

## Richmondshire District Council's Response to Meeting the Principles of The Armed Forces Covenant (2021-22)

The Armed Forces Covenant (AFC) covers a number of key areas. Those relating to services provided by Richmondshire District Council (RDC) are listed in the following table, outlining its responsibilities together with statistical information for the last three years.

AFC's Principles	AFC Guidance Statements	RDC's Responsibilities	RDC's response <u>2018-2020</u>	RDC's response <u>2020-2021</u>	RDC's response <u>2021-2022</u>
1. Housing	1.1 Members of the Armed Forces should have the same access to social housing and other housing schemes as any other citizen.	The North Yorkshire Home Choice Allocations Policy automatically considers members of the Armed Forces to have a Local Connection to the area. This is extended to applications from former service personnel, where the application is made within 5 years following discharge. Members of the Armed Forces have the same access to Social Housing as any other citizen.	In 2018-2020 Richmondshire District Council rehoused, into Social Housing, 15 applicants (5% of our total allocation for the two-year period) who were either recently discharged / has historically served in the Armed Forces or who were the spouse of a currently serving or former member of the Armed Forces.	In 2020-21 Richmondshire District Council rehoused, into social housing, 8 applicants (8.5% of our total allocation for the year) who were either recently discharged/has historically served in the Armed Forces or who were the spouse of a currently serving or former member of the Armed Forces.	In 2021-22 Richmondshire District Council rehoused, into social housing, 3 applicants (4% of our total allocation for the year) who were either recently discharged/has historically served in the Armed Forces or who were the spouse of a currently serving or former member of the Armed Forces.
1. Housing	1.3 Government departments and voluntary/community sectors will provide supported housing for homeless veterans.	The English Churches is a charity which provides supported accommodation at The Beacon in Catterick Garrison for homeless veterans. Amicus Trust is a charity that provides supported accommodation in Bedford which RDC can refer homeless veterans into.	Single Persons Accommodation Scheme for Ex-Services Personnel (SPACES) continues to be accessed.  In addition to this the Beacon Project can offer supported accommodation.	Single Persons Accommodation Scheme for Ex-Services Personnel (SPACES) continues to be accessed.  In addition to this the Beacon Project can offer supported accommodation.	NYCC withdrew the Supported People funding from 30/09/2021. Subsequently, Riverside restructured the service delivery at The Beacon, disestablishing the support worker

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		<p>Homeless veterans aged between 16-25 years can also access the Young People's Pathway and be considered for accommodation within the two supported housing schemes within Richmond although this is not specifically for ex-veterans. Phoenix House is a rehabilitation Centre based at Catterick Garrison.</p>	<p>Charities that we work with include. SSAFA and Royal British Legion.</p> <p>We provide links to other sources of advice such as the Veterans Gateway Link.</p>	<p>Charities that we work with include. SSAFA and Royal British Legion.</p> <p>We provide links to other sources of advice such as the Veterans Gateway Link.</p>	<p>roles and creating housing manager roles. Currently RDC has not received information from Riverside to enable it to be satisfied that the level of support provided from 01/10/2021 has met the test of being more than minimal. It is, therefore on the basis of the evidence provided to the council, no longer possible to consider The Beacon as providing supported accommodation and which would enable tenants to apply for Housing Benefit from 01/10/2021, instead they now are eligible only to apply for Universal Credit.</p>

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1. Housing	1.6 Those injured in service should have assistance with necessary adaptations to private housing.	Service personnel have the same rights to access Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) as civilians.	2 x DFG awarded to ex-service personnel	No formal DFG applications received from ex-service personnel	3 x DFG awarded to ex-service personnel
1. Housing	1.7 Injured service personnel's lump sum compensation is disregarded for the purposes of capital means test for affordable housing schemes, and Disabled Facilities Grant.	A Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) is a statutory means tested local council grant to help towards the cost of adapting a person's home to enable them to continue to live there. When an individual applies for DFG their Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS), or War Pension Scheme (WPS) compensation payment(s) is not taken into account in the means test. This commitment applies to those in receipt of WPS for disablement of 80 per cent or higher and receiving a Constant Attendance Allowance. It also applies to those who receive an AFCS lump sum payment and guaranteed income payment.	Not applicable to any DFG applications received. 1 x DFG awarded to ex-service personnel but in receipt of a passporting benefit therefore no means-test applied. 1 x DFG awarded to ex-service personnel but no means-test as work below threshold for financial assessment. 1 x DFG withdrawn by ex-service personnel as moving out of the area.	No formal DFG applications received from ex-service personnel	Not applicable to 2 x DFG applications received as no means test applied due to works being under RDC's non-means tested threshold. 1 x DFG awarded following means test
2. Benefits and tax	2.2 Payment from the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or War Pensions Scheme is not taken into	The Council currently disregards this income in its entirety.	During 2018/19 17 cases benefitted from this scheme amounting to a total of £31,014 (Housing Benefit).	During 2020/21, 8 cases benefitted from this scheme amounting to a total of £16,265 (Housing Benefit).	During 2021/22 7 cases benefitted from this scheme amounting to a total of £15632.96 (Housing Benefit).

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	account when entitlement to income-related benefits is assessed. The same rules apply to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit which are administered by Local Authorities who have the discretion to go beyond the £10 disregard including disregarding it entirely.		During 2019/20 10 cases benefitted from this scheme amounting to a total of £18,937 (Housing Benefit)		
2. Participati on as citizens	3.1 The Government are committed to ensuring that Service personnel can participate fully in elections.	The Council's Electoral Team targets service personnel each year to encourage maximum registration. This is achieved via targeted press coverage in Garrison publications. Liaison with Army unit registration Officers and through the Catterick Garrison liaison group. Service Personnel do not have to register at an address they are currently residing, they can register at an address they have previously lived at e.g., their parents' property, or at an address they would reside if	Reduction of the number of registered Service Voters in 2018/19 (319) due to non-renewals of applications following the expiration of 5 years registration period. However, in 2019/20 the number of registered Service Voters increased to 355 (General Election in December 2019). However, the use of the online application at <a href="http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote">www.gov.uk/register-to-vote</a> has assisted with more service personnel registering as ordinary voters. This facility can be accessed	Figures on 1 December 2020 when the Electoral Register was published recorded the number of registered Service Voters as 262. Service Personnel can only register as a Service Voter if posted overseas.  The number of electors registered at HM Barracks and service properties is 3238, which is 29 electors less than the previous year.	Figures on 1 December 2021 when the Electoral Register was published recorded the number of registered Service Voters as 182.  The number of electors registered at HM Barracks and service properties is 3281.

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		they were not in the forces e.g., a private property.	anywhere in the World. The number of ordinary voters registered in HM Barracks and Service Properties have increased 2018/19 (374) and 2019/20 (155).	<p>The Council's website links directly to the armed forces registration page at <a href="http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote">www.gov.uk/register-to-vote</a> to encourage using the online registration as opposed to completing an actual form.</p> <p>A change to e-mailing communications where possible, including renewals, confirmation letters, absent voting requests and other acknowledgements has proved effective to achieve a high response rate over mailing.</p> <p>An integral part of the communication strategy on registration and electoral activity is engagement with military personnel to encourage registration and advise on election participation.</p>	
3. Recourse	4.1 Armed Forces Advocates have been established at a senior level in major government departments. A	The Managing Director operates as the Council's Armed Forces Champion.	Over the 2018-2020 period: The Chief Executive/Corporate Director attended eight Garrison Liaison meetings with the Catterick Garrison	Over the 2020-21 period: The Chief Executive/Corporate Director attended four virtual Garrison Liaison meetings with the Catterick	Over the 2021-22 period: The Chief Executive/Corporate Director attended four

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	<p>number of Local Authorities have established Armed Forces Champions to perform a similar function at a local level.</p>		<p>Commander and MoD personnel.</p> <p>The Chief Executive attended four North Yorkshire Armed Forces/Civilian Integration Partnership Board Meetings.</p> <p>The Chief Executive attended two Armed Forces Community Covenant Regional Grants Panel Meetings (see section 5.2).</p> <p>The Corporate Director attended a North Yorkshire Armed Forces Covenant Network Meeting, three Catterick Garrison Working Group meetings and 3 Catterick Garrison town centre meetings.</p> <p>The Planning Manager has also attended two Catterick Garrison Master Plan meetings.</p> <p>RDC have appointed an Armed Forces Champion Member – Cllr Kevin Foster</p>	<p>Garrison Commander and MoD personnel.</p> <p>The Chief Executive attended three North Yorkshire Armed Forces/Civilian Integration Partnership Board Meetings.</p> <p>The Chief Executive attended one Catterick Garrison Strategic Development Group meeting.</p> <p>The Corporate Director attended one Catterick Assessment Study Scope &amp; Overview Session</p> <p>The Corporate Director attended one Catterick Vision Preparation &amp; Scene Setting Session</p> <p>The Corporate Director attended one Catterick Vision – Partner Contribution &amp; Input Session</p> <p>The Corporate Director attended one Catterick</p>	<p>virtual Garrison Liaison meetings with the Catterick Garrison Commander and MoD personnel.</p> <p>The Chief Executive/Corporate Director attended three Civil Integration Partnership Board Meetings.</p> <p>The Chief Executive and Corporate Director attended two Catterick Garrison Strategic Development Group meeting.</p> <p>The Corporate Director attended three Catterick Improvement and Development Group (CGIDG) meetings.</p> <p>The Corporate Director attend one Catterick</p>

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				<p>Vision – Draft Vision statement review. The Corporate Director attended one Catterick Working Group &amp; AS Engagement Group Discussion</p> <p>The Corporate Director attended one Review of CGCWG Reformation &amp; Revised ToR</p> <p>The Corporate Director attended one Catterick Vision Update – Pre SDG</p> <p>The Corporate Director attended one Catterick Garrison development pre-meeting.</p> <p>The Corporate Director attended one Catterick Vision roadmap and next steps.</p> <p>The Corporate Director attended one Catterick Improvement and Development Meeting.</p>	<p>Town Centre Regeneration Discussion</p> <p>The Corporate director attended one Catterick Vision Progress Update &amp; Key Findings meeting.</p> <p>The Planning Manager has also attended Catterick Garrison Master Plan meetings</p>

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				RDC have appointed a new Armed Forces Champion Member – Cllr Angie Dale	
3. Recourse	4.2 Members of the Armed Forces community should have means of recourse open to them if they believe they are not being treated in a fair or appropriate way. They can make use of established public service complaints processes. The first step would be to complain to the local service provider (e.g., Local Authority). If this still does not resolve the complaint, they can access Ombudsman services.	The Council has a Complaints and Compliments Policy which is published on our website, and we actively encourage feedback on all the services we provide. Paper versions can be found at all our Community Offices.	During 2018-20 there were no complaints received stating a connection with the Armed Forces.	During 20/21 there were no complaints received stating a connection with the Armed Forces.	During 21/22 there were no complaints received stating a connection with the Armed Forces.
4. The Covenant and the wider society	5.1 Reservists are unique in being members of both the Armed Forces and civilian communities. The SaBRE	RDC allow employees to join the Army and Naval Reserves and staff are entitled to up to two additional weeks' unpaid leave for attendance at annual camp on provision of	As part of the Armed Forces Community Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme Silver Award – this extended leave is in place. This includes volunteer members of non-regular	As part of the Armed Forces Community Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme Silver Award – this extended leave is in place. This includes volunteer members of non-regular	As part of the Armed Forces Community Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme Silver



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	(Supporting Britain's Reservists and Employers) campaign seeks to deliver effective employer support to reservists.	documentary evidence from the Unit Commander. Staff must obtain prior approval from their Head of Service and must recognise the need to provide adequate notice as per the requirements of the annual leave policy.	forces e.g., Territorial Army, Navy Reserves etc who are entitled for up to two weeks additional paid leave for military deployment, and two further additional paid days of leave to attend military events.	<p>forces e.g., Territorial Army, Navy Reserves etc who are entitled for up to two weeks additional paid leave for military deployment, and two further additional paid days of leave to attend military events.</p> <p>The Council have an AFC action plan which includes the promotion of the AFC Employer Recognition Scheme and encourages businesses and organisations to become AFC signatories.</p>	<p>Award – this extended leave is in place. This includes volunteer members of non-regular forces e.g., Territorial Army, Navy Reserves etc who are entitled for up to two weeks additional paid leave for military deployment, and two further additional paid days of leave to attend military events.</p> <p>The Council have an AFC action plan which includes the promotion of the AFC Employer Recognition Scheme and encourages businesses and organisations to become AFC signatories.</p>

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4. The Covenant and the wider society	5.2 The Armed Forces Community Covenant Grant scheme aims to support projects at a local level to strengthen ties between members of the Armed Forces community and the wider community in which they live.	<p>The Chief Executive sits on the Armed Forces Community Covenant Regional Grant Panel which considers applications for funding local projects.</p> <p>The Council provides 'match funding' for such projects via its various social grant schemes.</p>	<p>The Chief Executive attended two Armed Forces Community Covenant Regional Grants Panel Meetings.</p> <p>RDC' Business and Community Team actively promote the funding opportunities for community groups and organisations and offer support in making applications to the grant. We encourage applications to apply to RDC funding streams as match funding and demonstration of Council support for the project.</p> <p>The Council continues to be an active partner in the delivery of the North Yorkshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Network group. The Working Group have delivered the following priorities as part of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Practitioners conference</li> </ul> <p>The group continues to take a North Yorkshire wide approach, sharing best</p>	<p>RDC' Business and Community Team actively promote the funding opportunities for community groups and organisations and offer support in making applications to the grant. We encourage applications to apply to RDC funding streams as match funding and demonstration of Council support for the project.</p> <p>The Council continues to be an active partner in the delivery of the North Yorkshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Network group.</p> <p>The Council has a dedicated <a href="#">web page</a> to promote the AFC.</p> <p>The Council's Garrison Area Partnership are currently working on ways to support the AFC within their workplan.</p>	<p>RDC' Business and Community Team actively promote the funding opportunities for community groups and organisations and offer support in making applications to the grant. We encourage applications to apply to RDC funding streams as match funding and demonstration of Council support for the project.</p> <p>The Council continues to be an active partner in the delivery of the North Yorkshire Armed Forces Community Covenant Network group.</p> <p>The Council has a dedicated <a href="#">page on their website</a> to promote the AFC.</p>

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			<p>practice and ideas on how best to support our armed forces communities.</p> <p>During 2018 and 2019, the Pop-Up Shed programme offered free sessions to those aged 40 and over who live in North Yorkshire and had served in the armed forces, completed National Service conscription, or worked in the Merchant Navy in support of the military at some point. It also offered volunteering opportunities for younger veterans, family members and carers. It provided a safe, supportive and friendly setting where ex-forces could socialise, learn new skills, and hone existing skills by working alongside each other.</p>		<p>The Council's Garrison Area Partnership are currently working on ways to support the AFC within their workplan.</p> <p>The Council supports the Garrison Gathering Group which is made up of military and civilian membership and delivers community projects.</p>
5. The Covenant and the wider society	5.3 Build on links between Reserve Forces and Cadet Associations and youth groups.	Richmondshire District Council ensures there are opportunities for young people who are members of Reserve Forces or Cadet Associations to engage with youth projects across the District.	The Council provides opportunity for the Cadet Associations to play a role within community events such as the Tour de Yorkshire.	The Council provides opportunity for the Cadet Associations to play a role within community events such as the Tour de Yorkshire.	The Council provides opportunity for the Cadet Associations to play a role within community events whenever possible
5. The Covenant and the	5.4 Show public displays of support for the Armed	Richmondshire District Council participates in the annual Armed Forces Day	Poppy Appeal collection tins were once again placed throughout the offices in	Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, public displays of	Our Annual Armed Forces Day Flag Raising Ceremony

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wider society	Forces, including donations to charities such as Help for Heroes or the Royal British Legion, or active participation in homecoming parades or Armed Forces Day.	<p>commemorations in Friary Gardens, Richmond inviting service personnel and their families; Royal British Legion Branches; representatives of various local groups and charities who support the military community both serving and retired; cadet forces; local dignitaries and the wider community.</p> <p>The Council holds fundraising events for the Poppy Appeal. The Council allocates resources (e.g., free coach parking) for Armed Forces parades and events in the District.</p>	<p>October and November 2018 and 2019, with all money raised through weekly dress down days in November going to the Poppy Appeal.</p> <p>Our Annual Armed Forces Day Flag Raising Ceremony was held in both June 2018 and June 2019 in Friary Gardens, Richmond.</p> <p>In 2018 the Chairman of the Council, Councillor Bill Glover led officials from the authority along with forces personnel. Councillor Bill Glover gave the initial address and Lt Colonel Stephen Jordan, Garrison Commander replied on behalf of the armed forces.</p> <p>The ceremony also included the unveiling of a memorial plaque on the war memorial in the gardens to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> year of the Royal Air Force. They were joined by veterans, civic leaders, councillors, representatives from the Police, St John's Ambulance and Royal British Legion, scouts and girl guiding associations, Help for</p>	<p>support were very limited during 2020-21.</p> <p>We did fly the Armed Forces Day Flag in Friary Gardens and outside Mercury House from Monday, 22 June 2020 until Monday, 29 June 2020. The flag was raised by the Chairman but, due to the restrictions, it was not possible to hold an event.</p> <p>The other events attended were:</p> <p>Saturday, 15 August 2020 – The Royal British Legion VJ Day Commemorations  Sunday, 8 November 2020 – a Remembrance Sunday event in Richmond and a Remembrance Sunday event in Reeth  Wednesday, 11 November 2020 – Remembrance Day Wreath Laying in Reeth</p>	<p>was held in June in Friary Gardens, Richmond.</p> <p>Chairman of the Council, Councillor Clive World led officials from the authority along with forces personnel. Councillor Clive World gave the initial address and Lt Col Gary Robertson, Commanding Officer, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Training Battalion, replied on behalf of the armed forces.</p> <p>They were joined by veterans, civic leaders, councillors, representatives from the Royal British Legion, the Army Cadets, scouts and girl guiding associations, and</p>

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			<p>Heroes, and forces personnel – Army and RAF.</p> <p>In 2019 the Chairman of the Council, Councillor Stuart Parsons, led officials from the authority along with forces personnel.</p> <p>Councillor Parsons gave the initial address and Colonel Peter Stitt, Commandant of the School of Infantry replied on behalf of the armed forces.</p> <p>They were joined by veterans, civic leaders, councillors, representatives from the Police, St John's Ambulance and Royal British Legion, local school children from MKC (Military Kids Club) Heroes, scouts and girl guiding associations, Help for Heroes, and forces personnel – Army and RAF.</p> <p>The Chairman and Vice-Chairman attended various functions with military connections throughout 2018 including an Annual Reception at RAF Leeming, the HQ 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade &amp; HQ Catterick Garrison Reception and Beating</p>		<p>forces personnel – Army and RAF.</p> <p>Poppy Appeal collection tins were once again placed throughout the offices in October/November 2021.</p> <p>The Chairman held a Civic Service in February 2022 to which representatives from the Army were invited.</p> <p>In March 2022 his Annual Civic Reception and Dinner took place to which representatives from the Army, RAF and Army Cadet Force were invited.</p> <p>The Chairman attended various functions with military connections</p>

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			<p>Retreat, the presentation of a Bevin's Boys Veterans Badge, Catterick Garrison HQ and Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance, Remembrance Sunday Service &amp; Wreath Laying, a Passing Out Parade of Gurkha Company Recruit Intake 2018, Help for Heroes and Tour de Yorkshire Celebration Evening, British Gurkhas and Nepalese Community Catterick &amp; Darlington Celebration of Nepalese New Year BS 2076/AD 2019 and an event at which the Army Foundation College exercised its Freedom of the Borough of Harrogate. In 2019 various events with military connections were attended by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman including the Yorkshire (North and West) Army Cadet Force Presentation Day, RAF Leeming Annual Reception, 4 SCOTS Beating Retreat and Cocktail Party, Help for Heroes Phoenix House Community Open Day, Official Opening of a Special Exhibition at the Green</p>		<p>throughout his 2021-2022 term of office including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 23 September 2021, MPCT Graduation Ceremony</li> <li>- 16 October 2021, The Veteran's Breakfast Club, Richmond</li> <li>- 11 November 2021, Royal British Legion Service of the Crosses</li> <li>- 11 November 2021, The Infantry Training Centre Boxing Evening</li> <li>- 14 November 2021, Richmond Remembrance Sunday Service and Parade</li> <li>- 14 November 2021, Reeth Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service</li> <li>- 2 March 2022, Meeting with the Catterick Garrison Commander</li> </ul>

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			<p>Howards Museum, Ripon  City Council &amp; Ripon Branch of the Royal Air Force Association Battle of Britain Civic Event, Catterick Garrison Community Engagement Dinner, Remembrance Sunday Services and Wreath Laying Ceremony's, 2ITB Passing Out Parade of Gurkha Company Recruit Intake 2019.</p> <p>In 2018 and 2019 both Chairman held an Annual Civic Reception and Dinner to which representatives from the Army, RAF and Cadet Force were invited.</p>		