



**ARMED FORCES
COVENANT**

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:
Healthwatch Shropshire

Signed on behalf of:
Ministry of Defence

Name: **Lynn Cawley**
Position: **Chief Officer**

Date: **5th December 2022**

Name: **Colonel Clare Dutton MBE**
Position: **Commanding Officer 202 (M) Field Hospital**

Date: **5th December 2022**

healthwatch
Shropshire



**Ministry
of Defence**

The Armed Forces Covenant

An Enduring Covenant Between

The People of the United Kingdom

His 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 Covenant

1.1 We **Healthwatch Shropshire** 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 We recognise the value that serving personnel, reservists, veterans and military families bring to our organisation and to our country. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, by:

- **Promoting the Armed Forces:** promoting the fact that we are an Armed Forces-friendly organisation, to our staff, partners, and wider public;
- **Veterans:** supporting the employment of veterans, recognising military skills and qualifications in our recruitment and selection process; working with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) to support the employment of Service leavers;
- **Service Spouses & Partners:** supporting the employment of Service spouses and partners and providing flexibility in granting leave for Service spouses and partners before, during and after a partner's deployment;
- **Reserves:** supporting our employees who are members of the Reserve Forces; granting additional paid/unpaid leave for annual Reserve Forces training and supporting any mobilisations and deployment;
- **Cadet Organisations:** supporting our employees who are volunteer leaders in military cadet organisations, granting additional leave to attend annual training camps and courses; actively encouraging members of staff to become volunteer leaders in cadet organisations; supporting local military cadet units; recognising the benefits of employing cadets/ex-cadets within the workforce;
- **Actively promoting our services to veterans and military families:** through work with Armed Forces Outreach, making veterans and military families aware of the work of Healthwatch Shropshire in providing Health and Social Care signposting services and the Independent Health Complaints Advocacy Service.

2.2 We will publicise these commitments on our website, setting out how we will seek to honour them and inviting feedback from the Service community, our staff and our customers on how we are doing.