



Community Covenant

AN ARMED FORCES COVENANT BETWEEN WIGAN
COUNCIL, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHARITABLE
AND VOLUNTARY SECTORS, THE CIVILIAN
COMMUNITY OF WIGAN

AND

THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY IN WIGAN



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE



Community Covenant



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

We, the undersigned, agree to work and act together to honour the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

Signed:

Brigadier N O Fitzgerald, MBE
On behalf of the Ministry of Defence

Signed:

Lord P R C Smith, Leader of the Council
On behalf of Wigan Borough Council

Signed: *Richard Jordan*



Lieutenant Colonel R J P Jordan
On behalf of the Army

Signed: *[Signature]*



Lieutenant M Walker
On behalf of the Royal Navy

Signed: *Andy Manktelow*



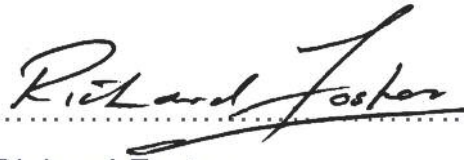
Squadron Leader A Manktelow
On behalf of the Royal Air Force

Signed: *[Signature]*



Colonel M Underhill, OBE
On behalf of Reserve Forces & Cadets Association

Signed:

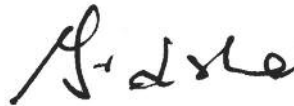


Richard Foster

On behalf Royal British Legion and Armed Forces Charities



Signed:



Tony Bradshaw, Vice Chair

On behalf of Wigan Leisure & Culture Trust



Signed:




Kathryn Johnston

Community Outreach & Partnership Manager

On behalf of Job Centre Plus



Signed:



Trish Anderson, Chief Officer

On behalf of NHS Wigan Borough Clinical Commissioning Group



Wigan Borough
Clinical Commissioning Group

Signed:

Ashley Crumbley

Ashley Crumbley, Chief Executive
On behalf of Wigan & Leigh Housing



Signed:

Shaun Donnellan

Chief Superintendent Shaun Donnellan
On behalf of Greater Manchester Police



Signed:

E. E. Davies

On behalf of Greater Manchester Probation Service



Signed:

Deborah Partington

Deborah Partington
Special Service Network Director
Greater Manchester West NHS Trust



On this Saturday, 29 June 2013

The Armed Forces Community Covenant

An enduring Covenant between the People of the United Kingdom, Her Majesty's Government

- and -

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of the Crown and their families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the Realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole Nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most, such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society: it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the Country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding the Covenant.

Section 1: General Principles of the Armed Forces Community Covenant

The Armed Forces Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community. It is intended to complement the Armed Forces Covenant, which outlines the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces, at the local level.

The purpose of this Community Covenant is to encourage support for the Armed Forces Community working and residing in Wigan and to recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of the Armed Forces Community, particularly those who have given the most. This includes in-service and ex-service personnel, their families and widow(er)s in Wigan.

For Wigan Council and partner organisations, the Community Covenant represents an opportunity to bring their knowledge, experience and expertise to bear on the provision of help and advice to members of the Armed Forces Community. It also presents an opportunity to build upon existing good work on other initiatives such as the Welfare Pathway.

For the Armed Forces Community, the Community Covenant encourages the integration of service life into civilian life and encourages members of the Armed Forces Community to help their local community.

This document explains how we will deliver the Armed Forces Community Covenant. It details our intentions, pledges and the approach that will be taken in order to ensure that the Covenant is a success for the Armed Forces, public, private and third sector as well as the wider community. As such, this Covenant supersedes all and any previous versions held by individual signatories.

The Armed Forces have a long history in Wigan

Whilst there is little physical evidence today of Wigan's military past, apart from the street names of Barrack Square and Barrack Yard. The modern Borough of Wigan is the home to the Territorial Army, the Sea Cadets and the Air Training Corps.

Wigan Borough has a long, proud and interesting connections to the military, going back as far as the Roman occupation of Britain, when there was a garrison based in the area. During the middle-ages there was William de Bradshaigh, the then Lord of the Manor at Haigh, who fought against the Scots.

Wigan and Leigh townships both played a role in the English Civil War, Wigan remained loyal to the crown, and was headquarters for the Earl of Derby, whilst Leigh was a Parliamentary strong hold.

One of the final battles of the Civil War was fought here, known as the Battle of Wigan Lane. During the battle one of the leading Royalists – Sir Thomas Tyldesley was killed. Following the battle The Earl of Derby, was sheltered by a local innkeeper, and managed to escape to Worcester, only to be captured later and brought back north to Bolton where he was executed. A monument was later erected to commemorate Sir Thomas Tyldesley on Wigan Lane and can still be seen today.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, with Britain at war with the revolutionary France and locally the start of the industrial revolution, there was a company of regular troops, stationed in Wigan. Their role was to recruit and partly to support the civil power in the event of unrest or even attempted revolution. It was during this period that Nathaniel Eckersley from Hindley served as a soldier with the Duke of Wellington in Spain. At this time the majority of officers serving belonged to the upper classes and therefore purchased their commissions. Nathaniel, however, rose through the ranks to become a Lieutenant Colonel. After the Napoleonic Wars had ended, Nathaniel returned to Hindley, where he commanded the Yeomanry (a troop of volunteer, part-time cavalry) who were responsible for maintaining law and order in the area.

In 1848, revolution was again breaking out in Europe. It was at this time that Sir John Gerard of Garswood, formed a troop of yeomanry. These yeomanry troops went on to form what today, we know as the Territorial Army. It was around this time that

Wigan like many other towns of the time built what was known as the Drill Hall in around 1884 in Powell Street. Linked to the Wigan Troop of Duke of Lancaster's Yeomanry (DLOY) in 1880 and even through the DLOY was disbanded in the 1992 the name remains

in Wigan (apart from a short periods in between) when they were known as D Sqn (DLOY) RMLY.

At the end of the nineteenth century, many local men joined the local regiments that fought in the Boer War, in South Africa. These troops are remember in a monument that has been restored and stands once more as a reminder of those local troops that lost their lives in this war.

With the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, again many men volunteered to join the Armed Forces, but as the War went on, conscription was introduced with the famous poster of Lord Horatio Herbert Kitchener, who was Secretary of State at the time saying 'Your Country needs YOU!' The Earl of Crawford was not exempt from call-up, and was the first Member of the House of Lords to serve as a private soldier; before being promoted in 1916 to a Cabinet Seat under Asquith's coalition.

During the First World War the Park at Winstanley Hall, Wigan was used as a transit camp and the Hall itself used for wounded. Billinge Hospital was used as a military hospital too during the War, with the last military patients being discharged in May 1919.

Many of the Towns engineering works were converted to the production of ammunition as part of the War effort.

The Cenotaph in Wigan Town Centre is situated in the grounds of Wigan Parish Church and was unveiled on 17 October 1925, amongst the dignitaries attending the ceremony, was Colonel Sir Henry Darlington, Commanding Officer of 1/5 Manchester, Wigan's Territorial Army. Leigh also, has a cenotaph sited in the Church Gardens. The names of those who lost their lives in the Second World War joined those who had given their lives in the First World War on the cenotaphs. Memorials to those that lost their lives in the both Wars can be seen in the various townships of the modern Borough of Wigan.

During the First World War Leigh was home to a prisoner of War Camp, based at what was later to become Etherstone Mill. It was home to over 1,800 prisoners, who arrived by train at the Leigh Station during February 1915 till the end of the war, following their transfer from Templemore in Ireland.

The history of the Sea Cadets goes back to the end of the Crimean War and 1899 the Sea Cadets received Royal recognition when Queen Victoria presented the Windsor Unit with uniforms, an event now known as the birthday of the Sea Cadets. However, it was not until 1919 that the Admiralty officially recognised the cadet units and changed the name to the Navy League Sea Cadet Corps. By the outbreak of the Second World War the number of units had increased from 34 to 100, based around the UK. Today Wigan is home to T.S. Sceptre, Wigan's Sea Cadets, based at Brookhouse Terrace on the outskirts of the town centre.

Wigan is also home to Squadron 723 (Wigan) Squadron, Air Training Corps based at Canal Street, Wigan near to the Territorial Army base. The history of the Royal Air Force (RAF) dates back to the First World War, originally part of the Army known as the Royal Flying Corps. During the 1930's with the Second World War looming, the Air Cadet Organisation was formed in 1938, from the idea of Air Commodore John Adrian Chamier, who had served in the army, the Royal Flying Corps and the RAF. Chamier knew from his own experience that aviation would play a key role in a war situation, and that the sooner training could be undertaken the better prepared and experienced a person would be in combat.

1939 saw the deterioration of international relations, and saw the British Government under the leadership of Neville Chamberlain to consider preparations for war against Nazi ruled Germany. This meant the introduction of plans for limited conscription applying to only single men between the ages of 20 and 22 under the Military Training Act 1939. With the declaration of war against Germany on 3 September 1939, parliament passed a more wide reaching measure and The National Service (Armed Forces) Act was imposed, on all males between the ages of 18 and 41, having to register for service. Those medically unfit were exempt as were those in key industries such as baking, farming, medicine and engineering. December 1941, saw parliament pass a second National Service Act to widen the scope of conscription widen to all unmarried women and all childless widows between the ages of 20 and 30.

With the on-set of the Second World War Wigan once again, saw many of its engineering works converted to the production of ammunition. The town's cotton mills also played a role in the war-effort producing duck-weft for the manufacturing of uniforms specifically for hot-climate fighting.

The local T.A. along with Boy Scouts and Guides organised door to door collections of aluminium and scrap as part of the war effort to produce much needed weapons. Wigan also raised funds to buy a Spit-fire fighter.

The Borough was home to a prisoner of war camp known as Camp 50 at Garswood Park Estate, Ashton-in-Makerfield at what is now the site of St Edmund Arrowsmith and Byrchall High Schools. Housing mainly Italian prisoners, it also housed German prisoners from 1944. The Park was also home to American Troops who were preparing for the D-Day landings. The end of the war in Europe and Japan, in 1945, saw the start of the demobilising of thousands of men and women who had served in the war. Preparations for this had started, in 1944, with the Reinstatement in Civil Employment Act, which allowed both men and women coming back from war to claim back their old jobs in 'civvy street' provided their employer was still in business. Also from 1945 women were no longer subject to National Service.

Despite the War having ended there was still a need to maintain high levels of military manpower in parts of the world that Britain had strong on-going commitments. The Government took the decision that these commitments could only be met by continuing National Service in peacetime, and in 1947 the National Service Act was passed by parliament. The Act came into force in January 1949. All physically fit males between the ages of 17 and 21 had to serve in one of the Armed Forces for an 18-month period. After which they remained on the reserve list for another four years. During this time they were liable to be called to serve with their units but on no more than three occasions, for 20 days maximum. In 1950 the National Service Act was amended and the length of service extended to 2-years. National Service ended in 1960 however, the last national servicemen were discharged in 1963.

We are immensely proud of our Armed Forces, particularly those from Wigan Borough, those returning or who are stationed here. We hope that this Covenant will demonstrate our commitment to all of our Armed Services Personnel, veterans and their families.

Section 2: Participants

This Armed Forces Community Covenant is made between:

The serving and former members of the Armed Forces and their families working and residing in Wigan.

Wigan Council

Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust

Job Centre Plus

Wigan Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

Wigan and Leigh Housing

Greater Manchester Police

Greater Manchester Probation Service

The Charitable and Voluntary Sector

Other members of the civilian community

Community Covenant Working Group

The Armed Forces

Wigan Council

NHS Armed Forces Lead

Job Centre Plus

Armed Forces Lead

Wigan and Leigh Housing

Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust

Greater Manchester Police

Greater Manchester Probation Service

Wigan Borough Clinical Commissioning Group

Royal British Legion

Supporting Organisations

Wigan Forward Board

Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA)

Royal British Legion

Veterans Council

Health and Well-being Board

The Community Covenant Working Group will be a network of ideas, issues and best practice can be shared between organisations. Armed Forces Champions from each organisation and will act as the first point of contact between organisations to allow the sharing of information and joined-up working. Champions have the responsibility of facilitating the implementation of the Covenant principles and pledges within their organisations. They are also a central point to receive and distribute information within their organisation and externally with partners.

The Working Group will link in to the 42(NW) Brigade Transition Delivery Working Group which covers Greater Manchester, Cheshire, Cumbria, Lancashire and Merseyside. The Group will provide support, taking into consideration the themes, direction and intelligence provided at this highly strategic level.

The Group will seek to engage with relevant organisations from the private, public and charity sectors. Active engagement with these groups will allow expert advice to be sought, working relationships to be built and further progress to be made.

Section 3: Aims and Objectives

The Armed Forces Community Covenant compliments the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant which defines the enduring, general principles that govern the relationship between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces Community.

It aims to encourage all parties within the community to offer support to the local Armed Forces Community and make it easier for service personnel, their families and veterans to access help and support from the Ministry of Defence, from statutory providers and from charitable and voluntary sector organisations. These organisations already work together in partnership at a local level.

It is intended to be a two-way arrangement and the Armed Forces Community are encouraged to do as much as they can to support their community and promote activity which integrates the service community into civilian life.

Section 4: Themes and Pledges

Five key themes that can significantly and positively contribute to the delivery of the aims and objectives are:

- Education
- Health and well-being
- Housing
- Employment and skills
- Enforcement

Education

Frequent moves can cause practical issues when enrolling children into school. Families generally receive good support when a whole regiment moves, but when only individual families move it can be more difficult. Children may also need additional support to ease their integration into a new school or may face specific challenges when a parent is in service.

Wigan Council People Directorate (Children, Families and Adults) pledges:

That in accordance with the School Admission Code for children in the UK Service Personnel with a confirmed posting to the area, or crown servants returning from overseas to live in the area, Wigan Council will allocate a school place based on their future address in advance of the family arriving in the area. Their application will be considered against the over-subscription criteria for their proposed schools providing the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares a relocation date and a unit postal address or quartering area address.

Early Intervention and Prevention Pledge for supporting veterans returning to Wigan:

The Early Intervention and Prevention Service (EIP) will pledge to identify veteran families and enter the service at the point of referral. Veteran families referred to the Gateway Service will be offered a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) assessment and

appropriate services will be championed on their behalf. In addition the specialist targeted services and Gateway locality teams will work in partnership with schools, admissions, social care, health and other partners to support these families and pupils around attendance, education / employment and training, behaviour and learning, Special Educational Needs (SEND) support and parenting.

Gateway workers, specialist teachers, educational psychologists and other staff within EIP will work in partnership with all agencies to support veteran families. The EIP service will liaise with our colleagues in the Children Missing Education (CME) Team to ensure that veterans and their families are supported into schools through the CME agenda.

Health and Well-being

Health and well-being is intrinsically linked to all of the themes described, both as a contributor to and an indicator of the state of individuals and our communities. We recognise the Armed Forces Community as a distinct group that may experience common issues and needs. We aim to fully integrate involvement and consideration of this community, as we do with all stakeholders, as part of our core business and not as an add-on or afterthought.

Wigan Council People Directorate (Children, Families and Adults) pledges:

To develop services focused on the health and well-being of service personnel, veterans and their families including mental health support by:

- Responding to the emerging needs of service personnel or ex-service personnel and / or their families with regard to community care needs;
- Ensuring continuity of social care provision for service personnel; and
- Set-up a service provision / central point of access within the Borough to enable ease of access to a range of support mechanisms.

Wigan Borough Clinical Commissioning Group pledges:

- To raise awareness with all our member practices about the needs and issues facing war veterans and their families within the Borough;

- To work with all our providers to ensure protocols are in place to identify and prioritise war veterans and their families for access to services; and
- To support, encourage and work with veterans organisations to develop services which will meet needs.

Enforcement

Greater Manchester Police – Wigan pledges:

We recognise and value the service men and women returning to our communities and want them to feel part of the rich neighbourhoods that make-up the Borough of Wigan. To assist them in this integration we make the following pledges:

- **Reports of crime or anti-social behaviour:** We will respond promptly and seek to investigate your concerns and keep you updated with progress on your report.
- **Voluntary work with us:** We prioritise any application you make to work with us at Wigan in our many volunteering roles, including that of community reporter where you can go on patrol with us and see what we do and then pass on your observations via social media.
- **Custody:** In the unfortunate event of your being detained we will ensure that you are properly risk assessed and any post-traumatic stress disorder issues or fears are taken into account.

Greater Manchester Probation Trust pledges:

We will support veterans who find themselves in prison and ensure they are aware of the advice and support available to them as ex-service personnel.

Prison In-reach (PIR) is an initiative, that aims to ensure all veterans (who are either in prison or on probation orders or licences), their families and resettlement services, are fully aware of the forms and levels of support available to them from the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA) or the ex-services charities.

We will ensure that veterans are aware of medical entitlements, welfare advice / support for themselves and their families.

Veterans will receive support from our housing advice service, provided by Catch 22. Education, training and employment advice will be provided for veterans by Achieve, our European Social Fund Project and the National Careers Service.

The Wigan Local Delivery Unit has a single point of contact for veterans involved in criminal justice services.

Wigan and Leigh Recovery Partnership (Drugs and Alcohol) pledges:

Veterans will receive an appointment to attend the service within 24-working hours.

The service is currently open, Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm. We have a late night opening at our Leigh base at Kennedy House on Wednesday's and at our Wigan base, Coops Recovery Centre on Thursday's.

Housing

Both research and anecdotal evidence has shown that access to housing can be a problem, particularly for those leaving the services or for the families of those currently serving or recently widowed. Those injured during service may also require additional support to adapt housing to help retain independence and remain in their own home, while homelessness is also recognised as an issue that may be faced by those discharged from the Armed Forces.

Wigan and Leigh Housing pledges:

For members of the Armed Forces leaving the service who have previously lived in the Borough or who have a local connection we will give priority status (Group A) on the housing waiting list.

Priority status will be awarded to:

- Former members of the Armed Forces;
- Reservists; and

- Bereaved spouse or civil partner of someone who served in the Armed Forces and whose death was attributable to that service

who are in urgent housing need and have previously lived in the Borough or have a connection to the Borough.

Wigan Council Places Employment and Skills Team pledges:

Access employment opportunities and benefits can be challenging for those leaving the services or the partners of those in service. Those leaving the service may have spent the majority of their career within the Armed Forces and may therefore require additional support when entering the job market. Entrepreneurial individuals may also benefit from business advice and support.

Views from veterans will be welcomed in relation to skills needs and where feasible Wigan Council will commission high-quality provision that meets those needs.

Information and advice will be provided to veterans to ensure that they are made aware of skills provision, job opportunities and grants that may be available.

Job Centre Plus pledges:

- To contact Career Transition Partnership (CTP) Regular Forces Employment Consultants and agree joint working arrangements;
- To identify employers prepared to offer trial attachments of up to four weeks duration for members of the Armed Forces who are within their resettlement period. During the trial attachment service personnel will continue to be paid by the Armed Forces;
- To work with new local outlets of major national employers close to military bases, to facilitate employment opportunities for service partners, who can find themselves in an unfamiliar area where they and their families lack networks;
- To extend links with the Ministry of Defence Forces Resettlement activities to also identify local employment opportunities available to potential second earners in service families, and promote the availability of the service family potential pool of labour to local employers;

- To extend the programme of proposed Job Centre Plus presentations aimed at service personnel in transition to civilian life, so that they (a) include information on support available for service partners; (b) include information about the support available through the Connexions Service / Careers Scotland / Wales for teenagers;
- To increase awareness of the services available from the European Employment Service (EURES) and network of EURES advisers, who can provide advice and assistance on vacancies and living and working conditions to service families in the UK preparing for a European overseas posting;
- To ensure teams and advisers are made aware of and work to meet the particular needs of some service partners in relation to training and softer skills such as confidence building activities; and
- To encourage Job Centre Plus customers who have served in the Armed Forces within the last two years to contact the local CTP Regular Forces Employment Consultants for support in obtaining employment.

Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust pledges:

- Returning members of the Armed Forces will be able to access a local Gateway to personal development programmes in conjunction with other organisations such as the Brathay Trust and Remount. Support for basic skills and job searches will be available through libraries. A web-link will be provided on the Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust web site. (www.wlct.org)
- Returning personnel, reservists and their families will be signposted to appropriate volunteering, training and apprenticeship opportunities, including guaranteed interviews for any job vacancies where individuals meet the essential criteria.
- Serving members (and those who have left the service in the last 12-months) will be entitled to 12-months free profiles gym and swimming membership on purchase of a lifestyle card.

Section 5: Monitoring and Development

As our communities develop so too will the role of the Community Covenant. It is therefore, important to revise this agreement when necessary. Organisations may also create action plans that will be developed and implemented locally to further support the

aims and pledges outlined. The Community Covenant Working Group will formally meet no less than every 6 months for the first 2-years to discuss existing pledges, achievements and issues as well as opportunities for development.

The Community Covenant Working Group will work with the Wigan community to access the Community Covenant Fund, in order to deliver financial support to projects at a local level that strengthen the ties or mutual understanding of the Armed Forces community and the wider community in which we live.

Contact Personnel

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Wigan and Leigh Carers Centre is a registered charity no:1138908 and a company limited
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