



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
**KINGSTON**  
UPON THAMES

## **The Armed Forces 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 Naval Service, 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 this Covenant.

## Section 1: Definition of the Armed Forces Community

The Armed Forces Community is defined, for the purposes of the Armed Forces Covenant, as including all those towards whom the Nation has a moral obligation due to Service in HM Armed Forces. The Armed Forces Community includes:

**Regular Personnel** – Individuals currently serving as members of the Naval Service, Royal Navy and Royal Marines, Army or Royal Air Force.

**Reservists** – Volunteer Reservists, who form the Royal Naval, Royal Marine, Territorial Army and the Royal Auxiliary Air Force, and Regular Reservists, who comprise the Royal Fleet Reserve, Army Reserve and Royal Air Force Reserve.

**Veterans** – Those who have served in the HM Armed Forces, whether as a Regular or as a Reservist.

**Families of Regular, Reservists and Veterans** – The immediate family of those in the categories listed above. This is defined as spouses, civil partners, and children for whom they are responsible, but can where appropriate extend to parents, unmarried partners and other family members.

**Bereaved** – The immediate family of Service Personnel and veterans who have died, whether or not that death has any connection with Service.

## Section 2: Principles Of The Armed Forces Covenant

We the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames will endeavour in our business dealings to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, which are:

- no member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantage in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen
- special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved

The covenant exists to redress the disadvantages that the armed forces community may face in comparison to other citizens, and to recognise sacrifices made.

### Section 3: Demonstrating our Commitment

The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames recognises the value that the Armed Forces Community bring to our community. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, by:

- **Promoting the fact that we are an Armed Forces-friendly organisation**
  - by publicising our Armed Forces Covenant and displaying the Armed Forces Covenant logo on our website
  - by assuming a positive leadership role in promoting Kingston upon Thames as an Armed Forces-friendly borough.
  - promoting a greater understanding and awareness of the issues affecting the Armed Forces Community within the borough
  - proactively encouraging companies and other organisations to sign Covenants
  - engaging with our partners in the private, public and voluntary sectors to identify opportunities to fulfil the objectives of the covenant.
  - promoting public understanding and awareness of issues affecting the Armed Forces through our website.
  
- **Strengthening our links with the Armed Forces Community by**
  - offering support to our local cadet units, either in our local community or in local schools,
  - encouraging our employees to become volunteer cadet helpers or instructors through our Community Works scheme
  - appointing a Councillor as an Armed Forces Champion and a senior officer point of contact within the council to ensure that our commitments are implemented and maintained
  - ensuring staff and elected Members are made aware of the Armed Forces Community Covenant for Kingston as part of their induction
  - continuing to develop an understanding of the needs of the local armed forces, including the new G (Guards) Company of the London Regiment, and of veterans, and respond in accordance with the Covenant
  - considering the needs of the Armed Forces Community as part of the wider Kingston community in future service and infrastructure planning.
  
- **Seeking to support the employment of veterans and service leavers**
  - recognising that the Armed Forces Community bring a variety of transferable skills and qualities developed throughout their military careers when interviewing for positions
  - Ensuring our recruitment process is inclusive and accessible
  - Anticipating and providing reasonable adjustments as required.
  
- **Striving to support the families of the Armed Forces Community by**
  - agreeing to offer a degree of flexibility in granting leave for Service spouses and partners before, during and after a partner's deployment
  - working with AFC to ensure that school admission policies recognise the needs of children of the Armed Forces Community.
  
- **Seeking to support our employees who choose to be members of the Reserve forces,**
  - by accommodating their training and deployment where practical
  - we will wherever possible accommodate the mobilisation of our reservists if they are required to deploy
  - we will encourage any reservists in our organisation to participate in Reserves Day.

- **Ensuring we give additional priority to members of the armed forces community with urgent housing needs by:**
  - making available up to two social housing allocations per year to single veterans who have a link with the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames and who have been nominated by a veterans association (identified through the Veterans Gateway a consortium of organisations and Armed Forces Charities)
  - providing through the Housing Options Service, the Council's 'single point of access' for housing, advice to Armed Services personnel on their housing options
  - providing within the Housing Allocations Scheme introduced in 2017 additional preference on the Housing Register for certain armed forces personnel and their surviving spouse/civil partner and veterans
  - providing support for ex-members of the Armed Forces in addition to other vulnerable groups the provision of funding (up to a maximum £25,000 p.a.) for the decoration of homes being allocated to Armed Forces quota target group in recognition of the additional challenges sometimes faced by veterans when moving into a property.
  
- **Recognising and remembering the sacrifices made by the armed forces community by**
  - supporting Armed Forces Day through flying the Armed Forces Day flag, supporting other events in our local community, posting messages of support on social media sites and linking to the Armed Forces Day website
  - recognising and mindfully remembering the sacrifices made by the armed forces community and all of those who lost their lives in both times of conflict and peace by supporting by posting messages of support on social media sites and linking to relevant websites
  - recognising and remembering the contribution of British and Commonwealth military and civilian service men and women who have been affected by armed conflict by supporting Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day.

We will publicise these commitments through our literature and/or on our website, setting out how we will seek to honour them and inviting feedback from the Service community and our customers on how we are doing.



## Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

**We, the undersigned, commit to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value of Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and Military families contribute to our business and our country.**

Signed:

Councillor Thay Thayalan  
The Worshipful The Mayor of The Royal Borough of  
Kingston Upon Thames

Signed:

Colonel Dave Mogg TD VR  
The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment

Signed:

Councillor Liz Green  
Leader of the Council of The Royal Borough of  
Kingston Upon Thames

Signed:

Major Marion Creagh QARANC  
C Detachment, 256 (City of London) Field Hospital

Signed:

Councillor Margaret Thompson  
The Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames  
Armed Forces Champion

Signed:

Major Nick Clark MA(oxon)  
G (Guards) Company, The London Regiment

Signed:

Stephen Evans  
Director of Communities  
The Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames