

Surrey Armed Forces Covenant Conference 2022

15 March 2022 – ATC Pirbright

Brief Summary:

- Tickets sold out two weeks ahead of conference.
- 120 attended, plus 20 soldiers from ATC Pirbright.
- 100% of those who provided feedback said they found the conference informative.
- The variety of speakers and venue were very popular.
- Some really positive suggestions for the next conference have already been received.

Feedback received via email:

- my overriding impression of the day was a highly successful event, thank you
- I just wanted to drop you a quick line to say congratulations on the fantastic event you organised yesterday. It really was very informative and you had some really good themes being presented.
- I am sorry that I missed the Falklands presentation but thought that the 11 Bde presentation was the best I have heard and the two recorded messages were powerful, truthful and certainly made an impact on the audience.
- It was a really good day full of interesting developments for the present and the future while also remembering our past.
- It was a very enjoyable day and I hope to come again next year.
- I found the presentations very interesting, and it is great to be back to meeting face-to-face!

Responses via online Feedback Form:

What key point will you take away with you from the conference?



Ideas for veteran hubs (activities)

Surrey is setting the standard, but there is still opportunity to improve even more.

The information about how the afghan interpreters are being helped was very helpful

How proactive Surrey is in the Veteran support space

there is a lot of change in the military.

That there is so much work gonig on that we can all connect with and tap into to improve our veteran experience. The network of people working on this project are all so friendly, helpful and inspirational.

Bravery and incredible service of our armed forces

Partnership is essential

Potential for more cross organisation support

All of the information passed on

The make up of the army in the area, the understanding of what the covenant is even though I have served 27years

Awareness of the work being done by organisations other than my own (e.g. county council, other NHS trusts)

Lived experience

The need to maintain efforts to highlight and demonstrate the benefits and responsibilities of signing the Armed Forces Covenant.

Information about the support services available to military personnel and the accommodation of refugees when coming to Surrey and the UK. V useful in my work

What did you like most about the event?



In person. Guest speakers

Covenant/Armed Forces Act brief, good quality speakers in general

Networking

That the speakers were from all different areas of expertise, and that there was time for Q&A after each speaker

the networking opportunities.

Hearing personal stories, which were woven into a number of the presentations was so powerful. Particularly Col Sam Shepherd - such an incredible journey.

Person testimonies eg Falklands

Very varied presentations

Interesting speakers

The set up

How passionate everyone is about working together to make it work

Opportunity to meet and network in person. And lunch, thank you!

Afghan Refugee transcripts and associated speakers. Also liked the Falklands speaker

networking

What did you like least?



Hurried rush at the end to finish on time.

If I have to put something here, it's with gritted teeth as nothing was bad about the day, it would be Falklands 40 - not the content (which was good) but it's inclusion for this particular audience. Maybe it was just at the wrong part of the agenda. It was a great presentation I must be clear.

The chairs

It was too short, an extra hour would have allowed for more discussion

Nothing at all. I just didn't have time to get around to speak to everyone!

Intricate detail of some of the projects.

Nothing !

Very little mention of the Cadet Forces especially our urgent need for CFAVs and the good work that cadets do in Community engagement

Nil

It was perfectly pitched

Would have been good to maybe start earlier and finish later, but space out the talks with a morning and afternoon coffee break to provide more networking opportunities.

Jenna Clare - I didn't like the point she made more or less saying covenant legislation was optional (not in so many words). It undermines a lot of the excellent FCSE work

nothing

Lunch was a bit quick as speakers overran in the morning session.

Suggestions for next conference:



Keep the format - like the different key speakers rather than one host

A brief on employing reservists; there are lots of rumblings on the future of reserve support to UK ops. Getting it in the minds of stakeholders early would only benefit the soldier and employer.

Having someone speak from the nhs would be nice.

The lunch break could be extended - or less time on a photograph, to enable more networking as this is normally where the magic happens

none

I don't think there is anything I could suggest as an improvement. The venue and staff were incredibly welcoming and the presentations were so useful and informative.

Bigger market place at lunchtime / registration to show partners contributions , and maybe some vignettes from partners , just one or two minutes long to maybe start the event to show full range of partners to the covenant Maybe 6-10 people

More mention of the Cadets and CFAVs, both the good work we do with regard to Community engagement and Army footprint and our urgent need for CFAVs

No it was brilliant

Would be great to get an overview of service families accommodation in Surrey, and of families who may not live on a patch (and what we can do to support them), especially with the Future Accommodation Model coming in.

Maybe fewer agenda items as time was tight although Chairman did an excellent job getting us back on track

would love to have the youth voice group present next year

I think we should continue to maintain a focus on the Covenant and ERS with perhaps one interest item on the agenda.

Clearer signage to the conference when on Pirbright camp. The Army notebooks were a hit

Other comments:



Excellent conference, I took away lots of new information that I will integrate into my job

Thank you. A good, well run event with quality speakers.

I am more confused now about due regard than I was previously as related to healthcare there needs to be more concrete guidance in relation to how it is put into place.

A really well run & informative day. Thank you

Huge thank you for allowing us to present our work and make connections. I look forwards to future events where we can continue to share and network to make a difference to the veteran experience. Please don't interrupt speakers and start clapping when they are still speaking as the time is running out. I found that so incredibly rude.

Excellent and inspiring day

The ABF would love to talk at the next one ease

Great day all round, thanks. And good to do it at Pirbright, which really focuses us on who we're here to support.

Excellent conference. Thank you so much. lovely to be able to do something in person too

I heard one interesting comment from an ex serviceman who thought that we were placing too much emphasis on veterans initiatives, trying to solve a problem that really did not exist. An interesting comment which perhaps we need to debate at some point

It was a really well organised conference with good speakers from a variety of backgrounds which kept the day interesting. An enjoyable and friendly day