

## Somerset Armed Forces Covenant Update March 2016



Welcome to the Somerset Armed Forces Covenant update. The Covenant is not just about grants; it is also and perhaps more importantly about the integration of our Armed Forces into our communities, reaching out to those that may need help. The aim is to increase awareness within the wide range of services that may come into contact with armed forces personnel, young and old, serving and retired and their families from education to housing, hospitals to employers, adult and children social care to parishes and voluntary organisations. To enable that to happen we would be grateful if you, as a Partnership member, could please cascade this across your own organisations. Further information on the partnership can be found via: [www.somerset.gov.uk/forcescovenant](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/forcescovenant)

Or contact Cllr Christopher Le Hardy, Cabinet Member Corporate Improvement and Armed Forces Champion, [CLeHardy@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:CLeHardy@somerset.gov.uk) or Chris Phillips, Community Development Service Manager, [cphillips@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:cphillips@somerset.gov.uk) or phone: 01823 359243

### Save the Date:

#### Raising the profile of the Armed Forces Covenant in Somerset

#### Somerset Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Event

Taunton

Thursday 23 June 2016, 9am to 2pm.

We wish to improve understanding of the challenges faced by the armed forces community, seeking a better understanding of their needs by the wide range of government services and multiple agencies that deliver support into the community from Early Help to housing, education to health, whilst continuing to embed the role of the Somerset Armed Forces Covenant Partnership as the driving force that enables this work.

Please save the date and further information about how to reserve a place is expected to be circulated by the beginning of May 2016.

### MoD Covenant Fund Update:

- We have been advised that no Somerset bid was successful as part of the latest Covenant bidding round. In order to strengthen Somerset bids being submitted please can you advise organisations to make contact with Cllr Christopher Le Hardy and email a copy of any outline proposal to [communities@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:communities@somerset.gov.uk)
- The Covenant Fund priorities for April 2016 to March 2017 have now been agreed:
  - Veterans' Gateway
  - Families in Stress
  - Improving local covenant delivery (for Local Authorities)
  - Community integration / delivery of local services
- Further information is available via: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/covenant-fund>. More detailed guidance about the Covenant Fund's priorities will be made available via the [guidance page](#) when the fund opens for applications **on Wednesday 4 May 2016**. The deadline for grants relating to Families in Stress and Community Integration is **Wednesday 22 June 2016**.

### **Covenant Fund 2015/16 Update:**

Fifty-nine small grants totalling almost £1m were awarded in late 2015 and a further 91 small bids worth £1.46m and 24 larger bids exceeding £7.4m have now been announced. For information on amounts awarded to-date by the MoD to successful organisations click [here](#). Newly approved schemes in the southwest include:

- **Active Plus (CIC) - £42,932** – to develop an array of services and support clustered around the company's Active Plus Works programme to assist 40 veterans who have been in the criminal justice system. There are a number of partners representing veterans' welfare, probation services, housing and employment organisations as well as nine bodies from which referrals will be accepted. Trainers will be ex-service personnel who before discharge had been classified as wounded, injured or sick.
- **Torbay Council - £15,632** – Training for four Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) trainers. MHFA is a nationally accredited educational course which teaches people how to identify, understand and help a person who may be developing a mental health issue, promoting early recognition of crucial warning signs of mental ill health. If primary care staff and community staff are aware of the challenges posed by leaving or being part of the Armed Forces, this will be key to removing some of the barriers perceived by veterans in accessing health care, particularly mental health.
- **Cornwall Museums Partnership - £17,299** - Joining Forces is a new project delivered in partnership by Cornwall Museums Partnership, Helston Museum and Active Plus together with an artist, curator, museum staff and volunteers. The project will bring together forces communities and the wider civilian community to explore experiences and stories of life as part of the forces and the prominence of RNAS Culdrose in the Helston area. The project, which will take place over six months, has been developed in consultation with the Culdrose Community Centre and associated groups in order to offer the greatest integration between civilian and forces communities. The project will support both groups to share their important stories through an exhibition and a series of creative workshops and follow up activities.
- **West of England Rural Network - £18,600** - the Rural Hidden Heroes project will have the benefit of sitting within a well established network of Village Agents who are trained and experienced at engaging with isolated people in most need of assistance. They will identify gaps in service provision in isolated rural areas and facilitate service providers to deliver their work more effectively. This funding will enable extra Village Agent man hours; an extensive mapping exercise will determine who and where the beneficiaries reside and encourage veterans to have pride in their military connections. There will be signposting to the appropriate partners and assistance in navigating through complex medical and social systems.
- **Surf Action - £20,000** - a health promotion project which will support serving military families and strengthen the physical health, psychological and emotional resilience of their children. It will strengthen family relationships and community integration so children and their parents can best deal with the results of a short notice deployment. An occupational therapist will monitor progress using a scale that measures emotional and psychological wellbeing, validated for use with children.
- **Devon Armed Services Community Support Hub - £20,000** - the Hub Transition 2016 provides a fast, relevant and appropriate means of signposting and referral. It also provides the facilities to deliver one-to-one interviews, group meetings, peer support sessions, training courses and conferences. A key part of the hub is the "job club job search" facility. Funding will assist with the rental costs.

If you have specific queries about the fund or are unsure whether your organisation or your project are likely to be funded, please contact [covenant-grantteammailbox@mod.uk](mailto:covenant-grantteammailbox@mod.uk).

## Other Updates:

### **Somerset Armed Forces Communication leaflet updated:**

To reflect the new national branding and the changes to the Covenant Fund priorities for 2016, the Somerset Armed Forces Communication leaflet has been updated and is available via: [www.somerset.gov.uk/forcescovenant](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/forcescovenant)

### **Vision for Somerset:**

Details of Somerset County Council's County Plan Priorities, endorsed at Full Council on 17 February 2016 can be accessed via: <http://somersetcountyplan.org.uk/>

### **Devolution Proposals:**

Somerset, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay with 13 district councils, Dartmoor and Exmoor national parks, the local NHS and the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership have submitted a Devolution Plan to Government. Details can be accessed [here](#)

For other County Council updates visit: <http://somersetnewsroom.com/>

### **Somerset Choices:**

The Somerset Choices website is being expanded to include Children's Services. The website will be a central point of access to information, advice and a wide range of services and support groups for children and families.

Local people, and professionals, will be able to search a directory of local services, support groups and products to meet individual needs. The website will help more people to help themselves or help professionals to tell people about local opportunities which can prevent the need for intervention from children's social care or other professionals.

For further information visit: [www.somersetchoices.org.uk](http://www.somersetchoices.org.uk)

If you have any questions or feedback about the website, please don't hesitate to contact the Somerset Choices team via: [www.somerset.gov.uk/choicesfeedback](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/choicesfeedback)

### **Nominate your Somerset Star Volunteer**

Nominations of outstanding volunteers are being sought for this year's Somerset Star Volunteer Awards. The closing date for nominations is 29 April 2016. There will be five winners crowned in total, one from each district area, chosen by the local volunteer network. Each district will present their 'Somerset Star' with their award at events planned to coincide with National Volunteers' Week, which runs from Wednesday 1 until Sunday 12 June 2016. You can nominate a 'Star Volunteer' online on the Somerset Celebrating Volunteering website at [www.scvolunteering.com](http://www.scvolunteering.com)

**Veterans World** raises awareness of help, advice and support available to veterans and their families via organisations, government, the voluntary and charitable sectors, and is aimed at people who work in an advisory capacity with the public. Issue 38 will be published in April 2016: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/veterans-world>

**Naval Families Federation** latest news can be accessed via: <http://nff.org.uk/>

### **Royal British Legion Insult to Injury campaign in England.**

Following the Chancellor's budget announcement on 16 March 2016, from 2017, injured veterans in England will no longer have to surrender most of their military compensation to pay for their social care. Further information is available via:

<http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/campaign/insult-to-injury/>

### **Forthcoming Events:**

#### **Armed Forces Day**

Armed Forces Day celebrations begin on Monday 20 June when the Armed Forces Day flag is raised on buildings and famous landmarks around the country. Armed Forces Day is a chance for your community to show its support for the men and women who make up the Armed Forces family: from current serving troops to Service families, veterans and cadets.

The aim is to:

- Raise awareness of the role of the Royal Navy, the Army, the Royal Air Force, Reservists, veterans, cadets and the wider Armed Forces family in society.
- Provide members of the public – including Local Authorities and businesses – with the means to actively engage in a celebration on Armed Forces Day.
- Cement Armed Forces Day in the public consciousness as the lead action oriented day to honour and celebrate the work of the Armed Forces.

Armed Forces Day takes place on **Saturday 25 June 2016**. Further information is available via: <https://www.armedforcesday.org.uk/>

**Reserves Day** on **Wednesday 22 June** will provide an opportunity for the country to recognise our Reserve Forces.

#### **Local Events:**

As well as the Partnership Event planned for **Thursday 23 June 2016**, West Somerset District Council will be holding a flag raising ceremony as part of Armed Forces week on **Monday 20 June** at 11 am. It will comprise of a short service (approx. 30 minutes) around the flagpole outside of the council offices in Williton, Killick Way, Somerset, TA4 4QA.

The Chairman of West Somerset District Council would like to extend the invitation to members of the Somerset Armed Forces Covenant. The service will be preceded by light refreshments in the Council Chamber at West Somerset House from 10.15 am. In order to assist with arrangements, it would be appreciated if you could confirm your attendance by contacting: Krystyna Kowalewska, [KKowalewska@westsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:KKowalewska@westsomerset.gov.uk)

#### **"Dining in the Dark" Charity Fundraising Dinner for Blind Veterans UK**

An awareness and fundraising evening will be taking place on 23rd April 2016, 7.30pm at the Beambridge Inn, Wellington, TA21 0HB. "Dining in the Dark" will offer guest an unusual experience of what it is like in the sight loss world to do an everyday task like eating.

The event is hosted by the Rotary club of District 1200 with His Grace The Duke of Somerset guest of honour. It is a ticket only event and tickets cost £35. For bookings call 01823 672223 or email: [secretary@rotaryclub1200.org](mailto:secretary@rotaryclub1200.org)

## GO COMMANDO

### *'An Evening with Falklands War Veteran - Simon Weston CBE'*

Following the conclusion of his hugely successful UK tour 'My Life My Story' and in association with Queen's College, Taunton Go Commando are delighted to announce that Simon Weston is joining them for a special one off evening on **Friday 6<sup>th</sup> May, 2016, 7.30pm** for an inspirational event to be held in Queen's Hall, the College's newly refurbished auditorium (Tickets £25). Simon will tell his own story of events that changed his life forever, following the fateful day he was on board the stricken naval vessel RFA Sir Galahad, destroyed by enemy fire. For further information visit <http://www.gocommando.org.uk/events>  
Online Tickets available from <http://bookings.queenscollege.org.uk/> or 01823 340880

### **Victoria Cross Memorial Event:**

A public memorial / commemoration event is due to take place in Rode on Saturday 2 July 2016 to commemorate Captain Arthur Hugh Henry Batten-Pooll, 3rd battalion and 2nd battalion Royal Munster Fusiliers and his winning of the Victoria Cross in France on 26 June 1916. Further information is available via: <http://www.royalmunsterfusiliers.org/b4batpol.htm>  
Contact [peterbates@hotmail.com](mailto:peterbates@hotmail.com) for further information about the commemoration event

### **Other Funding Sources:**

#### **Royal British Legion Grants**

Further information regarding Royal British Legion Grants visit:  
<http://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-support/finances/grants/>

#### **Heritage Lottery Fund:**

The Heritage Lottery Fund provide grants for community projects which explore, conserve and share the heritage of the First World War. Further information is available via:  
<http://www.hlf.org.uk/about-us/news-features/understanding-first-world-war>

#### **The Aged Veterans Fund will reopen in early May 2016.**

It will fund projects that support non-core health, wellbeing and social care needs for older veterans (born before 1 January 1950), including surviving World War 2 veterans, those who undertook National Service and other voluntary enlisted veterans who may need some focused support in relation to their health and social care needs.

Grants of up to £3 million are available to lead organisations who will manage, support and ensure the delivery of a strategic portfolio of projects lasting up to 3 years. Applicants must be a registered charity with a track record of managing large strategic projects, and capacity to manage and coordinate the provision of the proposed portfolio.

There will be a workshop for potential applicants on 5 April 2015. Please email us at [covenant-grantteammailbox@mod.uk](mailto:covenant-grantteammailbox@mod.uk) to reserve your place and to receive details of times and locations. Expression of interest guidance notes (will be published on 1 April 2016). For further information visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/aged-veterans-fund>

#### **Grants for War Memorials – War Memorials Trust**

Grants are currently available up to 75% of eligible costs with a normal maximum grant of £30,000. The War Memorials Trust are looking to streamline the application process to make it easier for applicants and further information will be uploaded to:  
<http://www.warmemorials.org/grants/>