



Norfolk County Council

Ref: AFC/MH/KK

Date: 23 June 2021

Letter to all Town and Parish Councils in Norfolk

Cllr Keith Kiddie
Armed Forces Champion
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Dear Town and Parish Councils

ARMED FORCES COVENANT PLEDGE

Living under COVID-19 restrictions for the last 15 months has made us aware of the role the armed forces play deep within our communities; from driving ambulances, distributing NHS personal protective equipment and setting up rapid testing centres. As a county, we are deeply grateful to them and everyone who has played a role supporting Norfolk through the pandemic.

As Armed Forces Champion for Norfolk County Council, I would like to take the opportunity during Armed Forces Week to raise awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant and encourage your council to show its support for the armed forces community living in your local area.

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise from the nation to those who are serving in the armed forces and those who have previously served, and their families, that they will be treated fairly and not disadvantaged because of their service. It acknowledges the sacrifices they make through service and recognises that some individuals give their lives, some are seriously wounded, injured or sick through their service and some partners and families are bereaved.

I am a member of the [Norfolk Armed Forces Covenant Board](#); a partnership of organisations working together to promote the Covenant in all aspects of life and increase general understanding of service life.

I would like to encourage your council to support the Armed Forces Covenant, by signing the **Covenant Pledge**. The [Defence Employer Recognition Scheme](#), run by the Ministry of Defence, offers councils Bronze, Silver and Gold awards as they pledge, demonstrate and advocate their support for defence and the armed forces community.

As a result of a very successful webinar hosted by the Norfolk Association of Local Council seven town and parish councils have already signed their Covenant Pledge

and have received or will shortly receive their Bronze awards. They have pledged to do some or all the following:

- appoint an **Armed Forces Champion** to promote support for the Armed Forces community;
- promote the fact that they are an **Armed Forces-friendly Council**, to their members and wider public; celebrating the work of the Armed Forces and encouraging positive interaction between them and members of the public; maintaining our War Memorial.
- upkeep of war graves, with support of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.
- finding out where the nearest Royal British Legion branch is, promoting it and supporting events.
- support the employment of military **Veterans**; recognising that they are a valued part of our community; facilitating and encouraging their participation in civic and community events; providing a link to the Veterans' Gateway on their website; encouraging local businesses to support the employment of veterans;
- support the employment of **Service Spouses & Partners**: encouraging local businesses to support their employment;
- encourage support for the **Reserves Forces**; encouraging local businesses to support the employment of Reservists;
- finding our nearest cadet detachments, promoting and encouraging support for and membership of local cadet units;
- support and promote support for **Armed Forces Events** such as local Breakfast Clubs, Coffee Mornings, Armed Forces Day/Week, Reserves Day, the Poppy Appeal Day and Remembrance activities;
- support and promote support for **Armed Forces Charities**; looking at whether an empty shop can be used as a hub.
- encourage local businesses to consider offering discounts to members of the Armed Forces community.

In all likelihood, your council will already do some of the above, making a strong case for signing the Covenant Pledge. If your council would like to sign it, please use the template attached. You will find all the relevant documents online in the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association [Information Pack](#).

Once your council has signed the Pledge, please forward it to Kristina Carrington, Regional Director of Employer Engagement at Defence Relationship Management. Her email address is: ea-empsp@rfca.mod.uk. Please copy your email to armedforcescovenant@norfolk.gov.uk.

You will then be able to register for a Bronze award on the Ministry of Defence's website: [Bronze Award](#).

If you would like any further information on the Covenant Pledge or help completing the template, please contact Kristina Carrington or armedforcescovenant@norfolk.gov.uk.

Thank you very much for your support.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K Kiddie', is centered on a light-colored rectangular background.

Cllr Keith Kiddie
Armed Forces Champion