

Shropshire Armed Forces Partnership Board

Action Plan 2025-2029

The Armed Forces Covenant is a pledge that together we acknowledge and understand that those who serve or who have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, should be treated with fairness and respect in the communities, economy, and society they serve with their lives.

The Shropshire Armed Forces Partnership Board (SAFPB) Action Plan is driven by Shropshire Council and advocates a shared vision and clear understanding of the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant – to ensure fair treatment and to remove disadvantage for the Armed Forces community: serving personnel, service leavers, veterans, and their families. The vision is to ensure the Covenant is better established and understood across the County and that stakeholders can apply its principles through partnership working, service provision and policies.

The deliverability of this action plan is reliant upon members of the Shropshire Armed Forces Partnership Board and the organisations we work with.

It is intended that the actions we deliver through this Plan will address the key aims of the Armed Forces Covenant:

- Encourage local communities to support the Armed Forces community in their areas and to nurture public understanding and awareness among the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces community.
- Recognise and remember the sacrifices faced by the Armed Forces community.
- Encourage activities which help to integrate the Armed Forces community into local life.
- Encourage the Armed Forces community to help and support the wider community, whether through participation in events and joints projects, or other forms of engagement.

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THEME	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	REVIEW DATE	CURRENT POSITION – What are we doing now?	FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS – what are we going to do?
1. Collaboration Between Organisations	Shropshire Council (SC) continues to administer and co-ordinate a steering group of internal/external partners including those signed up to the Covenant.	Cllr I Nellins - AFC Champion Cllr K Hurst - AFC Champion SC – AFC Project Team	Autumn 2025	Shropshire Armed Forces Partnership Board (SAFPB) set up to oversee and deliver the commitments within the Covenant together. Update: Ongoing support for the SAFPB and the number of attendees/interested parties continues to increase. The Ops Group meets monthly. The group support people who are in varying degrees of crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agree and oversee the Action Plan and update regularly. - Agree the Terms of Reference for the SAFC Partnership Group and publicise. - Organise quarterly meetings of the SAFC Partnership Group at different venues. - Seek agenda items for the SAFC Partnership Group. - Organise monthly meetings of the Ops Group and assess feasibility of holding at different venues.
2. Working Together	The SAFPB will raise awareness and understanding of the AFC.	SAFC Partnership Group SC – AFC Project Team	Ongoing	General information sharing on the SC and other partners official webpage and through Facebook/twitter. Training sessions are delivered on a regular basis including Veterans Awareness training and suicide awareness training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of a communications plan incl. website refresh and better use of social media. - Briefings and presentations are regularly made to Councillors and Senior Managers as appropriate - A minimum of two business/organisation/community events to be delivered annually.

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3. Community and Relationships	<p>Develop the Outreach Programme and look at alternative management options</p> <p>We are not the subject matter experts, but we can signpost individuals to the relevant agencies to support their needs.</p>	<p>SC – AFC Project Team.</p> <p>Armed Forces Community, MOD, military charities, voluntary and community sector, business sector</p>	Summer 2025	<p>Outreach sessions are held across the County, looking to introduce mobile outreach in remote areas, in conjunction with various agencies.</p> <p>All location and dates will be published on the Web Page.</p>	<p>Record statistics to determine success criteria and effectively monitor results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of service or ex-service personnel accessing the outreach hub. - Number of activities/workshops. - Number of service users helped.
4. Recognition and understanding	<p>Continue to meet the aims of the Armed Forces Covenant, increase awareness and legacy.</p> <p>Ensure compliance in line with the Armed Forces legislation for Healthcare, Housing and Education</p> <p>Promote Armed Forces Covenant Signings and encourage organisations across Shropshire to sign up. Promote the Employer Recognition Scheme.</p>	<p>SC – AFC Project Team SAFPB</p> <p>SC – AFC Project Team SAFPB</p> <p>Armed Forces Community, WM RFCA, DRM and regional AFC</p>	Ongoing	<p>AS of the 14/11/24 150 businesses in Shropshire have signed the AFC</p> <p>In the recent census we can confirm that there are over 14,800 veterans across Shropshire.</p>	<p>Advocacy work will continue to increase the number of businesses/organisations that are signed up to the Covenant.</p> <p>Advocacy work to ensure that AFC signatories are meeting their pledges.</p> <p>Advocacy work to continue to encourage/support businesses/organisations to achieve the bronze, silver, or gold AFC Employer Recognition Scheme Awards.</p>
5. Community Integration	Promote local services and discounts for the Armed Forces Community.	SC – AFC Project Team	Ongoing	Discounts made through AFC pledges.	

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	Promote and support the development of community integration projects to through the AF Covenant Trust and Military Charities .	SAFPB Partnership Group			
6. Health & Wellbeing Mental Health	Identify specialist needs to support veteran’s mental health. Support veterans to access timely, effective and integrated services	Shropshire Council SC – AFC Project Team SAFPB/Ops Group CAMHS OP Courage	Ongoing	Working to support veterans to access timely, effective and integrated services through the Outreach hubs and partnership working. Working with Armed Forces charities and charitable organisations, health and local partners to further strengthen and link wider mental activity.	Raise awareness around the Priority Treatment policy with partner agencies in health. Linked with increasing veteran declaration of service. Actively promote the Positive Pathways Programme. Research and map local mental health services, referral pathways to access primary and secondary mental health services and raise awareness through the Outreach hubs. Ensure recognition of access to mental health services for Armed Forces children.
7. Health & Wellbeing Older Veterans	Address and facilitate the needs of older veterans around social care, mobility, loneliness and social isolation.	Shropshire Council SC – AFC Project Team	Ongoing	Representation from Shropshire Council Adult Social Care and Age UK has been sought to attend the SAFPB and Ops Group.	Link with Integrated Care Board, social prescribing public health and ASC Hub/assistive technology.

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		SAFC Partnership Group			Update Shropshire Council's policies around veterans.
8. Health & Wellbeing Families	<p>Ensure that NHS and statutory services can be accessed by Service personnel, veterans, spouses and children and that no disadvantage is experienced.</p> <p>GP Surgeries signing up to the Veterans Friendly Accreditation Scheme</p> <p>Compliance with Armed Forces Health legislation</p>	<p>Shropshire Council</p> <p>SC – AFC Project Team</p> <p>Integrated Care Board/RCGP</p> <p>SAFPB</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Work is ongoing to ensure that the Covenant is better integrated within GP practices and hospitals.</p> <p>The SC AFC Project Team have undertaken Veterans Awareness training to Veterans Champions within the Shrewsbury and Telford Health (SaTH) Trust.</p> <p>Outreach hubs regularly take place in local hospitals.</p> <p>Use of the GP Code is widely communicated on social media.</p> <p>To give 'due regard' in the following areas</p>	<p>Develop an effective training programme to raise awareness of the Covenant across Health providers</p> <p>Link with community and family hubs</p> <p>Considering the Covenant when developing, delivering and reviewing policies and decisions which may impact the Armed Forces community.</p>

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				<p>the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces;</p> <p>the principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces; and</p> <p>The principle that special provision for Service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.</p>	
9. Health & Wellbeing Substance Misuse	Support development of veteran-focused service provision and promote awareness of community-based opportunities.	Shropshire Council SC – AFC Project Team SAFPB/Ops Group We are with You	Ongoing	Locally commissioned substance misuse services and networks are aware of how to engage veterans.	
10. Education	Recognise difficulties faced by Service families during school transition.	Shropshire Council		Work is ongoing with Shropshire Council's	School Admission Codes and SPP have been two of the greatest successes of

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	<p>Maximise the value of the Service Pupil Premium (SPP).</p> <p>Compliance with Armed Forces Education legislation</p>	SC – AFC Project Team		<p>Education Service Team to raise awareness of the SPP and to identify best practice of how it is spent.</p> <p>Numbers of eligible pupils for SPP have been identified and these will be used to encourage registration.</p> <p>To give ‘due regard’ in the following areas the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces;</p> <p>the principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from</p>	<p>the Covenant. However, difficulties are still being faced due to academisation. SC AFC Project Team to work with Academy Trusts to encourage them to be more Forces friendly and to sign up to the Covenant Pledge.</p> <p>Issues remain about SEN and additional support, in respect of how to get the required package in place at short notice. When families transition from military service, the School Admissions Code does not apply.</p> <p>Considering the Covenant when developing, delivering and reviewing policies and decisions which may impact the Armed Forces community.</p>

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11. Housing	<p>Housing advice to the Armed Forces Community.</p> <p>SC to engage with Armed Forces welfare officers, relevant statutory bodies, and service charities on the number of Veteran rough sleepers</p> <p>Compliance with the Armed Forces legislation for Housing</p>	<p>SC Housing Team Social Housing Providers</p> <p>SC/We are with You/service charities</p> <p>Shropshire Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Offering advice on homelessness, Homepoint,</p> <p>Ops group supports clients who have housing issues</p> <p>To give 'due regard' in the following areas</p> <p>To give 'due regard' in the following areas the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces;</p>	<p>Considering the Covenant when developing, delivering and reviewing policies and decisions which may impact the Armed Forces community.</p>

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				<p>the principle that it is desirable to remove disadvantages arising for Service people from membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces; and</p> <p>The principle that special provision for Service people may be justified by the effects on such people of membership, or former membership, of the Armed Forces.</p>	
11. Events and Activities	<p>Promoting community events to raise awareness and appreciation of the Armed Forces.</p> <p>Shropshire Council to continue to maintain the reputation of events, commemorations and celebrations by supporting Armed Forces events, where necessary.</p>	<p>Shropshire Council</p> <p>SC – AFC Project Team</p> <p>SAFC Partnership Group</p>	Ongoing	<p>Shropshire Council has a full calendar of events that celebrate our Armed Forces communities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Armed Forces Day. - Armed Forces Match Day Celebrations. - Remembrance Events. - Support partner events 	<p>Develop a calendar of key dates in the military calendar to ensure that they are commemorated/celebrated.</p> <p>Identify lessons learnt from each event to ensure continuous improvement.</p>

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