



Corporate Covenant

The Armed Forces Corporate Covenant

Gentoo Group Ltd

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 Gentoo Group Ltd

Signed: 

Name: Peter Walls

Position Held: CEO, Gentoo Group

Date: 16.6.15



Ministry
of Defence

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: Principles Of The Armed Forces Corporate Covenant

1.1 We, Gentoo, 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.*
- *in some circumstances special treatment may be appropriate especially for the injured or bereaved.*

Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment

2.1 Gentoo recognises the value serving personnel, reservists, veterans and military families bring to our business. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, by:

- *promoting the fact that we are an armed forces-friendly organisation:*
 - *We will proudly display our Bronze Award for services to the Armed Forces Community on our website.*
 - *We will display our Award in a prominent place at our head office.*
 - *The badge will be proudly displayed as a footer on all email communication from Gentoo Group.*
 - *Our website will give detail of our commitment to the Armed Forces Community and copies of our Community Covenant and Corporate Covenant can be found there.*
- *seeking to support the employment of veterans young and old:*
 - *We will continue our already established partnership with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) including links with our local Employment Engagement Officer and the Regional Manager.*
 - *All vacancies at Gentoo will be advertised on the CTP website and through our Armed Forces partners and networks.*
 - *We will work alongside The Officers' Association (AO) with regard to recruitment from the Military Officer Corps.*

- *striving to support the employment of ex-service personnel at Gentoo and Service spouses and partners:*
 - *Gentoo employees who have served in the Armed Forces are invited to be part of our Gentoo Armed Forces Veterans Group. This Group will provide peer support to ex Armed Forces personnel, Reservists and ex-Reservists and to spouses and family members of people who have served or are serving.*
 - *The Gentoo Armed Forces Veterans Group will advocate on behalf of this group, be Armed Forces Champions within the organisation, offering advice and assistance and support to customers and staff.*
- *We recognise the need to offer flexibility in granting leave at short notice for Service spouses and partners before during and after a partner's deployment.*
- *We will actively support any staff member who chooses to be a member of the Reserves:*
 - *We will support their need of training and deployment, granting 2 weeks of additional leave across each year.*
 - *We will encourage our Reservists to participate in Reserves Day as part of our activity around Armed Forces Day.*
 - *We will encourage staff who wish to become Reservists to do so, supporting them throughout the process.*
 - *We will welcome the Single Service Reservists to actively recruit from within Gentoo, providing opportunities for staff engagement.*
- *We will actively support Sunderland's Armed Forces Day by:*
 - *Providing volunteering opportunities for Gentoo staff to participate.*
 - *Promoting the event programme on our website, encouraging staff and customer participation.*
 - *Provide easy access to our Aspire grants programme for Armed Forces Day activity.*

- *We will seek to identify Gentoo customers who have served/are serving in the Armed Forces and support them where possible.*
- *We will encourage Gentoo customer volunteers with service history to participate in volunteering events, in specific relation to the Armed Forces.*
- *Our Gentoo Armed Forces Internal Working Group will be responsible for ensuring that our working practices do not disadvantage any member of the Armed Forces Community. The group will seek to enhance working practices to benefit this client group.*
- *We will work with partners to train staff in health issues associated with the Armed Forces.*
- *Our Business Connector will work specifically with the Armed Forces Community/Voluntary/Charity sector, connecting such groups to local businesses who will assist them in achieving their aims and objectives.*
- *We will support the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal throughout the City in Gentoo offices.*
- *We will support Armed Forces charities and events connected to our employees such as Brothers in Arms and Cuthy's 200.*
- *We will review our allocations policy to give priority to Returning Service Personnel seeking accommodation.*
- *We will have a nominated 'Service Champion' for housing allocations.*
- *We will uphold our commitment as signatory on our Local Community Covenant for Sunderland.*
- *We will be active members of Sunderland's Armed Forces Network and participate in the City's Armed Forces Forum.*
- *We will be an active member of Sunderland's Armed Forces Strategic Board, working with our Local Authority on a strategic plan for the Armed Forces Community which will support our Local Community Covenant.*

- *We will create local partnerships that will benefit the Armed Forces Community.*
- *We will lead on a Regional and then National Armed Forces Housing Pledge, encouraging Housing Providers to:*

- *Recognise the commitment of Returning Service Personnel and Veterans and treat them accordingly.*
- *Ensure your allocations policy gives priority to Returning Service Personnel, reviewing this if necessary and nominate a 'Service Champion' in relation to housing allocations.*
- *Agree upon a One Access for Housing Strategy, ensuring that Returning Service Personnel can expect a consistent offer wherever they choose to return to.*
- *Develop personal support packages to complement the housing offer.*
- *Be an active signatory to your Local Community Covenant, create your own Corporate Covenant, delivering on responsibilities, promises and commitments on both.*
- *Challenge existing working practices, changing the way you do business to favour Veterans and Returning Personnel.*
- *Actively engage in partnerships locally, regionally and nationally for the continued benefit of Returning Service Personnel and Veterans, providing access to a range of specialist services.*

We strive to continuously improve our commitment to the Armed Forces Community through continuous engagement and interaction with veterans and other stakeholders. As such, this Corporate Covenant is subject to favourable change.

2.2 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.