



Church of Scotland

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

Signed on behalf of:

Church of Scotland

Ministry of Defence

See Overleaf



Signatories

Signed:



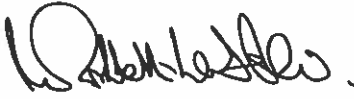
24 JUN 2017

Name:

The Right Rev Dr Derek Browning

Moderator of the General Assembly of
The Church of Scotland

Signed:



24 JUN 2017

Name:

Major General Michael Riddell-Webster
CBE DSO

Governor of Edinburgh Castle

Signed:

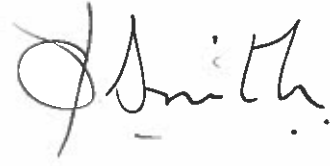


Eric Fraser CBE

The Scottish Veterans Commissioner

24 JUN 2017

Signed:



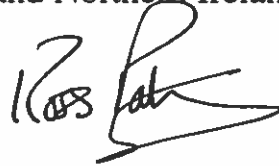
24 JUN 2017

Name:

Captain Chris Smith RN

Naval Regional Commander
Scotland and Northern Ireland

Signed:



24 JUN 2017

Name:

Air Vice Marshal Ross Paterson CB
OBE ADC

Air Officer Scotland

Signed:

Name:



Colonel Martin Gibson OBE DL

Executive Chairman, Veterans Scotland

24 JUN 2017

Church of Scotland Armed Forces Covenant

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.”

Whereas the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland notes the terms of The Armed Forces Covenant; and whereas the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland is desirous of setting out the principles which the Church of Scotland will follow in its relations with past and currently serving members of the armed forces of the United Kingdom and their families. Now therefore the General Assembly declares the following principles:

Section 1: Principles of the Armed Forces Covenant

1.1 A consequence of the Government's defence of the realm is that servicemen, servicewomen and veterans may face disadvantage in their lives. Therefore we, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland will endeavour in our business and charitable 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
- in some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured or bereaved

Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment

2.1 The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland recognises the value serving personnel, reservists, veterans and their families bring to our society and communities. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, by:

Pastorally:

- urging Presbyteries to appoint Veterans' Champions who will support parish ministers and engage with and help contribute to local Veteran's forums;
- urging every parish minister who encounters members of the broader Armed Forces community who are facing disadvantages to signpost them to the appropriate resources;
- supporting veterans, regulars, reservists and their families by the normal arrangements for the provision of pastoral care.

Liturgically:

- commending the recognition and remembrance of the sacrifices made by others by marking Remembrance Sunday and other such occasions.
- producing and distributing appropriate promotional and liturgical material for use across Scotland as resources for remembrance of the past and reflection on future hopes.

Organisationally:

- providing support in the employment of veterans (young and old) in our own recruitment practices including advertising appropriate vacancies in the non-incorporated Councils and Committees through relevant veterans' employment websites and guaranteeing an interview for those veterans who are in receipt of a War Disabled Pension or other Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payment, providing they meet the essential criteria for the job;
- looking favourably upon employee and office holder requests for leave and flexible working by partners of those deployed, and compassionate leave for any bereaved spouse - including attendance at an inquest or other legal investigation;
- affirming the important work of regular and reserve military chaplaincy and facilitating the transition to and from civilian and military ministry by recognising the transferability of skills and experiences of those engaged in military chaplaincy;
- seeking to support our employees and office holders who choose to be members of the Reserve forces, for instance, by seeking as far as possible to accommodate their training and deployment;
- setting up a dedicated page and links on websites across the Church's community to alert those who work in relevant areas of Church ministry to the specific needs of and resources for the Armed Forces Community.

2.2 We will seek to publicise these commitments on our websites, setting out how we will seek to honour them and inviting feedback from the Service and Veterans' community and others on how we are doing. In addition, we will encourage organisations across the Service and Veterans' community to link to our websites and resources.