

Veterans WORLD

Issue 37



ARMED FORCES
COVENANT

Pages 12-13

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Veterans WORLD

Veterans World is distributed to those who work in an advisory role.

February 2016

Issue 37

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New Year, New Focus

The aim of *Veterans World* is to provide up to date information on services, support and advice for the Veterans community, in particular those who act in an advisory role.

We know, from engaging with our customers, charitable organisations and partners that the key issues for the Veterans community are:



Accommodation
& Housing



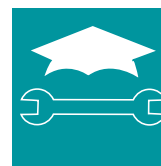
Working in
Partnership



Family Matters



Healthcare



Education/
Training/
Employment

Articles in this and future issues of *Veterans World* will be about a service, initiative or event that is focussed around one of these themes. The icon and colours at the top of each page will continue the theme so that you can see at a glance the topic of the article.

At a Glance...

Veterans Breakfast Club



Representing ALL the services, these clubs offer an informal network of support for veterans. The principle is very simple, turn up, buy your own breakfast and start to enjoy the banter and camaraderie. There are currently 78 clubs running up and down the country as well as clubs overseas made up of more than 5,600 members. To find your nearest club go to:

<http://veteransbreakfastclubs.co.uk/>

Dementia Support for Veterans Extended



Two new nurse-led dementia support services have been launched by the Royal British Legion, covering Hampshire and Somerset. Referrals for the new service are now being taken. Either the person with dementia or the carer needs to be eligible as a beneficiary of the Legion in order to qualify for support. For further information see:

<https://support.britishlegion.org.uk>

New Careers Manager at HighGround



Sami Choudhury will be responsible for Service Leavers, Reservists and Veterans who come to HighGround seeking advice and support about jobs, careers and vocational opportunities in the land-based sector and for running the Charity's Rural Weeks programme at Plumpton College, Sussex. For more information contact Anna Baker Cresswell:

anna@highground-uk.org

tel. 07951 495 272.

Veterans with Mesothelioma - Changes to Compensation



Veterans diagnosed with Mesothelioma on or after 16 December 2015, due to their Military Service prior to 6 April 2005, will now have the option of receiving a one-off payment of £140,000 under the War Pensions Scheme. For more information visit [GOV.UK](http://gov.uk) and look out for an article in the next edition of Veterans World.

War Pension Rates from April 2016



From April 2016, War Pension Scheme and Armed Forces Pensions Scheme payments will remain the same as the 2015 rates. This approach is consistent with the current rate of inflation and the rates of disability benefits paid by the Department for Work and Pensions. For more information please visit [GOV.UK](http://gov.uk)

Chronic Pain - Volunteers Needed



Pain Concern, a UK based charity focused on providing information and support to those who live with chronic pain, are looking for ex-Service personnel that would be willing to be interviewed about their experiences of living with chronic pain to take part in a radio internet programme. If you are interested please contact:

production@painconcern.org.uk



Help shape the future...

A campaign to gather feedback that will help shape mental health services for Military veterans has been launched in Greater Manchester.

Anyone interested in the health and wellbeing of ex-Service personnel can contribute to research that will be used to develop services, simply by replying to a series of text messages.

The pilot campaign has been launched by Overcoming Barriers – a partnership scheme between Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust, Inspiration NW, Veterans in Communities and Walking With the Wounded, that works to develop various projects to help Greater Manchester veterans overcome barriers to accessing mental health services.

Janet Butterworth, Director of Inspiration NW, explained: "We're particularly hoping to hear from ex-Service personnel, reservists, family and friends of veterans, and any professionals who come into contact with veterans who may be having difficulties, such as health staff, social services, charities of all kinds, and criminal justice staff."

People can 'opt in' to the campaign by texting 'in' to 60013. They will then be sent two messages to respond to. Over the period of the pilot those who have opted in will receive a number of contacts asking for feedback on what barriers veterans may face in accessing mental health services and how these could be overcome. There is no cost for receiving the texts, and replies are charged at the same rate as a standard text message.

Dr Alan Barrett, Clinical Lead for the Military Veterans' Service, a specialist mental health service provided by Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust said: "At the Military Veterans' Service, we know there are veterans who could benefit from support but choose not to access services – we very much want to understand if there are things services could do better to reach these people.

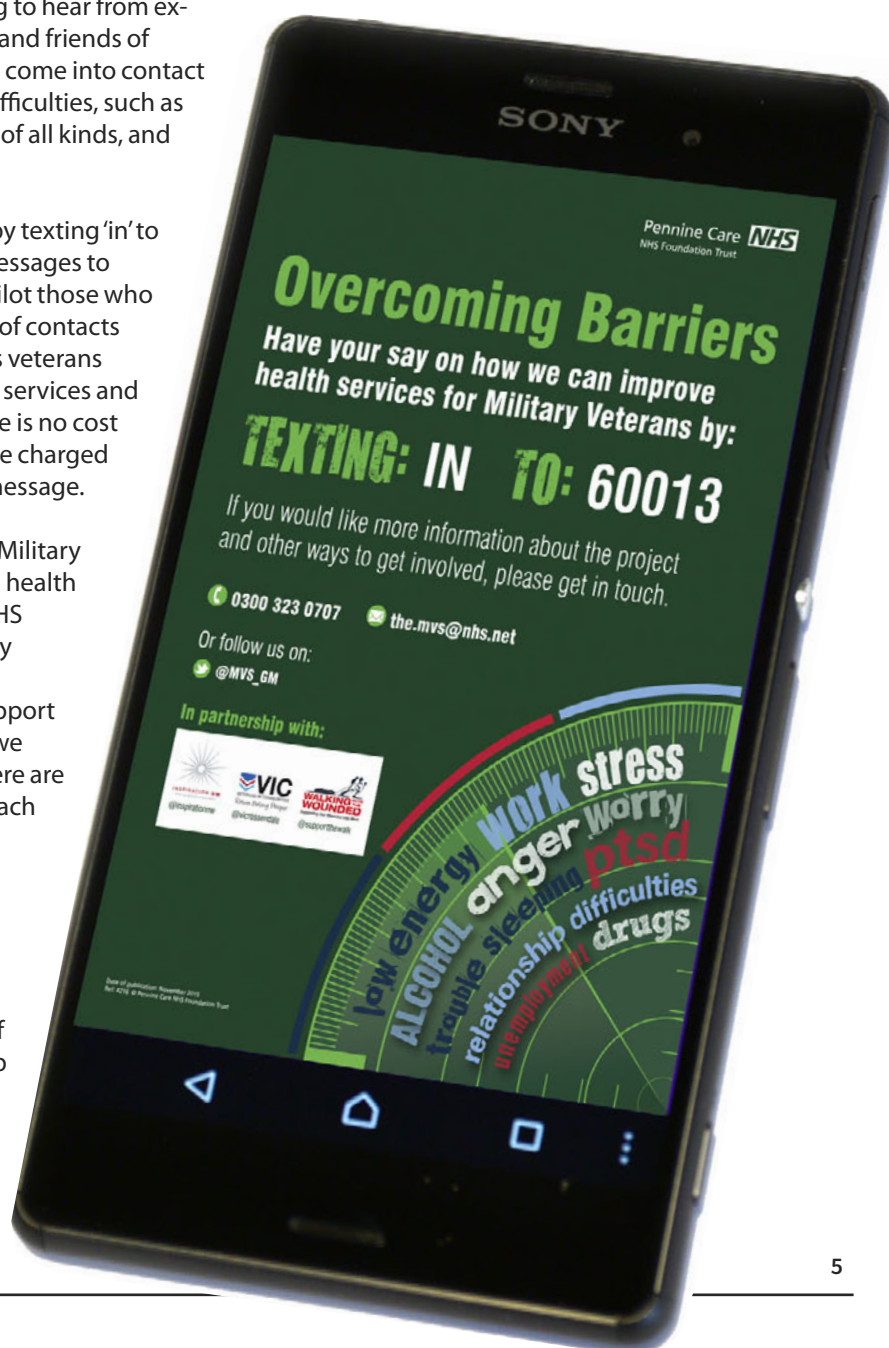
"Through the text campaign we're hoping to access the views of those people who rarely come forward in other ways. This is just one of the projects we'll be looking at as part of the Overcoming Barriers partnership and we're looking forward to seeing some positive outcomes."

To take part in the research, opt in by texting 'in' to 60013.

Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust provides the Military Veterans' Service across Greater Manchester.

The Military Veterans' Service provides mental health support to ex-Service personnel for conditions including depression, alcohol and substance misuse, anger problems and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Veterans can self-refer to the service by either using the online form at www.penninecare.nhs.uk/military-veterans or calling 0300 323 0707 to speak to a member of staff. They can also speak to their GP, health and social care professional or voluntary sector worker to make a referral on their behalf.





The Next Step (Veterans Transition) Ltd



The Next Step (Veterans Transition) has been formed by veterans for veterans with the primary aim of getting ex Servicemen and women into meaningful employment.

Its founders are Matthew Hellyer, who served 25 years in the British Army, and Amy Tickner who is a volunteer with the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (PRVC). They have a dedicated team of ex Military personnel who can help veterans prepare and transition into a civilian career.

The Next Step (Veterans Transition) app has been created to match jobs to skills. It's very easy to use - the user needs to download the Next Step app on to their mobile device and create a profile. They then take a photo of their cv, qualifications and certificates and upload them to the app.

Once uploaded, qualifications will be placed into employment categories and the user will begin to receive job notifications relevant to their skill sets. A free Personal Development Plan is available for all

veterans and Service leavers to enable the best possible career prospects outside of the military. Once the veteran has stated their career aspirations and uploaded their plan, the Next Step team will contact them and advise on the best route to reach their career goals.

The Next Step also offer advice about a wide range of training courses to help veterans keep their qualifications up to date and acquire new skills.

The app is available to download on iOS and Android.

Or contact us:

info@vetsnextstep.com

+ 44 (0) 1432 379 928

www.vetsnextstep.com

Twitter: [@VetsNextStep](https://twitter.com/VetsNextStep)

Facebook/ LinkedIn/Google+:

[The Next Step \(Veterans Transition\)](#)

THE NEXT STEP (VETERANS TRANSITION)

ARE YOU LOOKING FOR ~~LOVE?~~ **EMPLOYMENT?**

The Next Step gets veterans and service leavers into meaningful, high calibre employment. A bit like online dating. Here's how:



And also...

- Our app is FREE to download
- There are loads of training courses available on the app
- We are targeting companies who have signed a pledge to recruit veterans
- We aren't a dating service (sorry)



e: info@vetsnextstep.com t: 01432 379928 www.vetsnextstep.com Our app: **The Next Step (Veterans Transition)**

Capitalising on Veterans' Valuable Skills



Following on from a small article in last edition's 'News' section, the Defence Secretary Michael Fallon has backed the Veterans Employment Transition Support (VETS) programme that will provide mentoring, training and advice to Service leavers.

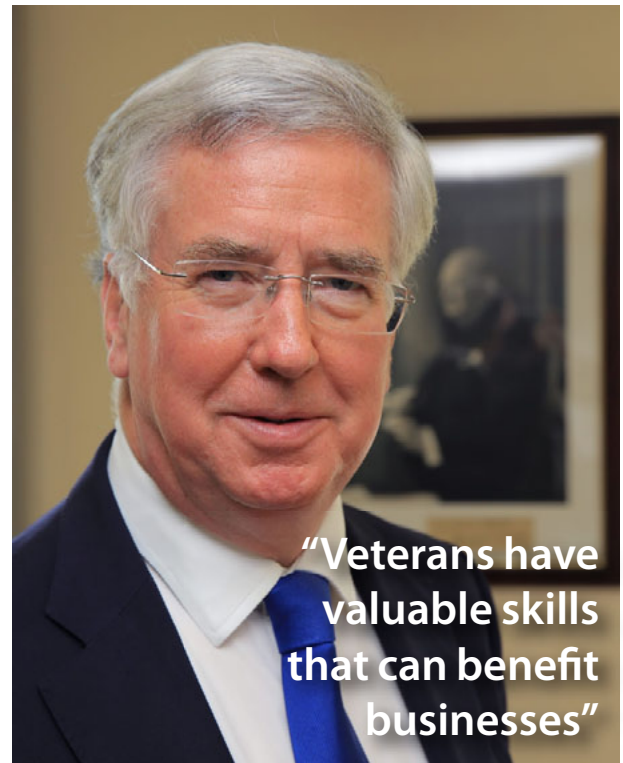
Initiated by Barclays, the VETS programme is a partnership of leading companies and charities. It will support the Ministry of Defence and Career Transition Partnership (CTP) in helping Service leavers as they seek to find employment, and provide mentoring, training and advice to veterans, regardless of when they left the Armed Forces.

Through the partnership, veterans will also be matched to work experience and job opportunities that best match their skills and career aspirations, while employers will get advice on how to recruit and be provided with support to help get the best from the veterans in their workforce.

Research by Barclays, conducted amongst 782 veterans now in civilian employment, commissioned to coincide with the launch of the VETS programme, showed that only around a fifth of the veterans surveyed felt that their current employer fully recognises the skills and experience they possess.

Stuart Tootal, Head of the Barclays Armed Forces Transition, Employment and Resettlement (AFTER) Programme, one of the VETS partners, said: "The real benefit of VETS is that it brings together existing activities to enhance support for veterans, working collaboratively to help them use their skills and enhance their careers."

The CTP helped 84 per cent of Service leavers in 2013/14 to find sustainable employment within six



The Rt. Hon. Michael Fallon, Defence Secretary.

months of leaving the Armed Forces. As reported in *Veterans World* previously, a new contract to provide CTP services and support, potentially worth up to £100 million over the next decade, was awarded to Right Management Ltd and implemented on 1 October 2015. More than 200,000 Service leavers have been helped by the CTP since 1998.

Mr Fallon welcomed the launch of VETS at the MOD's Welfare Conference where representatives of the Armed Forces, charities and other stakeholders had the opportunity to discuss a wide range of topics, including; the VETS programme and the Department's first ever Armed Forces Families' Strategy which is to be developed as part of the ongoing Armed Forces Covenant work.

The Defence Secretary said: "Veterans have valuable skills that can benefit businesses but not enough employers understand what they have to offer. This new scheme will help match firms to the talent pool of all those who have served and who can help their firms to grow."



A Century of Caring

100 years of The Royal Star & Garter Homes



**The Royal Star
& Garter Homes**
Caring for the nation's military family since 1916

The Royal Star & Garter Homes is a charity that has been caring for disabled veterans for 100 years.

The Royal Star & Garter Homes' mission, when it opened in 1916, was to care for the injured troops returning from the First World War, but where the first residents were in their early twenties, today's residents come to the Charity in later life when they can no longer manage at home.

One such resident is Army veteran Douglas Jakeman who lives with dementia at The Royal Star & Garter Homes. A much-loved great-grandfather, Douglas has lived an incredible life. During the Second World War, he was called up and joined the 9th (Second City of London) Battalion, Royal Fusiliers. They saw active service in the Middle East (PAL Force), the African campaign against Rommel and the Italian campaign.

Douglas was captured at Salerno, Italy, in 1943 and imprisoned at Stalag VIII B 344 at Lamsdorf (Lambinowice) in Poland until 1945. He was separated from the tank team he had trained with and with whom he had spent most of the War. As Douglas describes it, "It was a horrible thing. I had my three lads. When we were caught, as an NCO I wasn't allowed to be (imprisoned) with them, to avoid stirring them all up. I saw my three friends go away, looking at me as if to say 'It's all over'. I never saw them again."

Sadly, Douglas was unable to trace his teammates after the War.

Now he is enjoying life at The Royal Star & Garter Homes, where his family visit him often and where he can receive the specialist care he needs.

Staff at the Charity have had the privilege of sharing the stories and the lives of brave veterans for the last 100 years.

In the words of First World War veteran Horace Ham, who was a resident with the Charity until his death in 1995:

"The Star & Garter is my home now. It's a wonderful, wonderful place. I only hope, just as the Home was here for me when I needed it, it will be here in years to come for brave Servicemen and women."

Now caring for veterans of the Second World War and beyond, it remains the Charity's mission to provide specialist therapeutic and nursing care to the nation's military family for generations to come – just as Horace hoped.



Veteran Douglas Jakeman, with his wife Luana in 1945, and today, pictured below.

More help and advice

For more about The Royal Star & Garter Homes and how they can help you, visit:
www.starandgarter.org



Opening doors for Veterans



Countess of Wessex House, one of Stoll's sites in London (Credit: Living Architects)



Veterans' charity Stoll has succeeded in helping over 260 veterans find secure accommodation through a unique scheme that sees charities, Local Authorities and Housing Associations working together.

The Veterans' Nomination Scheme (VNS) is run by Stoll and is funded by The Royal British Legion. The charities work with Housing Associations and Local Authorities to provide stable, affordable accommodation to veterans across the whole of England.

Stoll accepts referrals from any organisation that works with veterans, and works in partnership with 71 landlords to gain access to one-bedroom flats and studios all over the country. The Scheme enables veterans who may not usually be considered for social housing to be given the opportunity to live independently in such properties.

At 19, Neil* moved out of his parents home to join the Army. After five years of Service he left the Armed Forces and moved to London to pursue his dream career of being a musician. Neil found living independently as a civilian for the first time challenging. He ended up living in a hostel and with no permanent address, he struggled to find a full-time job.

Neil applied for help through the Veterans' Nomination Scheme and Stoll worked with a Housing Association to find Neil a flat and helped him with the up-front payments. With a stable place to live, Neil took an

entrepreneurship course and qualified as a sports coach and fitness instructor.

Thanks to the Veterans' Nomination Scheme, Neil is now feeling positive about the future: "For me, having somewhere to live was a huge turning point in my life. I was homeless, physically and mentally scarred by conflict, stuck in a rut and constantly moving around. The VNS broke that cycle for me and gave me the confidence to channel my efforts into creating a successful career and life for myself post-Service."



Julian Coates, Veterans' Nomination Scheme Project Manager at Stoll says: "We are delighted with the progress being made by the VNS. For some veterans, finding secure, affordable housing is one of the biggest challenges of civilian life.

Neil's story is testament to the fact that with a stable home comes greater opportunities. I hope that many more Local Authorities and Housing Associations see our success and sign up to the scheme. By working collaboratively we can make a greater difference."

About Stoll

Stoll is a leading Veterans' charity and Housing Association that has been helping ex-Service personnel since 1916. Stoll provides secure, high quality housing and access to services that enable vulnerable and disabled Veterans in need of support to live fulfilling, independent lives. www.stoll.org.uk.

*not real name

Veterans UK on GOV.UK

Help and Support

Armed Forces
Compensation Scheme

Armed Forces Pensions

Applying for Medals

Copies of
Service Records

Armed Forces Covenant



WWW.GOV.UK/VETERANS-UK

Veterans UK Helpline 0808 1914 2 18



Inside the Veterans Welfare Service

The Veterans Welfare Service (VWS) is committed to enhancing the quality of life for veterans and beneficiaries of Veterans UK pensions and compensation schemes.

VWS caseworkers offer one-to-one professional help and guidance by telephone, or if needed, during a home visit.

Under Veterans UK, the VWS works in partnerships with the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force, ex-Service charities, statutory and non-statutory bodies, local community service providers and the Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committees to deliver a quality welfare service that promotes independence, maintains dignity and provides continuous support through life.

The VWS has four Veterans Welfare Centres, providing advice and support across the UK.

If you are supporting a veteran and need further advice, the VWS may be able to help.

To locate your nearest centre, call our Veterans UK helpline on 0808 1914 2 18.

Here, John Maguire, a Welfare Manager for the VWS gives an insight into his typical working week.



John Maguire, Welfare Manager

A Welfare Managers Weekly Diary: John Maguire tells us more about how a Veterans Welfare Manager supports the Veterans community

Monday:

I spent the day at Fulwood Barracks working with the Personnel Recovery Unit (PRU) 42 (North West) Brigade. The PRU is a military unit that soldiers are assigned to in the build up to their discharge from the Armed Forces. Working in partnership with military colleagues, I did a presentation about the Veterans Welfare Service to 12 WIS (wounded, injured, sick) soldiers recently assigned to the PRU. This presentation provides valuable information about help and support the Veterans Welfare Service can deliver to the Service person as they approach the transition from Service to civilian life.

Tuesday:

Today I visited an ex-Serviceman who had been referred from one of our partner organisations, the Royal British Legion. The client had recently been diagnosed with skin cancer which could have been caused by his National Service in North Africa. I advised him that he can submit a claim for a War Pension and helped him complete the form. He was also having problems with his personal care due to arthritis so I provided advice regarding potential DWP benefits and assisted with completion of an Attendance Allowance claim form. The Veterans Welfare Service role includes helping family/dependants, so I arranged to visit him again to complete further paperwork for his wife who was also struggling with her care needs.

Wednesday:

Today I was back at the Personnel Recovery Unit attending the newly combined '28 day review' and 'Unit Health Committee' meeting. Again, this is working in partnership with military colleagues at 42 Brigade in assessing those individuals approaching discharge to ensure that support programmes and services are in place. I gave updates on individual cases and gave advice on some other cases. Following the meeting I then prepared for the following day's visits and telephoned the clients confirming they were still available to attend.

Thursday:

I had four local visits arranged in a 'surgery' location at Veterans for Fylde; a local support service with who I have close contacts. I gave advice on the War Pensions Scheme/Armed Forces Compensation Scheme and also DWP benefits. The use of a surgery is beneficial for those who are able to travel as it means I can see more clients at scheduled appointment times in one place than I can when having to travel to different locations.

Friday:

I cleared some work that had been assigned whilst I was away from the office. I was able to resolve some enquiries by phone but after undertaking a full holistic assessment, I determined some clients would need further visits due to mental health/hearing problems. Today I was also the 'duty welfare manager' on call, providing advice, assistance and guidance for any difficult or challenging calls my colleagues in the Welfare Centre may face.

Visit GOV.UK to find out more about veterans welfare issues.

Saturday:

Sunday:



Armed Forces Covenant

Marching On



The Armed Forces Covenant is an agreement between the Government, the Nation and the Armed Forces which the Government has enshrined in law. It is a promise to ensure that Serving personnel, veterans and their families are treated fairly and not disadvantaged by the sacrifices they make or have made to keep the nation safe.

Each year an Annual Report is published to Parliament on the action the Government has taken to uphold the commitments in the Covenant. Here are the highlights from this year's report that will be of interest to the veterans community and also the key priorities coming up.

Healthcare

What does the Covenant do?

Veterans should receive priority treatment (subject to the clinical needs of others) in respect of NHS secondary healthcare relating to a condition resulting from their Service in the Armed Forces and veterans should be able to access mental health professionals who have an understanding of Armed Forces culture.

This year's achievements:

- Embedded the Covenant in the new NHS constitution in England
- £500k initial research programme into hearing loss
- £2M to set up a NHS Specialist Rehabilitation Unit in Stanmore

- £5M to research the psychological impact of battlefield injuries and severe battlefield trauma
- Updated the Armed Forces community health pages on the NHS Choices website
- Allocated £10M to the Royal British Legion to launch a veterans' hearing fund
- Confirmed that funding for the nine enhanced prosthetic centres for veterans will continue
- £3M to help veterans access high specification wheelchairs

Corporate and Community

What does the Covenant do?

The Community Covenant is a voluntary, non-binding commitment by Local Authorities, to support members of the Armed Forces community in their area. The corporate covenant is a public pledge by businesses and other organisations to support the Armed Forces community.

This year's achievements:

- Four regional Local Authorities conferences held to explain the needs of the Armed Forces community and to promote best practice
- Targeted action with Local Authorities to address key issues e.g. access to social housing
- Formally reviewing the support provided by Local Authorities so that it can be further improved in 2016
- More than 760 organisations have now signed a Corporate Covenant pledging specific support for the Armed Forces community such as help with transition from Service to civilian life through work placement opportunities and training courses
- Every Local Authority in mainland Great Britain and two in Northern Ireland have signed a Community Covenant



What else has the Covenant achieved this year?

- The Veterans Employment Transition Support (VETS) programme is a partnership of leading companies and charities. It will support the MOD's Career Transition Partnership in helping Service Leavers find employment, and provide mentoring, training and advice to veterans, regardless of when they left the Armed Forces
- Agreed that Military spouses reaching State Pension age from 6 April 2016 will be able to apply for new National Insurance credits to cover periods from 1975 where they have been accompanying their Service partner on postings outside the UK
- Amended the Armed Forces Pension Scheme to ensure Reservists are eligible
- Provided access to the Armed Forces Railcard for Reserves and their families
- Launched a £10M annual Covenant fund and a five year, £25M aged veteran fund to fund projects that support non-core health, wellbeing and social care needs for older veterans
- Funded the Military Ethos Alternative Provision programme which employs over 300 veterans, including Wounded, Injured and Sick (WIS). This programme aims to help the most disengaged young people in some of the roughest parts of the country to do better at school

What are the targets for the coming year?

Some of the key priorities next year include:

- Publishing the first UK Armed Forces Families' strategy and the plan for making the commitments a reality
- Publishing detailed metrics to provide an objective assessment of how the Covenant is being delivered
- The DfE will provide further opportunities through programmes, such as Troops to Teachers, which provide a worthwhile career path for Service leavers and enables schools to have a better insight into Service life
- Working to get firm commitments from the financial services sector to support the Armed Forces community
- Looking at ways of making it easier for veterans to access the high levels of support available

Where can I find out more?

To find out more about the Armed Forces Covenant go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/armed-forces-covenant>

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Veterans World now includes regular features on:



Accommodation & Housing



special housing and accommodation projects for veterans



Healthcare



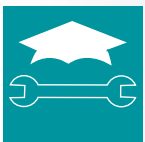
special healthcare programmes for veterans from the NHS, charities and other providers



Working in Partnership



sharing best practice to better support our veterans community



Education, Training and Employment



leaving the forces and helping veterans find work and improve their skills



Family Matters



support for families including those bereaved by service