

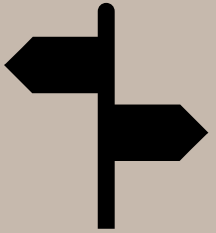
# Staffordshire Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan: 2025 / 27

**Building on the success of delivery to date,  
this sets out how we will ensure the  
principles of the Covenant are upheld locally  
through priorities based upon local and  
national insight**



## **INSIGHT / DATA AND INFORMATION, ADVICE & GUIDANCE**

Understanding key issues / needs and working across partners to ensure support is easily accessible



## **PROVISION OF & ACCESS TO HEALTH**

Working across partners to ensure appropriate care and treatment is available, accessible taking account of the specific Armed Forces community needs

## **ARMED FORCES ACT 2021**

Ensuring the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant are fully considered and informing decision making



## **PROMOTION & AWARENESS OF THE COVENANT / ADVOCACY**

Raising awareness / increasing support of organisations, businesses and individuals for the important mutual support between our civilian and Armed Force communities

## Armed Forces Covenant Action Plan 2025 / 2027

The AFC Action Plan 2025 / 27 sets out how we will recognise, support and integrate our Armed Forces as a valued part of Staffordshire's communities. We want everyone in our county to prosper, be healthy and happy.



### **PRIORITY: Armed forces community insight / information, advice and guidance (IAG):**

Providing a better understanding of key issues / needs / support already in place. Includes working with partners to help match providers of services to areas of need, and along with IAG, ensure access to the right support and opportunities as quickly as possible.

<b>Deliverable (We will....)</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Delivery Leads</b>	<b>Impact / What does success look like?</b>
<b>1.1</b> Continually review and update insight into Staffordshire's Armed Forces community to inform the planning and delivery of services and share with partners.	Ongoing (review bi-annually)	Insight Team / Amanda Dawson-Blower (SCC)	Analysis and reporting of Armed Forces data has improved our understanding of this community.  This will enable more robust Armed Forces data and insight to target services and support.
<b>1.2</b> Continue to identify key local & national organisations supporting the Armed Forces community to help inform IAG.	Ongoing (review quarterly)	Amanda Dawson-Blower (SCC) / All partners	AF community accessing information / support they need.
<b>1.3</b> Develop Staffordshire Armed Forces Covenant frontpages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>continually review and refresh external AFC webpage;</li> <li>develop an internal AFC intranet page for the workforce;</li> <li>and promote and encourage partners to develop dedicated AFC pages to ensure a consistent offer.</li> </ul>	Ongoing / Internal AFC page (May 2025)	Amanda Dawson-Blower (SCC) / District & Borough Council leads	Up to date webpages to enable AF community to access support / advice / guidance they need.
<b>1.4</b> Enhance the IAG offer for the Armed Forces community, for example, through Staffordshire Connects online directory / Community Help points and promote across partnership.	June 2025	Amanda Dawson-Blower /	AF community better equipped to access information / support they need.

Deliverable (We will....)	Date	Delivery Leads	Impact / What does success look like?
		Public Health (SCC)	
<p><b>1.5</b> Identify any opportunities to build on Enhanced Two-Tier working and further explore a consistent 'Staffordshire Offer' for AF community access to support / services (e.g. with District / Borough Councils &amp; Stoke City Council).</p>	Late 2025	Sarah James / Keith Luscombe (SCC) / District / Borough Councils	Any member of AF community, regardless of postcode, can access same level of support across Staffordshire.
<p><b>1.6</b> Explore and analyse Thrive Together data and information to target services / support.</p>	Dec 2025	Gemma Warden (Thrive Together) / Amanda Dawson-Blower (SCC) / All	<p>Analysis of data has improved our understanding of the needs of this community.</p> <p>This will enable more robust targeted services and support.</p>

**PRIORITY: Provision of and Access to Health**

Working together, partners can help advocate for and ensure the right care and treatment is available to all, also taking account specific needs of the Armed Forces community. As acknowledged nationally, ensuring access to healthcare is crucial and the number of serving and ex-service people and families settling locally likely to increase.

<b>Deliverable (We will....)</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Delivery Leads</b>	<b>Impact / What does success look like?</b>
<p><b>2.1</b> Explore and identify opportunities with health partners, to ensure the right care and treatment is available to the Armed Forces community, taking account of specific needs (as part of the Integrated Care System). For example, through:</p> <p><b>2.1.1</b> Enhancing the Integrated Care Strategy to better outline support available to veterans</p> <p><b>2.1.2</b> Increasing the number of veteran friendly GP practices</p> <p><b>2.1.3</b> Increasing the number of veteran aware hospitals</p> <p><b>2.1.4</b> Encouraging veterans to register with their GP / identify themselves as a veteran</p> <p><b>2.1.5</b> Exploring how to further encourage GPs use of the 'veteran status' read code</p> <p><b>2.1.6</b> Increase the number of GP practices/health centres/hospitals to sign an Armed Forces Covenant and achieve an Employer Recognition Scheme award.</p>	<p>2025/26</p> <p>End of 2026</p> <p>End of 2026</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Paul Edmondson-Jones (ICB)</p> <p>Paul Edmondson-Jones (ICB) / Phil Sinclair (DRM)</p>	<p>Armed Forces community accessing the care / treatment required.</p> <p>Health partners supported to better understand needs of Armed Forces community.</p>
<p><b>2.2</b> Explore opportunities to adopt the Orange Button Community Scheme in Staffordshire.</p>	Ongoing	Chris Stanley (SCC)	Enable identification of people who have received suicide training enabling people to access support.
<p><b>2.3</b> Ensure our Armed Forces community are considered / engaged through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), helping to inform health and social care commissioning / wider decision making.</p>	June 2025	Paul Edmondson-Jones (ICB) / Insight Team (SCC)	Future assessments, including JSNAs, more fully consider AF community issues and needs.
<p><b>2.4</b> Explore opportunities to promote the Veteran Friendly Framework to Staffordshire Care settings.</p>	Ongoing	Health & Care (SCC)	No. of care homes / settings gaining accreditation.

**PRIORITY: Armed Forces Legislation**

This aims to improve public service delivery and the new duty, requiring public services to fully consider the Armed Forces community when shaping decisions. Ensuring Staffordshire is well placed to deliver on this, particularly around housing, education and healthcare, fully considering the opportunities and implications across Covenant partners will be key.

Deliverable (We will....)	Date	Delivery Leads	Impact / What does success look like?
<p><b>3.1</b> Continually review Covenant Legal Duty toolkit of resources / best practice to inform and support healthcare, housing and education leads to continue to implement the duty.</p>	Ongoing (review quarterly)	All partners	Promoted and partners understand resources available.
<p><b>3.2</b> Work with public sector partners to ensure continued implementation of the Act focusing on the key policy areas (healthcare, housing, education). To include:</p> <p><b>3.2.1 Healthcare</b> - progress actions identified in the 'Provision of and Access to Health' priority above.</p> <p><b>3.2.2 Housing</b> - explore a consistent Staffordshire offer around housing policy/support.</p> <p><b>3.2.3 Education</b> - explore opportunities to increase Covenant engagement and implementation across Staffordshire schools.</p> <p><b>3.2.4 Education</b> - explore opportunities to maximise the value of the Service Pupil Premium.</p>	Ongoing	Paul Edmondson-Jones (ICB) / Chris Stanley (SCC)	Public sector partners fully complying with statutory duties.
<p><b>3.2.2 Housing</b> - explore a consistent Staffordshire offer around housing policy/support.</p>	Ongoing	District / Borough Councils	
<p><b>3.2.3 Education</b> - explore opportunities to increase Covenant engagement and implementation across Staffordshire schools.</p>	Ongoing	Tim Moss / Amanda Dawson-Blower (SCC)	
<p><b>3.2.4 Education</b> - explore opportunities to maximise the value of the Service Pupil Premium.</p>			

Deliverable (We will....)	Date	Delivery Leads	Impact / What does success look like?
<p><b>3.3</b> Continually review wider decision-making practices to enable consideration of the Act / Armed Forces community, for example, through Equality/Community Impact Assessments, and promote across partnership.</p>	<p>Ongoing (review quarterly)</p>	<p>SCC / District &amp; Borough Councils / ICB partners</p>	<p>Our decision-making processes are fit for purpose taking account of the Act.</p>

**PRIORITY: Promotion and Awareness of the Covenant / Advocacy**

Raising awareness more effectively, helping to increase the support of organisations and individuals for the important mutual support between the civilian and Armed Force communities, to the positive benefit of all Staffordshire residents. Business promotion and engagement will also be key, including to ensure we build on the relevant skills that ex-service people bring.

<b>Deliverable (We will....)</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Delivery Leads</b>	<b>Impact / What does success look like?</b>
<b>4.1</b> Promote AFC Fund programmes to organisations / provide support to eligible bids that can help support delivery of the Covenant	Ongoing	Amanda Dawson-Blower / Comms (SCC)	Staffordshire organisations can successfully secure AFC funding.
<b>4.2</b> Explore opportunities to engage with successful Covenant Fund organisations to further advocate the Covenant.	Ongoing	Amanda Dawson-Blower (SCC)	Increase in no. of AFC signatories.
<p><b>4.3</b> Promote and expand recruitment / employment opportunities, recognising the invaluable skills former serving personnel and their families can bring for Staffordshire employers, including through:</p> <p><b>4.3.1</b> Working with Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, Staffordshire Jobs &amp; Careers and the West Midlands Employer Engagement Team to identify opportunities and coordinate engagement with local businesses / employers;</p> <p><b>4.3.2</b> Explore opportunities to further enhance recruitment policies / practices for the Armed Forces community and promote to member organisations.</p> <p><b>4.3.3</b> Explore opportunities to support Armed Forces workforce, such as time-off policy and networking opportunities and promote to member organisations.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Best practice exercise May 2025</p> <p>As above</p>	<p>Chris Plant (Staffordshire Chambers) / Karen Woolley (FSB (Federation of Small Businesses)) / Phil Sinclair (DRM) / Amanda Dawson-Blower (SCC)</p> <p>Amanda Dawson-Blower / People Services (SCC)</p> <p>Amanda Dawson-Blower / People Services (SCC)</p>	<p>Increase in number of bronze / silver / gold award holders &amp; AF Covenant signatories, raising the profile of the AF community across businesses and organisations.</p> <p>Ensuring businesses and organisations are better placed to help increase and support the number of ex-service personnel employed.</p>

<b>Deliverable (We will....)</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Delivery Leads</b>	<b>Impact / What does success look like?</b>
<b>4.4</b> Explore opportunities to support young people, e.g. through Army Engagement and the Cadets Schemes.	Ongoing	Jane Reynolds (SCVYS) / Sarah James / Amanda Dawson-Blower (SCC)	Opportunities are identified to engage with young people.
<b>4.5</b> Celebrate and promote recognition and remembrance of AF community (communication / events to support our AF community to explain what they do and why on behalf of the Country):  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Armed Forces Day</li> <li>• Remembrance Day</li> <li>• Further key opportunities / dates TBC</li> </ul>	Ongoing	All partners	Opportunities are identified to promote Covenant and further celebrate our AF community.
<b>4.6</b> Maximise promotion through County events and collaborate with partners to promote the Covenant, advocating for our AF community.	Ongoing	All partners	Opportunities are identified to promote Covenant.
<b>4.7</b> Adopt and promote Armed Forces Covenant e-learning / training opportunities across the Partnership group.	Ongoing (review quarterly)	Amanda Dawson-Blower (SCC) / Hayley Corbett / All partners	All relevant partners adopted training modules.
<b>4.8</b> Regular communications / key updates across Partnership Group / wider partners and stakeholders.	Ongoing	Amanda Dawson-Blower / Comms (SCC)	Opportunities are identified to promote Covenant.