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Armed forces covenant

Last Modified May 10, 2024



The Armed Forces Covenant

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise by the nation that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, should be treated fairly and should not face disadvantages when seeking to access public or private goods and services in the UK.

In October 2011, Blackpool Council signed the Armed Forces Covenant to demonstrate our support for the armed forces community. It is Blackpool Council's way of acknowledging our historic relationship and ensuring service personnel are not disadvantaged by their service.

[Sign the Armed Forces Covenant and make your pledge](#)

The covenant is a voluntary pledge which organisations may choose to sign up to in order to demonstrate their support for the armed forces community and the principles of the covenant. All organisations – public, private or voluntary and small, medium or large – are welcome to sign the covenant.

[Details on how to sign the Armed Forces Covenant, and a list of example pledges to specify your commitments.](#)

Armed forces champion

Councillor Major (retired) Adrian Hoyle is the appointed armed forces champion for Blackpool Council.

The role of the armed forces champion is to act as a point of contact and advocate for current and ex-service personnel living in the town.

This includes encouraging other organisations to sign the armed forces covenant, working to reduce barriers to engagement that the armed forces community may face and to lead the local armed forces covenant meetings, ensuring that Blackpool meets its local objectives.

Local armed forces covenant meetings

Local armed forces covenant meetings, chaired by the armed forces champion, are held quarterly (every three months). These meetings are an opportunity for organisations dedicated to supporting the armed forces community to come together to:

- Network
- Stay up to date on the latest developments
- Share best practice
- Discuss key challenges and solutions
- Raise the profile of the support on offer

To register your interest in attending the next meeting, please email us at: armedforceschampion@blackpool.gov.uk

Defence Employer Recognition Scheme

The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) encourages employers to support defence and inspire others to do the same.

The scheme encompasses bronze, silver and gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the armed forces community, and align their values with the armed forces covenant.

In 2020 we received the ERS Silver Award and in 2024 we will be applying for the gold!

Forces friendly employer

In Blackpool we are proud of our historic links with the armed forces. Blackpool Council is a forces friendly employer, and over the last few years have increased our efforts to welcome and support members of the armed forces community who wish to build a successful career at the council.

We work alongside local partners to encourage uptake of the covenant and evidence our commitment via:

- Internal support for service and ex-service people including their families covering subjects such as debt advice and an employee assistance program including mental and health support
- Covenant training available for all staff within Blackpool council and our wholly owned companies to raise awareness of the covenant and the barriers faced by service people and their families
- A reserve and adult cadet volunteers training and mobilisation policy allowing for paid leave to attend necessary training
- Leading large scale events for Armed Forces Week to raise awareness and celebrate their contributions
- Links with local barracks and reservist units.

We are registered as an employer with [Forces Families Jobs](#) and our [latest job opportunities can be found on Greater Jobs](#).

National support services

Veteran's Gateway

The Veterans' Gateway service is the first point of contact for all veterans, and their families. Their expert content covers welfare areas: housing, employment, finances, living independently, mental wellbeing, families and communities, and physical health.

- 24/7 helpline via phone, chat, email and text
- Call 0808 802 1212
- [Further information](#)

Royal British Legion (RBL)

- The Royal British Legion is a charity that supports the armed forces community, they can offer advice and one to one support 7 days a week.
- Telephone: 0808 802 8080 from 8.00am to 8.00pm
- [Further information](#)

Soldiers' Sailors' Air Force & Families Association (SSAFA)

SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity is a trusted source of practical and emotional help to serving personnel, veterans, and their families in their time of need. Working with more than 120 different military organisations, regimental associations and many other foundations enabling us to help so many in need.

Referrals to SSAFA Lancashire can be made as follows:

- **Helpline number:** 020 4566 9146. This is covered Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00pm. Messages can be left out of hours and will be picked up the next day

- **Email:** enw.region@ssafa.org.uk
- [Further Information](#)

Blackpool support services

Whether you are a veteran, currently serving or are in the process of leaving the armed forces, you and your family may need advice and information on issues like housing, education, employment, training and welfare.

Housing and homelessness

For advice and support on housing and homelessness issues please contact housing options.

Address: Housing options, Chapel Street, Blackpool, FY1 5AW

Telephone: 01253 477760

Email: housing.options@blackpool.gov.uk

Employment, skills and welfare benefits

For help finding work and advice on claiming benefits, please contact Blackpool Jobcentre who have a specially trained armed forces support staff member.

Address: Blackpool Jobcentre, Municipal Buildings, Corporation Street, Blackpool, FY1 1EJ

Community Support - Blackpool FC Community Trust

Blackpool FC Community Trust host a range of armed forces programmes within the Community. This includes serving personnel, families, veterans and families of veterans.

Sessions include: coffee mornings, breakfast clubs, walking and running football, and the opportunity to represent Blackpool FC in veteran's competitions against other clubs in the North West.

- [Further details](#)
- **Telephone:** 01253 348691
- **Email:** office@bfct.co.uk

Armed forces events

Every year, we support local and national armed forces campaigns, such as Armed Forces Week and Remembrance Day, to celebrate and commemorate those who have been in service, and are still serving our country.

[Information about this year's Armed Force's Week celebrations](#)

Contact

For any other support or information please email us at: armedforceschampion@blackpool.gov.uk

Additional information

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Corporation Street
Blackpool
FY1 1NF

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