

Armed Forces Covenant across Gwent

The Covenant is a promise from the nation ensuring that those who serve and have served in the Armed Forces and their families are treated fairly.

Updates from your local authority

Blaenau Gwent

Blaenau Gwent Council and partners representing Blaenau Gwent's Armed Forces community came together at a special event to raise the RAF Ensign at the Civic Centre in Ebbw Vale.

The Council's Armed Forces Champion, Councillor Brian Thomas, welcomed the Lord Lieutenant of Gwent Brigadier Aitken, the High Sheriff of Gwent Sharon Linnard, and the RAF's Air Commodore Adrian Williams (Air Officer Wales).

Other distinguished guests at the event included Reverent Islwyn Morgan, who led the prayers for the ceremony, members of the local branches of the Royal British Legion (RBL) from across Blaenau Gwent, representatives of the Tredegar Air Cadets (2167 Squadron), the South Atlantic Medal Association, and partner organisations representatives from the Blaenau Gwent Armed Forces Community Covenant Group.



The Council was also represented by the Deputy Leader Councillor Garth Collier, Chair of Council Councillor Mandy Moore, and the Council's Managing Director Michelle Morris. People of all ages from Blaenau Gwent came together to mark the Centenary year of the end of the First World War.

School pupils around the county borough got involved by holding special remembrance assemblies to learn about and recognise the sacrifices made by the armed forces during the First World War and the conflicts since. Primary school pupils who attended the Children's Grand Council got a taste for life during the war as they took part in a re-enactment session; a Welsh Guards drill; the Royal British Legion's Standards display; poppy craft workshops and even ate their lunch from a war canteen!

In September the Royal Welsh marched through the town of Brynmawr in a Reaffirmation Parade to exercise their right to the Freedom of the Borough and on the same day a VC commemorative paving stone was unveiled in recognition of CSM Williams in Nantyglo.

Caerphilly

School pupils and community members came together at Penallta House for Caerphilly Remembers – marking the centenary of the end of World War One.

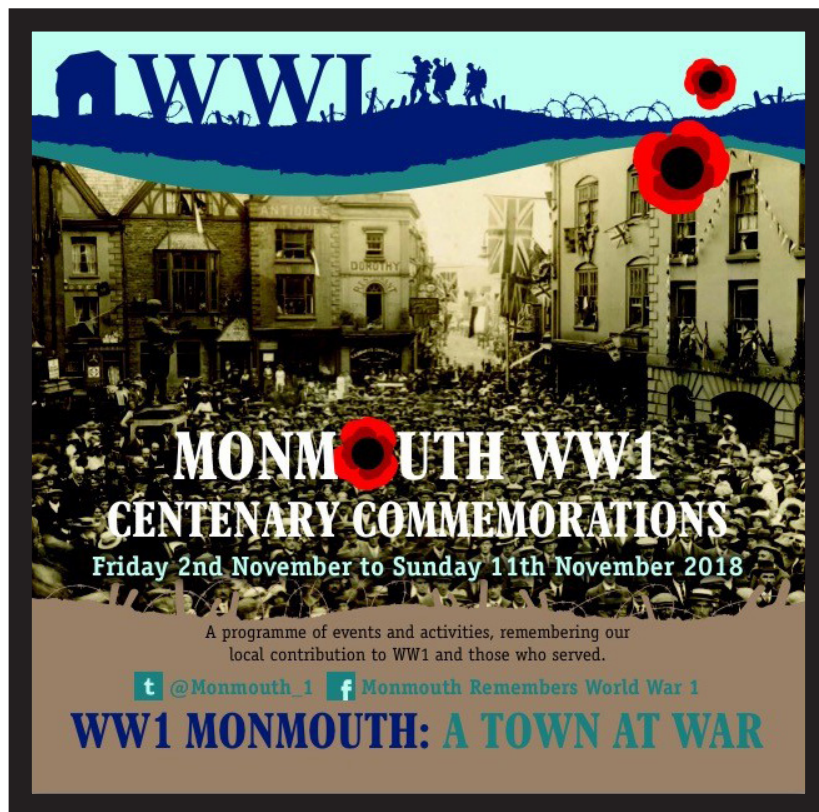
A grant of over £10000 was obtained from the Armed Forces Covenant Trust to remember those from local government during WW1. A competition was held between Caerphilly schools to produce a work of art in relation to the centenary. There were some fantastic entries which remained on display in the local libraries.



Monmouthshire

A partnership between Monmouthshire County Council, Monmouth Town Council, the Royal British Legion, the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers, Rotary Monmouth & other local organisations commemorated and honoured those who contributed to the war effort in Monmouth one hundred years ago.

Funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Trust to support a week's full programme of events was secured by the town council for over £19,000. The programme focused on Monmouth's First World War service men and women as well as their families and in addition to concerts and exhibitions, people joined in historical walks, period object handling, poetry and drama.



The programme was planned by representatives from community organisations including guided walk specialists Walkers are Welcome. The Savoy and The Blake theatres, Monmouth Museum and Shire Hall, with its emotive handcrafted poppy display, hosted events while Monmouth's churches provided opportunities for remembrance and local primary schools participated in activities and learning related to the Great War.

Among the highlights were a firework display at the town's annual Rotary bonfire night, a performance by Monmouth Male Voice Choir with Monmouth Town Band at the Blake, an exhibition of model tanks at Shire Hall decorated by pupils from Kymin View, Osbaston and Overmonnow primary schools and a series of lectures and screening of contemporary silent films at the Bridges Centre. The week's events culminated in the annual Remembrance Parade and a recreation of the Armistice announcement made by the Mayor of Monmouth, William Sambrook in November 1918.

Newport

In celebration of the RAF turning 100 a competition was held for all school children in the borough to get involved. There were some fantastic entries making the judging extremely difficult.

The Newport Armed Forces Forum meets quarterly with members of the Armed Forces Community. This partnership has gone from strength to strength ensuring that current issues are identified and addressed.



Torfaen

Ex-service men and women from Torfaen joined with pupils and staff from Crownbridge School for a service to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the First World War at Llanyrafon Methodist Church.

The service was opened by Crownbridge School head teacher Lesley Bush, followed by a short procession with standard-bearers through the church and a two minute silence.

Children from school choir paid a fitting tribute to the fallen service men and women of World War One by singing some classic wartime songs, including 'it's a long way to Tipperary' and 'Pack up your troubles', followed by the poem 'Never Forget' read by year 13 pupil Lewis Michael.



The morning concluded with a short story, capturing why poppies have such a significant place with remembrance to the First World War. This was followed by each pupil pinning their hand-made poppies to a cross whilst the sound of Vera Lynn's 'We'll meet again' played in the background.

Head teacher Lesley Bush said, "The whole school feels very proud to join with the ex-service men and women at this service of remembrance today. With it being the 100th anniversary to mark the end of world war one, it's a special time to remember all those who gave and still give their lives to keep us all safe and well."

104 Regiment Royal Artillery

104 Regiment Royal Artillery (The Welsh Borderers) were formed on 1st April 1967 due to the establishment of the Territorial Army and Volunteer Reserve. The Welsh Borderers were born from a spread of sub units across the Welsh Border with Batteries based in Abertillery, Worcester, Newport and Bristol with a Ceremonial Troop in Cardiff. The Regimental Headquarters is based in Raglan Barracks, Newport.

The Regiment is currently converting to L118 105mm Light Guns, having spent the past ten years as an Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Regiment equipped with Desert Hawk 3 Unmanned Air Vehicle. Prior to that the Regiment had been equipped with High Velocity Missile, Javelin and Blowpipe, all man portable air defence missile systems. The Regiment had been equipped with the BOFOR 40/70 anti-aircraft gun at its formation in 1967.

The Regiment has deployed Battery's and individuals to all theatres operationally, home and abroad, since its formation. These include Op Telic and Herrick in the middle East, Op Tosca (UN Cyprus) Op Ismay (NATO summit) and Op Olympics (2012 Summer Olympics). The Regiment has recently been

involved in supporting the emergency services during the Fire Service strikes, the Foot and Mouth crisis and flooding relief. The Regiment delivers as part of its ceremonial role, six Royal Salutes, Support to National Sporting events in the Principality and various other activities in support of Employer, Community and Youth engagement.

Over the last year members of the Regiment have deployed on a live firing exercise in Denmark, won the silver award on Exercise Cambrian Patrol in the Black Mountains and have taken part in Adventure Training and Sports Competitions throughout Europe (Skiing, Snowboarding, Winter Mountaineering, Cycling, Football and Rugby to name a few).



There are many opportunities for people to have a varied and interesting career in the Regiment. We are always looking for volunteers to join us in Abertillery, Newport and Cardiff. If you are interested in operating the light gun, becoming a medic, HR Specialist, Communications Specialist, Logistics Specialist or just want to do something that is different, then: Email: 104RA-ROSO@mod.gov.uk or Search Army Reserve Jobs.

Get involved...

Sign the Covenant

Businesses, charitable organisations and public sector organisations of all sizes who wish to support Gwent's Armed Forces Community can join ... in signing the Covenant.

Each organisation can tailor their own pledge to offer the support they want to provide, each pledge can be unique. Options range from ensuring employment policies support veterans, reservists, and forces' families, offering discounts for services/products through the Defence Discount service and supporting Armed Forces Day every June.



To find out more visit
www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk

Military charities Join Forces for Veterans' Gateway

A new 24-hour Gateway to help veterans access the support they need quickly and easily as they transition from military to civilian life launched 20th June 2017.

Backed by £2 million from the Ministry of Defence's Covenant Fund, Veterans' Gateway is designed to help former Servicemen and Women of all ages and backgrounds navigate their new lives as civilians. From advice on housing and finance to help with health concerns, the Gateway will bring together the vast range of charities and support on offer, guiding veterans directly to the help they need, when and where they need it.

The new 24-hour online chat, phone, and text message service brings the Armed Forces support community together in a single place for the first time – delivered by a Royal British Legion-led consortium with Poppyscotland, Combat Stress, Connect Assist, The Ministry of Defence and SSAFA, the Armed Forces Charity.

The service centre, based in Nantgarw near Cardiff, is manned partly by veterans to help ensure that callers can speak to someone who can understand their experience.



VETERANS' GATEWAY

The Veterans Gateway can be contacted by:

- Calling **0808 802 1212**
- Texting **81212**
- Visiting www.veteransgateway.org.uk



Gwent Armed Forces Champions



Blaenau Gwent Cllr Brian Thomas
Caerphilly Cllr Andrew Whitcombe
Monmouth Cllr Laura Jones

Newport Cllr Mark Spencer
Torfaen Cllr Alan Jones

The Armed Forces Covenant Local Grants

Do you have an idea for a project that you think would benefit Armed forces and their families?

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund has four broad funding themes now and in future years.

- removing barriers to family life;
- extra support after service for those that need help;
- measures to integrate military and civilian communities and allow the armed forces community to participate as citizens;
- non-core healthcare services for veterans

The Armed Forces Covenant Local Grants - Next round is **OPEN NOW** www.covenantfund.org.uk/

You maybe interested in applying to the MOD Covenant Fund.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/covenant-fund-guidance-on-how-to-apply

There are some amazing charities working closely with the Armed Forces Community. Here's just some of them....

■ Blesma

Blesma, The Limbless Veterans, is dedicated to assisting serving and ex-Service men and women who have suffered life-changing limb loss or the loss of use of a limb, an eye or loss of sight. We support these men and women in their communities throughout the UK and overseas. We also support our Widows for life.

We work tirelessly for our Members when the conflicts that have affected their lives are no longer a focal point in the nation's media. Since 1932, we have been the only national Service charity that supports limbless veterans for the duration of their lives. Our Members range from the youngest amputee veterans to those who fought in WWII, some having lived with limb loss for more than half a century. Modern medicine transforms the physical injury, but it is a complicated process to treat the emotional trauma and related lifelong health problems.

Blesma provides a network where Members not only enjoy support from our professional Welfare Team, but where they have the opportunity to engage with others who have similar injuries and backgrounds to themselves, building an important fellowship with each other to overcome everyday battles.

Tom Hall,
Blesma Support Officer (Wales & West),
Telephone: 0208 548 7098 or
Mobile: 07780165085
Email: bsowest@blesma.org
Website: www.blesma.org

Jason Suller,
Blesma Outreach Officer (Wales & West),
Mobile: 07741 744141
Email: outreachw@blesma.org
Website: www.blesma.org

Or simply write to:
Blesma, Frankland Moore House, 185-187 High Road, Chadwell Heath, Romford RM6 6NA

Blesma

THE LIMBLESS VETERANS

Registered Charity Numbers: England & Wales 1084189,
Scotland SC010315: Company Limited Guarantee No. 4102768

■ The Royal British Legion Admiral Nurse Service South Wales

Families' caring for loved ones, living in South East Wales, who are living with Dementia are now benefiting from their own dedicated Admiral Nurse.

The Royal British Legion, in conjunction with Dementia UK, launched the Admiral Nurse Service in August 2017. Since its launch across South East Wales, we have had more than 211 referrals.

There are four Admiral Nurses in total who run the service, all of whom are qualified Mental Health Nurse Practitioners who specialise, in Dementia care, and offer a support service for the Carers' of individuals' living with Dementia.

Caring for a loved one living with Dementia, can have its challenges, our Admiral Nurses' can offer, support – emotional and practical, advice regarding prescribed medication, reducing Carers' stress and often and most importantly being someone to talk to.

How do I access this service?

Individuals' and family members can self refer, if you're a carer of a person living with Dementia who, has served in the British Armed Forces or if you have served your self. The Royal British Legion also offer a number of other services to veterans' and beneficiaries.'

These include:

- Poppy Break Centres
- Handy Van service
- Access to Welfare Officers
- Independent living advisors'
- Appello – Personal emergency alarm service

Further details can be found by contacting The Royal British Legion Contact Centre.

As well as offering a one to one service, The Admiral Nurses', are actively engaged within the wider community. We are, and have delivered presentations about our service throughout South East Wales and have been invited to Carers' groups as well as Dementia Cafes.

You can contact The Admiral Nurse Service directly on **03330114497** or via The Royal British Legion Contact Centre on **08088028080** (please note that all calls are free of charge).

■ SSCE Cymru

The SSCE mission is to provide the best possible educational support to Service children in Wales. Working with schools, local authorities, Armed Forces families and support organisations.

Definition of a Service child:

- A child who has one or both parents currently serving in the armed forces
- A child whose parent/s have served in the armed forces within the last six years (Veteran) or
- A child whose parent/s are currently serving as Reservists.

Challenges Service children face in education:

- Frequent moves between schools
- Gaps in curriculum
- Different education systems
- Emotional impact of parent/s being deployed.

Resources available on the SSCE website to help overcome these challenges:

- Toolkits – for schools and parents. Containing details of the Welsh education system, support available through different organisations and case studies.
- Films – providing an insight into what life can be like for Service children. A film on organisational support and a film on Service children with Additional Learning Needs.
- Digital stories – about experiences of Service children across Wales.
- Newsletters – for the SSCE network and schools, circulated quarterly.
- Case studies – on how schools are supporting Service children and their families.
- A data study on Service children in education (2015).
- Service children with Additional Learning Needs report (2018).

■ www.sscecymru.co.uk ■ ssce@wlga.gov.uk
Follow us on Twitter  @SSCECymru

There will be pupils of current serving military personnel in attendance at your local schools/provisions.

We are asking schools to gather data of the following: How many pupils are in the following categories?

- Army ■ Navy ■ RAF ■ Reservist ■ None
- Veteran (up to six years after leaving Service)

Please contact: armedforces@caerphilly.gov.uk
for further information.

SSCE  SUPPORTING SERVICE CHILDREN
IN EDUCATION WALES
CYMRU  CYNORTHWYO PLANT MILWYR
YN YSGOLION CYMRU

■ Help for Heroes

Help for Heroes continues to provide and develop Community Recovery support services to Armed Forces personnel and their loved ones across Wales.

With regular sports recovery sessions, activities, events and hubs taking place in the Community Recovery Office in Treforest, and at accessible locations throughout the country, the aim is to provide exceptional support where and when it is needed, enabling our veterans to regain their purpose and live happy, healthy lives.

Recent activities have included wheelchair rugby taster sessions with the support of the Welsh Rugby Union in Newport, Rugby coaching in Swansea with The Ospreys, Powerlifting with Weightlifting Wales in Haverfordwest, Sleep Hygiene, Aromatherapy and Pathfinder Experience courses at the Community Recovery office and many more.

In November several Band of Brother fellowship members who had taken part in Community Recovery sports activities and the Pathfinder Experience in Wales were proud to join serving personnel and Invictus athletes at the Principality Stadium forming a Guard of Honour for the Remembrance commemoration at the Wales v Australia Rugby International to mark 100 years since the end of World War II.

Regular Band of Brothers and Sisters Fellowship Hub, One-to-One Advice and Sports Recovery sessions take place on a monthly basis:

Carmarthen: Every first Wednesday of the month, 11.30am - 2.00pm
Carmarthen Leisure Centre, Llansteffan Road, Carmarthen SA31 3NQ

Newport: Every second Tuesday of the month, 11.30am - 2.00pm
Newport International Sports Village, Velodrome Way, Newport NP19 4RA

Bridgend: Every third Wednesday of the month, 11.30am - 2.00pm
*Sports sessions take place here every week.
Nuffield Health, Waterton Retail Park, Waterton Rd, Bridgend CF31 3YW

For more information about support in Wales visit: www.helpforheroes.org.uk/get-support/how-to-access-our-services/recovery-in-wales/
Call: 01443 808910 email: wales.supporthub@helpforheroes.org.uk



Help for Heroes Band of Brothers Fellowship members join serving personnel and Invictus athletes to commemorate 100 years since the end of World War I at the Principality Stadium (c) Welsh Rugby Union.

■ Hire a Hero

Hire a Hero is a charity that supports service leavers through the transition into civilian life. They work in partnership with public, private and third sector organisations to provide a network of support and to signpost service leavers to the most appropriate resources as required.



For many service leavers civilian life can be a confusing, chaotic place; the charity, through its network of businesses, career coaches and volunteers that provides a consistent source of support to service leavers and veterans. Hire a Hero has a network of businesses who advertise job roles across the United Kingdom that are specifically targeted at Service Leavers and Veterans, these roles are tailored for ex-service personnel to use their existing skills and qualifications which they would have gained whilst being in the services. If you would like to advertise vacancies via Hire a Hero and provide meaningful employment for a Service Leavers, please contact Hire a Hero's Development Officer Axel Rees. axel@hireahero.org.uk

The charity also offers a one to one Career Coaching service for service leavers who are looking for support and guidance to gain employment in their civilian transition. Career Coaches will work with services leavers on their CV's, Interview Techniques and various other support that they may require. Are you interested in becoming a Career Coach? Would you like to support a Service Leaver or Veteran, contact Military Liaison Officer, Jinty Morgan for more information on how you can serve those who served us. jinty@hireahero.org.uk

Hire a Hero holds various fundraising events throughout the year which includes; Annual Evening of Boxing at Wellington

Barracks, Annual Golf Event at Stoke Park, and Cardiff Half Marathon, the charity also has various campaigns such as 'Pots Campaign' and Text Donate. The charity welcomes members of the public and business to run their own fundraising events in aid of Hire a Hero, if you have an idea or are interested in running your own fundraising event please contact Hire a Hero to discuss how you can support the charity. If you would like to sponsor an event, take on a challenge or join the pots campaign please contact Hire a Hero via email: info@hireahero.org.uk or phone: 01495 366670.

Hire a Hero are holding their annual boxing event at the prestigious Wellington Barracks on Friday 15th March 2019. This event is certainly one not to be missed, professional boxing bouts, live entertainment and much more. If you would like more information or to book tickets please contact Axel on 07934 854453 or axel@hireahero.org.uk

Did You Know: Lifting the lid on transition: The families' experience and the support they need

Aware of the growing dialogue about transition and the lack of specific research into the impact of transition on family members, the Naval Families Federation (NFF), Army Families Federation (AFF) and RAF Families Federation (RAF FF) came together in October 2016 to leverage their unique relationship with Service families and embarked on a two-year, fixed-term project funded by the Forces in Mind Trust (FiMT).

The Service families of today are the Service leavers' families of tomorrow and the veteran families of the future. As such, 'transition' is the common denominator between the Armed Forces Covenant, the Families' Strategy and the Veterans' Strategy. Helping families make more successful transitions, based on genuine options, may help them avoid making sub-optimal choices, which can re-emerge as problems later.

For more information: www.fim-trust.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Transition-Final-Report-FINAL-ONLINE.pdf

Upcoming areas of work

Current housing policy is under review to reflect the complexities that may occur when leaving the services.

Monmouthshire and Newport County Council have been successful in a bid from the MOD Education Fund to employ an HMF support officer. This post will support service children who may be experiencing difficulties when moving from school to school and with the challenges of having a parent deployed.

The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme recognises those who demonstrate or advocate support to the armed forces community and align their values with the Armed Forces



PROUDLY SUPPORTING THOSE WHO SERVE.

Covenant – a pledge from the nation that those who serve or who have served and their families are treated fairly. Silver award winners must meet varied criteria, such as; employ at least one individual from the armed forces community, actively ensure that their workforce is aware of their positive policies, demonstrate support to mobilisations of reservists and provide at least five days additional leave for training. Congratulations to Caerphilly and Torfaen County Borough Councils obtaining the Silver Award at the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme!



There is now a **Facebook & Twitter @GwentAFC page** that promotes the work & events for the Armed Forces Community!

EVENTS ■ EVENTS ■ EVENTS ■ EVENTS ■

MILITARY VETERANS' 'ONE STOP SHOP'

CARDIFF CITY FC STADIUM

- Wednesday 6th February 2019
- 11:00 - 15:00hrs

Open to ALL retired & ex-armed services to 'drop in' and meet the various organisations, charities and regimental associations that are there for YOUR benefit!

FOUNDATION

Proudly supported by: **HUGH JAMES**

For more information or to book a stand contact:
finola.pickwell@cardiffcityfc.org.uk | t. 07495 485053

CHARITY EVENING

FRIDAY 15TH MARCH 2019

WELLINGTON BARRACKS

OVERLOOKING BUCKINGHAM PALACE

VIP TABLES OF 10: £2,750 | STANDARD: £1,000

DRINKS RECEPTION 6PM - CARRIAGES 2AM

BOOKINGS / ENQUIRIES: AXEL@HIREAHERO.ORG.UK OR 07934854453

HELPING THE TRANSITION FROM SERVICE TO CIVILIAN LIFE

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ARMED FORCES DAY SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

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 A walk through time with WW1 & WW2 living history
 Classic Cars | Military Equipment | Face Painting
 Childrens Play Ground and a Funfair

A DAY TO REMEMBER

REWARDING VETERANS IN SPORT, FITNESS, BUSINESS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITY

WE ARE BRINGING YOU TWO FANTASTIC AWARD CEREMONIES!

The Welsh Veterans Awards in Swansea on 26th June 2019 in the Village Hotel Swansea

The English Veterans awards in Bristol on 25th September 2019 at the Mercure Holland House Bristol

In the UK, we have a huge number of highly successful Armed Forces Veterans that have made the transition from the Military to civilian life. We want to reward these veterans who have gone above and beyond and excelled in their relevant fields. They will act as role models for future service leavers. We want to find the people who even during the most difficult periods have excelled!

Let's hear your success stories to act as role models and inspire future service leavers!

In support of our nominated charity ABF The Soldiers' Charity ABF The Soldiers' Charity Wales

For more information on the awards please get in touch.

The Veterans Awards Team
 07891 402 326
info@veteransawards.co.uk
 Web: veteransawards.co.uk
 Twitter: @AwardsVeterans
 Facebook: Veterans Awards

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Armed Forces Covenant across Gwent

The Covenant is a promise from the nation ensuring that those who serve and have served in the Armed Forces and their families are treated fairly.

Lisa Rawlings Regional Armed Forces Covenant Liaison Officer Penallta House, Tredomen Park, Ystrad Mynach, Hengoed CF82 7PG

☎ 01443 864447 📞 07717 467341 @ armedforces@caerphilly.gov.uk ✉ rawlil@caerphilly.gov.uk

📘 There is now a **Facebook** and **Twitter @GwentAFC** page that promotes the work & events for the Armed Forces Community!