

Sheffield Community Covenant

Annual Report 2014



www.sheffield.gov.uk/armedforces



Foreword

This is an especially important year for recognising the local Armed Forces Community. This year we commemorate 100 years since the start of World War I and remember all those who sacrificed their freedom for the freedom of others. Across Sheffield we have seen many commemoration activities involving all generations and this will continue up until 2018.

This is the third year of the Community Covenant and we continue to celebrate Veterans and Armed Forces Day, which has become a key event in our local calendar. This year saw one of the busiest events with stalls and activities across the city centre along with the popular Veterans and Cadets parade. This year we were proud to have the Town Guns displayed in the City Centre and are grateful to all those who made this happen.

We recognise that the local Armed Forces Community is made up of many people. This includes those who are currently serving in the Army, Navy and Air Force and those who are Reservist, giving up their spare time to train and serve. There are also Cadets learning essential skills for life and preparing for a potential future role and our Veterans whose previous service we value and appreciate. The group that is sometimes forgotten are the close family and friends of those mentioned above. These are the people who keep things going whilst loved ones are away and provide the normality and stability that is so essential. This report sets out how support is provided to all those who make up the local Armed Forces Community in Sheffield and shows our ongoing commitment to promote the aims of the Community Covenant.

Councillor Julie Dore, Leader Sheffield City Council

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The aims of the Sheffield Community Covenant have remained the same since it was implemented in Sheffield in November 2011. These are to:

1. Encourage local communities to support the Armed Forces Community in their area;
2. Nurture understanding and awareness amongst the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces Community;
3. Recognise the contribution made by the Armed Forces Community;
4. Remember the sacrifices faced by the Armed Forces Community;
5. Encourage activities which help to integrate the Armed Forces Community into local life;
6. Encourage the Armed Forces Community to help and support the wider community, whether through participation in events and joint projects, or other forms of engagement.

1.2 This report details the progress made on these aims during 2014.

2.0 National and local context

2.1 At the end of World War II there were 5,000,000 armed forces personnel, today the number is less than 200,000 and this number is decreasing as planned through the Army 2020 programme. Army 2020 is the concept for transforming the British Army for the 2020s and beyond in response to today's strategic challenges. Army 2020 seeks to fully integrate Regulars and Reservists, for the first time, within a whole force structure. The most significant changes, as seen this year, is the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan, the rebasing of troops from Germany, reduction in the number of Regulars and the increased numbers of Reservists. This has implications for cities such as Sheffield as our local Armed Forces Community is likely to increase and we are likely to have a higher proportion of Reservists living and

working in the city than ever before. This makes ongoing support even more crucial, impacting on the City Council, the health services and local employers. This year the Government has introduced a new Covenant into the Covenant family, the Corporate Covenant. This aims to increase support and awareness amongst businesses and organisations that are employers of, and provide services to members of the local Armed Forces Community.

2.2 We continue to develop our understanding of the makeup of the Armed Forces Community in Sheffield. But we do know some facts, for example:

- There have been around 300 new entrants to the Armed Forces from Sheffield in the last 5 years.
- There are around 1,300 people in Sheffield receiving a pension from the MOD following active service.
- At the beginning of 2014 there were 70 MOD personnel living in Sheffield. 40 Army regular Forces and 30 Civilian Personnel in their own homes.
- 46 Naval families are recorded as living in Sheffield.
- 60 service children claimed service pupil premium this year.

2.3 SaBRE (Supporting Britain's Reservists and Employers) estimate that there are currently 35,000 Reservists in the UK including the Royal Naval Reserve, Royal Marine Reserves, the Army Reserves and the Royal Air Force Reserves. These are ordinary men and women, from all parts of the community, who give up their time to train and serve alongside the Regular Forces. Reservists make up around 14% of the nation's total defence capacity and are called out to supplement the Regular Forces as needed. There are a number of different categories of Reservists including Standard Volunteer Reservists and Full-time Reserves. Full details of all the categories and the role of the Reservist can be found on the SaBRE website www.sabre.mod.uk.

- 2.4 The Cadet Forces offer young people the opportunity for personal development in addition to providing adventure and excitement through a wide range of activities. The Government is opening 100 new cadet units in state-funded secondary schools in England by 2015. This opportunity has been promoted to schools in Sheffield through the communication system “schoolpoint”. Sheffield Cadets include the Army Cadets, Air Cadet and Sea Cadets. The Cadets are an integral part of the local Armed Forces Community and join the parade each year with the Veterans on Armed Forces Day.
- 2.5 Links have been established in Sheffield between the Sheffield Community Covenant Partnership Board and the Reserve Forces and Cadet Association (RFCA) for Yorkshire and Humberside. Sheffield has a seat on the RFCA Board for Yorkshire and Humberside.
- 2.6 Veterans are also part of our Armed Forces Community and a person is considered a Veteran if they have previously served in the Armed Forces, this may be for as little as a single day but is usually for a much longer period. It is estimated that there are around five million Veterans in the UK, and about seven million family dependents. In Sheffield this equates to over 90,000 people. Veterans are supported in Sheffield through well-established ex-Service associations which provide a range of support. Links have been strengthened with these organisations throughout 2014.
- 2.7 The Armed Forces Community includes those in-service including Reservists, Veterans and those who care for, depend on or are close family members of these groups of people.¹

¹ “Family member” means spouse, dependent child, parent or sibling, where they are supporting or supported by the serviceman / woman.

3.0 Sheffield Community Covenant Partnership

3.1 There are now three Covenants in the Covenant family. The **Armed Forces Covenant** was the first of these and sets out the relationship between the nation, the government and the armed forces. It recognises that the whole nation, has a moral obligation to members of the armed forces and their families, and it establishes how they should expect to be treated. The principles of this are enshrined in law through the Armed Forces Act 2011.

3.2 The Armed Forces Covenant has delivered many tangible benefits over the last 3 years. This year the government has shown its commitment to the Armed Forces Community by:

- Committing to permanent funding for the Covenant, including a further £10million per year 2015-16 on top of the current £65million.
- £100million of Libor fines is being made available to support a number of good causes which include work with the Armed Forces Community.
- £150million is being provided for the purchase of 700 properties to use as service accommodation.
- Council tax relief has doubled to almost £600 for personnel on eligible operations.
- There are retained places on the NHS waiting list and guaranteed IVF cycles for injured personnel.
- Access to the Service Pupil premium has been widened and the Families Welfare Grant has been increased.

3.2 The Armed Forces Covenant was shortly followed by the **Armed Forces Community Covenant** in June 2011. The Community Covenant was established in Sheffield November 2011. The aims of the Community Covenant are detailed in section 1. The Sheffield

Community Covenant Partnership is made up of representatives from across a number of key organisations in the city including:

- Amey
- Armed Forces
- Capita
- Charitable organisations
- Ex-Service Associations
- Jobcentre Plus
- Remploy
- Sheffield City Council
- Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group
- Sheffield Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust
- The Royal British Legion
- South Yorkshire Police

3.3 This year South Yorkshire Police (SYP) joined the Sheffield Community Covenant Partnership. SYP have also agreed a referral process to the Sheffield Veterans and Armed Forces Support Service.



3.4 The Sheffield Community Covenant Partnership Board meets twice a year. The Leader of Sheffield City Council, Julie Dore, chairs the meetings. The role of the Board is:

- a. To promote the signing of the covenant by partner organisations and members of the charitable and voluntary sectors and ensure that the commitments made are adhered to.

- b. To establish a joint action plan and identify resources to support projects which strengthen the ties between members of the Armed Forces Community and the wider community in Sheffield.
- c. To monitor the impact of the covenant and ensure that the aims are met.
- d. To provide oversight of all the activity within Sheffield relating to the Community Covenant Grant Scheme
- e. To ensure that key services (health, housing, employment, etc.) within the city are briefed and able to support the Armed Forces Community.
- f. To encourage the Armed Forces Community to be active members of their local communities
- g. To report annually to Full Council on the implementation of the Community Covenant.

3.5 The **Corporate Covenant** was introduced this year. This is the final of the three covenants in the covenant family. The corporate covenant is a written and publicised voluntary pledge from businesses and charitable organisations who wish to demonstrate their concrete support for the armed forces community. Over 100 organisations have signed the corporate covenant to date. In Sheffield this includes key organisations such as the Kier Group and Capita plc

"We are delighted to be in the first group of companies to sign up to the Corporate Covenant. It allows the Commercial Sector to commit to the principles that no member of the Armed Forces community should be disadvantaged in the provision of public or commercial services, and that in some special circumstances special treatment may be appropriate for the injured or bereaved. Kier will demonstrate that it is an Armed Forces friendly organisation by recognising military skills, seeking to employ veterans, working to provide flexibility with employees who are also Reservists and by striving to support service dependants and local cadet organisations". **Duncan Whiting, Director Kier Group**

3.6 Capita plc have carried out a range of activities since signing up to the Sheffield Community Covenant and more recently since signing the Corporate Covenant. Actions include arranging 3 two week work

experience trials for Veterans, establishing links with the Career Transition Partnership, guaranteed interviews for Veteran applicants, special leave for Reservists and recognition of military skills and qualifications.

4.0 Sheffield Community Covenant Progress 2014

4.1 There has been considerable progress made since the Community Covenant was established in Sheffield in November 2011. A report is produced each year showing progress. Below are examples of the progress made in 2014.

4.2 Encourage local communities to support the Armed Forces Community in their area

4.2.1 “Heroes Welcome” was launched at the Federation of Small Businesses event in November 2012. Businesses continue to be encouraged to sign the pledge and show their support to the local Armed Forces Community. This year Owlerton Stadium Sheffield showed their support and joined the scheme offering a discount on production of a military ID card. The scheme was promoted during Veterans and Armed Forces Day this year and

this was acknowledged by the organisers of the Heroes Welcome scheme who circulated this photograph to all their members.



4.2.2 The Community Covenant Grant scheme continues to be promoted by Sheffield City Council. This year two schemes have been carried forward and a new project has been funded bringing over £100,000 of Ministry of Defence funding into Sheffield:

- Parkour Training Facility - awarded £20,000 to create a dedicated Parkour training facility in Endcliffe Park, Sheffield
- Sheffield Cathedral – £25,098 - Project engaging 2,500 school children from 75 schools (25 school per year) across the city in the commemoration of WW1 over the next three years. Outreach visits commence this term with schools which have been targeted for the project and printed information is going out to all primary schools in the area.
- TAKE2 - £59,015 - A Peer Led Accommodation, Employment and Personal Development Project for Sheffield

4.2.3 This year Customer Services, in Sheffield City Council, arranged a collection of goods for Sheffield Supports Soldiers Easter box appeal.

“On behalf of Sheffield Supports Soldiers, We would like to thank you again for the generous donations that you have given us towards our Shoe Box Appeal. Your Commitment towards helping our efforts is sincerely appreciated. We have been truly humbled by the amount of donations we received, we look forward to passing on to you, any feedback or correspondence that we receive from the recipients of the Shoe Boxes. With your very kind help and donations we will ensure that at least 100 servicemen and women will receive a shoe box containing basic essentials like shower gel, toothpaste etc., and also some sweets and treats for them to enjoy over the Easter period. Thanks again for your generous support towards our efforts; it really has restored our faith that people can still give so much, even in these trying times.” **Tony Merrygold, Sheffield Supports Soldiers**

4.2.4 Links have been developed with a number of organisations across the city this year to encourage local communities to support their Armed Forces community. Links have been established with Blind Veterans UK, Remploy and a South Yorkshire Local Authorities group has been formed to share knowledge and resources.

4.2.5 An e-learning module has been developed for Sheffield City Council employees informing them of the Community Covenant and giving more information about the local armed forces community. This is currently being tested by Armed Forces employees (Veterans and Reservists) and will be launched in 2015.

4.3 Nurture understanding and awareness amongst the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces Community

4.3.1 The Armed Forces webpages on the Sheffield City Council website were launched in November 2012 and are updated monthly www.sheffield.gov.uk/armedforces. This allows individuals to show their support to the Armed Forces Community by signing up to the Community Covenant. It also encourages businesses to join the Heroes Welcome scheme and publicises the offers made. We have received very positive feedback about the website and received approximately 3,000 views of the web pages in the last 12 months. We've also helped by providing links to other organisations through our website.

“Just to say that the (Armed Forces) online information is very clear and helpful, one of the best in my trawl round the region”. **Andrew Melville, Member of Yorkshire and Humberside Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee**

4.3.2 The publication of this annual report is an important part of nurturing awareness and understanding. The report is

published for all to see the work that has taken place over the last year. The Royal Air Force Families Federation shared last year's report with their contacts as an example of "*Excellent Practice*".

4.4 Recognise the contribution made by the Armed Forces Community

4.4.1 Sheffield City Council continues in its aim to raise £150,000 to produce a permanent memorial in recognition of the women of Sheffield who served their city and country by working in the steel industry and factories during World War I and World War II. The statue will celebrate a special group of women whose exceptional work ethic, stamina and bravery in the steel factories went virtually unrecognised for years. The project is called Women of Steel and donations can be made here <https://www.justgiving.com/womenofsteel>.

4.4.2 The Support for Volunteer Reservists and Adult Instructors of Cadets Policy was updated and published by Sheffield City Council in January 2014. This recognises the role of these volunteers and provides support for employees who carry out these roles. The Policy has been shared with other organisations as an example of good practise.

4.4.3 Sheffield City Council is regularly updating information to honour those involved in conflicts. This year the War Memorials Officer has arranged the following tributes:

- 3 names engraved on Hollinsend Memorials from WW2
- Plaque erected at Frecheville commemorating the local Servicemen who perished in WW2
- Working with Friends of Grenoside War Memorial to add a name

- Installation of 3 plaques to commemorate 3 Servicemen born in Sheffield who received the VC in WW1

4.4.4 In addition Rolls of Honour have been moved from Bannerdale Centre to original location at Leopold Hotel and from outside Emmanuel Church to Chapelwood Road Church.

4.5 Remember the sacrifices faced by the Armed Forces Community

4.5.1 Servicemen and women from the 1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery and the King's Troop paraded through Sheffield to mark their homecoming from Afghanistan in January 2014. Soldiers spoke of their pride at parading through their home city to mark the end of a tour in Afghanistan. Troops from the 1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery were applauded by crowds of people as they marched through the city centre. A band and marching horses pulling two artillery guns from the ceremonial King's Troop also paraded for the first time since 1974 to mark the end of a decade of the regiment's service in Iraq, Afghanistan and Cyprus.

4.5.2 Veterans and Armed Forces Day is an excellent way in which to raise awareness and encourage local communities to support the local Armed Forces Community. On the 21 of June 2014 we celebrated our sixth Veterans and Armed Forces day in Sheffield. Veterans and Armed Forces Day is an occasion to remember the sacrifices made by those who have served the country over the years. It's also an opportunity to thank those who volunteer as Reservist and the families and friends, who provide the day to day support to our Armed Forces Community. This year also commemorated 100 years since the start of World War 1 and the sunny weather brought thousands of people into the city centre for the stalls, activities and parade.

4.5.3 Commemoration activities to mark the start of World War 1 have been taking place across the city this year. The activities are listed on the Sheffield City Council website and on Welcome to Sheffield. As well as the formal activities across the city people have been making their own arrangements to mark this special year, including street art as shown in the photograph below.



4.5.4 Sheffield City Council has worked with the local Armed Forces Community and local Schools to have a shop window display to commemorate the start of World War 1. The display has been on Pinstone Street since June 2014 and continues to be rotated to display different relevant scenes.



4.5.5 In June 2014 Remploy held a Veterans Event, promoting the work they are doing to support Veterans in Sheffield. Speakers included Tony Philips from Combat Stress and MP Paul

Blomfield. The event brought together organisations and employees from across the city.

4.5.6 Sheffield City Council took part in the national “Lights Out” initiative on Monday 4 August 2014. A single light shone from the three main offices (Town Hall, Moorfoot, Howden House) from 10pm-11pm. This marked the 100th anniversary, to the hour, at which the UK joined World War 1.

4.5.7 Dore Primary School produced an excellent display in the Town Hall foyer during summer. The pupils in the school produced information and a display in a space the size of trench to commemorate the start of World War 1.



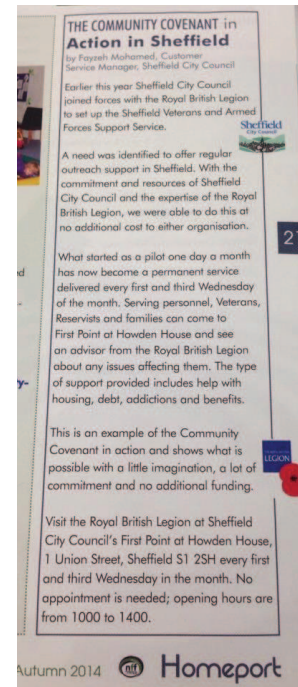
4.5.8 On 18 October 2014 the 64 (City of Sheffield) Signal Regiment was given Freedom of the City following reorganisation of the Army Reserves. The honour of Freedom of the City was transferred from the previous 38th Signal Regiment. A parade and inspection took place in the City Centre.

4.5.9 On 12 November 2014 Sheffield City Council Cabinet approved recommendations to nominate Weston Park as a ‘Centenary Field’ as part of a national initiative being led by the Fields in Trust and the Royal British Legion. The Centenary Fields programme 2014-18 aims to protect at least one green space in every local authority area across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to commemorate the centenary of World War 1.

4.6 Encourage activities which help to integrate the Armed Forces Community into local life

4.6.1 Links have been made this year with the Royal Air Force and Naval Families Federations Community Covenant Coordinators. These links have enabled us to share information about the Armed Forces Community in Sheffield.

4.6.2 In November 2013 a new service was launched, the Sheffield Armed Forces and Veterans Support Service. This service was initially delivered one day a month from First Point in Howden House. Experienced Welfare Advisors from The Royal British Legion attend Council premises to deliver the service. The service has been so successful that since July 2014 it is delivered two days a month, on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month. The service was featured in an article in the autumn 2014 edition of Homeport. Homeport is a magazine produced by the Naval Families Federation, the independent voice of Royal Naval and Royal Marines families.



4.6.3 The Veterans Outreach Service continues to be delivered in Sheffield by the Sheffield Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust. The service provides specialist mental health support to veterans and their families. The focus over the latter part of this year has shifted to do less of the awareness raising and capacity building to doing more clinical work. There are now more direct referrals and referrals through organisations such as South Yorkshire Police.

4.6.4 The service pupil premium is an opportunity to access support for children of service families. This is used by schools to help integrate children into the local community and provides the funds to arrange specialist support and activities. Service personnel with children in state schools in England are asked to notify their school head teacher of their children's eligibility to the service pupil premium before the annual school census. This was introduced in 2011 as part of the commitment to the delivery of Armed Forces Covenant. There were 60 eligible children registered in Sheffield this year and £80,000 was received in funding. The next school census is in January 2015 and this is where service pupils need to be identified, this will determine funding for the next year. It is worth noting that this year's promotion of the premium resulted in an increase in notifications from 42 the previous year to 60 this year.

4.6.5 The Parkour facility based in Endcliffe Park Sheffield was funded by Sheffield City Council and the Community Covenant Grant and was opened for use on 17th May 2014. The facility is very popular and heavily used by Parkour practitioners and new users. The facility has been promoted by Sheffield Parkour Movement via social media and Radio Sheffield the response received suggests that the facility is attracting between 30-50 users per day. The facility is providing a location for young people to practice Parkour in a safe and welcoming environment. This includes young people involved in cadets and those that have no military connections. The Parkour facility provides an opportunity for the 38 Signal Regiment and relevant others to promote and communicate the work of the Armed Forces.



4.6.6 Through the Government's Work Choice programme Remploy help veterans to prepare for and find employment after the Armed Forces. Remploy have a number of Armed Forces Champions that arrange specialist intervention, tailored development modules and employer engagement to fully support the integration of ex-service personnel into civilian life.

4.7 Encourage the Armed Forces Community to help and support the wider community, whether through participation in events and joint projects. Or other forms of engagement

4.7.1 The Kier Group have developed programmes in partnership with the Careers Transition Partnership to help the Armed Forces Community to integrate into local life. The Kier Group Military Work Placement Programme provides a link with national programmes to aid the rehabilitation of military service users into civilian careers. The provision of civilian work experience to these ex-service personnel has proved invaluable in highlighting transferable skills.

4.7.2 Sheffield City Council took part in Exercise Executive Stretch, a SaBRE training course to give employers an



understanding into the training undertaken by Reservists. The exercise is led by Reservists and gives a unique insight into the work carried out by Reservists and the skills they can bring into the workforce.

4.7.3 Sheffield City Council held an Employees Armed Forces Workshop this year in which it brought together employees from Sheffield City Council who also part of the Armed Forces Community. These are a mix of Veterans and Reservists. The group now meet twice yearly, share information and have agreed to be used as a testing ground for new developments.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 2014 has been a year of reflection, commemoration and practical action to support the local Armed Forces community in Sheffield. We are proud of the continued commitment that the whole of the city has shown to meeting the aims of the Community Covenant. This commitment has spanned across public, private and community organisations across the city.

5.2 In this special year of commemoration is it worth reminding ourselves of why it is important to acknowledge the contribution of the Armed Forces Community, today, in the past and in the future. This commitment should be honoured and never forgotten.

For The Fallen by Robert Laurence Binyon

With proud thanksgiving,
a mother for her children,
England mourns for her dead across the sea.
Flesh of her flesh they were, spirit of her spirit,
Fallen in the cause of the free.

Solemn the drums thrill;
Death august and royal Sings sorrow up into immortal spheres,
There is music in the midst of desolation
And a glory that shines upon our tears.

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted;
They fell with their faces to the foe.

**They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.**

They mingle not with their laughing comrades again;
They sit no more at familiar tables of home;
They have no lot in our labour of the day-time;
They sleep beyond England's foam.

But where our desires are and our hopes profound,
Felt as a well-spring that is hidden from sight,
To the innermost heart of their own land they are known
As the stars are known to the Night;

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain;
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.



This document can be supplied in alternative formats, please contact 0114 205 3532.

Sheffield City Council
www.sheffield.gov.uk



When you have finished with this document please recycle

80% recycled

This document is printed on 80% recycled paper

This page is intentionally left blank