period. Over the past 4 years, using the skills of the firefighters, the building was restored to its former glory and a cairn raised in memory of those fallen. It is now a poignant place which connects those who served in the Brigade and went to war and subsequently died defending our freedoms, including the boys who were schooled at Wray Park and did the same before them. Some of these people would have used the pavilion and played cricket on these green and pleasant lands in the heart of Surrey and although none of those named on both memorials ever came home, there will always be a connection for them from whatever corner of the world they now lay back to us. We will remember and honour them. This was a very high profile event attended by the Lord-Lieutenant, the High Sheriff and the Chairman of Surrey County Council.

## Freedom Parades

DMRC Headley Court is due to move to the Midlands in summer 2018. On 29 September 2017, Headley Court carried out a farewell march through Dorking town centre with the Band of the Household Cavalry. They were inspected by HRH Sophie, Countess of Wessex.

During the year the Army Training Centre (ATC) (Pirbright) was given the Freedom of both Woking and Guildford Borough Council areas. ATC (Pirbright) exercised their right to march through Woking in April 2017 and through Guildford in June 2017 at two spectacular events which were very well attended by members of the public.

## Commemorations

On Friday 10 November, County Hall was lit up with a spectacular display of falling poppies as part of the County Council's Remembrance Day commemorations to pay respect to generations of Service men and women who have lost their lives in the line of duty. The event, which was supported by the Royal British Legion, also saw the unveiling of two Silent Soldiers outside the main entrance of County Hall.

Plans for First World War 100 commemorations are being co-ordinated in Surrey through the Recognise and Remember Task Group of the Surrey Civilian Military Partnership Board.





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## Armed Forces Week

The annual Choral Matins at Guildford Cathedral took place at the start of Armed Forces Week in June with the Lord-Lieutenant raising the Armed Forces Flag. There then followed a parade and full inspection of the tri-service cadets, watched by the High Sheriff and all Surrey's Mayors.

All Surrey District and Borough Councils participated in Armed Forces Week by raising the Flag and some, including Woking, held a parade in the Town Centre.

## War Memorials

Surrey Heritage Services has been working with the Armed Forces Champions and the Cadets

locally to document all war memorials in Surrey. This has been a very successful educational project with Cadets learning a considerable amount about many of Surrey's service men and women who lost their lives in both world wars. This has helped to chronicle Surrey's active participation in both wars.

## Muslim Burial Ground Peace Garden

Woking Borough Council, 11 Infantry Brigade, 27 Regiment RLC, Woking High School and Horsell Common Preservation Society held an inaugural commemoration service at the Muslim Burial Ground Peace Garden on 16 July 2017 attended by over 250 people. The event was attended by Sophena Chisembele the daughter of the last soldier buried at the Muslim Burial Ground.

# INDEX

<b>Foreword</b>	Page 2	<b>Health, Wellbeing and Welfare</b>	Page 14
<b>Introduction</b>	Page 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health Champions</li> <li>• Armed Forces Carers</li> <li>• Unit Welfare Officers</li> <li>• Veterans' Hubs</li> </ul>	
<b>Engagement</b>	Page 6		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairman's Priorities</li> <li>• Forces Connect South East</li> <li>• Armed Forces Covenant Conference</li> <li>• Armed Forces Covenant Audit</li> <li>• Sharing Best Practice</li> <li>• Grant Success</li> <li>• Building Relationships</li> <li>• Armed Forces Covenant Signings</li> </ul>		<b>Housing</b>	Page 15
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Liaison and Allocation</li> </ul>	
<b>Education and Young People</b>	Page 10	<b>Recognition and Remembrance</b>	Page 16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cadet Force Expansion</li> <li>• Cadet Inspections</li> <li>• Education Support</li> <li>• Challenge Week</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memorial Dedication</li> <li>• Freedom Parades</li> <li>• Commemorations</li> <li>• Armed Forces Week</li> <li>• War Memorials</li> <li>• Muslim Burial Ground Peace Garden</li> </ul>	
<b>Employment</b>	Page 11		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reserve Forces</li> <li>• Transferable Skills</li> <li>• Armed Forces Employment Plan</li> <li>• Supporting Reservists</li> <li>• Gold Employer Recognition Scheme Award</li> <li>• Employee Survey</li> <li>• Guaranteed Interviews</li> <li>• Sandhurst Leadership Challenge</li> <li>• Employer Engagement</li> </ul>			

# SURREY CIVILIAN MILITARY PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEMBERS

<b>Peter Martin (Chairman)</b>	Chairman of Surrey County Council
<b>Michael Cannon</b>	Chairman of Community Integration Task Group
<b>Brigadier Paul Evans OBE DL</b>	Chairman of Recognise and Remember Task Group
<b>Mr Michael More-Molyneux</b>	Lord-Lieutenant of Surrey
<b>Colonel Simon Browne OBE</b>	Deputy Commander, 11 Infantry Brigade (SE)
<b>Canon Peter Bruinvels</b>	Surrey County Council Civilian-Military Liaison Adviser
<b>Col Bob Crawley OBE JP</b>	SSAFA Surrey
<b>Colonel Patrick Crowley</b>	South East Reserve Forces and Cadets Association
<b>Debbie Goldsmith</b>	Army Training Centre (Pirbright)
<b>Cllr John Kingsbury</b>	Surrey Leaders Representative
<b>Major Carol Miller MBE</b>	Army Training Centre (Pirbright)
<b>Mr David Munro</b>	Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey
<b>Steve Owen-Hughes</b>	Assistant Chief Fire Officer, Surrey Fire and Rescue Service
<b>Louise Punter</b>	Surrey Chambers of Commerce
<b>Karen Simmonds</b>	Surrey County Council Public Health
<b>Craig Spence</b>	Royal British Legion
<b>Mrs Karen Whelan</b>	Surrey Chief Executives Representative

Supported by officers from Surrey County Council

For further information please contact: [armedforces@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:armedforces@surreycc.gov.uk)

