

# The armed forces community in Herefordshire

## Executive Summary

This summary report has been compiled by Herefordshire's Armed Forces Covenant Partnership to gain a deeper understanding of the Armed Forces community in Herefordshire.

[www.herefordshire.gov.uk/armedforces](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/armedforces)

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

This report has been commissioned by Herefordshire's Armed Forces Covenant Partnership (HAFCP), to gain a deeper understanding of the Armed Forces community in Herefordshire. It aims to set out a new strategic direction together with a range of tactical interventions to improve services and outcomes for our Armed Forces community, underpinned by a 3-year action plan (2020-23).

Herefordshire's Armed Forces community represents a significant figure in the overall population of the county, particularly when factoring in spouses, family members and carers. Many residents, estimated at around 25% of the whole population of Herefordshire, have a strong and proud connection to the military. Numbers suggest that as a population it is rising, particularly the veteran community; returning service leavers and those choosing to retire to Herefordshire.

As a community, the Armed Forces make an outstanding contribution to society with the majority of service personnel settled with their families, or as veterans having adapted well to civilian life. For the purposes of this document, emphasis is placed on those who experience at one time or another problems as a result of service life.

A great deal of work has been done by the Armed Forces Covenant and local authorities to ensure those who serve or who have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly. Herefordshire Council is an exemplar as one of the first local authorities to pledge to the Armed Forces Covenant in 2012. It remains committed to ensure serving and ex-service personnel and their families living locally have access to the services they need.

Herefordshire's Armed Forces community is well served by a range of national military charities including: SSAFA, The Royal British Legion,

Help for Heroes, Combat Stress, Defence Medical Welfare Service, Alabare, First Light Trust, Age UK and Blind Veterans UK. There are a number of excellent regional projects and local organisations who offer bespoke support to the Armed Forces community such as Herefordshire's Veteran Support Centre, The Cart Shed, YSS: Remember Veterans, The Buchanan Trust, Herefordshire Council's Community Brokers, Herefordshire Veteran Support Group and Veteran Breakfast Clubs.

HAFCP, facilitated by Herefordshire Council, takes a strategic and operational approach to identifying needs and developing funding opportunities to improve outcomes. The partnership enables a collaborative, cross-sector platform to instigate change and to measure impact.

This report aims to:

- Provide evidenced-based insights and analysis to inform Herefordshire's Armed Forces Covenant Partnership and its stakeholders. Stakeholders in this context include the Armed Forces community, military charities, voluntary and statutory services, health and well-being services.
- Address key issues from a national outlook and where possible sets out a local context and response.
- Support decisions on future planning and funding as well as reflecting Herefordshire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership's desire to have a foundation document which is evidence-based.
- Highlight gaps in support and to identify where services can be improved.
- Identify areas where changes in policy should be considered.
- Produce a list of recommendations and priorities to shape an action plan for the next 3 years (2020 – 2023).

## 2 SERVING ARMED FORCES POPULATION IN HEREFORDSHIRE

It is worth noting that data requests to the Ministry of Defence for information on serving and former service personnel living in Herefordshire are restricted. However, several alternate sources such as Office for National Statistics and Census data have been used to give an indication of the number of personnel living in Herefordshire.

- 2.1 In April 2019, it was estimated there were 1,660 members of the Regular Armed Forces stationed in Herefordshire. This represents a 15% increase since 2012 (1,450). It is worth noting that not all will be resident in Herefordshire. They are predominately Army (95%), Royal Navy/Royal Marines (4%) and RAF (1%).
- 2.2 In 2019, there were 290 civilians employed by the MoD in Herefordshire.
- 2.3 According to the 2011 Census there were 1,200 people employed by the Armed Forces living in Herefordshire with an associated 1,450 family members (spouse, partner, child or step-child) living with them: a total population of at least 2,650. All but 50 of these were living in a household - either a private home or military family accommodation. Taking into account the 2019 figures, this number may likely to have grown due to the increase between 2011 and 2019.
- 2.4 According to the last Census, the majority of the serving population (94%) were male, similar to the 90% seen nationally but they had an older profile than the national picture; 10% were under the age of 25 compared to 31% across England and Wales. In Herefordshire, the majority (85%) of personnel were aged 25 to 49 (compared to 63% nationally). The majority, (96%) were classed as White: British.
- 2.5 In 2018, 1,015 pupils in Herefordshire schools attracted the Service Pupil Premium, slightly more than the 901 pupils in 2017. The 1,015 service pupils were dispersed amongst 98 different schools in the county.

## 3 VETERAN POPULATION IN HEREFORDSHIRE

- 3.1 In 2019, there were approximately 2.4 million people living in Great Britain who have served in HM Armed Forces at some point in their lives; down from 2.5 million in 2016. This reduction is likely to be caused by the older age profile of Armed Forces veterans. Veterans represent a significantly higher proportion of the population aged 75+ (47%), when compared to non-veterans (8%), due to post-war conscription.
- 3.2 Veterans are also more likely to be widowed (16%), than non-veterans (8%) which again, may be associated with this older age profile. The majority (89%) of veterans were male.
- 3.3 In Herefordshire, there are around 14,000 veterans resident in Herefordshire representing around 1% of the United Kingdom's veteran population.
- 3.4 If we were to take a sample from the recent Armed Forces Herefordshire Veteran Survey as a snapshot the age profile of Herefordshire veterans would be: 25 to 34 years (3%), 35 to 44 years (9%), 45 to 54 years (26%), 55 to 64 years (14%), 65 to 74 years (31%), 75 + years (17%). 84% were male and 16% female.
- 3.5 They represent the following branches of the Armed Forces: Navy 5%, Army 78%, Royal Air Force 17%.
- 3.6 There were 2,224 veterans in receipt of Armed Forces pensions or compensation in Herefordshire in 2018.

- 3.7 Evidence would suggest that Herefordshire has a greater proportion of service personnel receiving compensation as a result of their service compared nationally. 303 local veterans are in receipt of compensation due to illness or injury whilst serving.
- 3.8 However, it should be noted that a significant majority of Herefordshire veterans are not receiving military pensions of any kind. It was only in 2005 that all members of the Armed Forces were automatically enrolled into the Armed Forces Pension Scheme with 0% contribution.
- 3.9 National projections forecast that by 2028 there will be approximately 1.6 million veterans as opposed to 2.4 million currently. If Herefordshire was to follow a similar trend, by 2028 there would be around 7,750 veterans living in the county. However, it should be noted that there is evidence to suggest the veteran population is rising in Herefordshire, so further investigation should be considered to understand why.

## 4 VETERAN SURVEY

- 4.1 The Armed Forces veterans' survey took place between 22 August 2019 and 7 October 2019. In total, 169 responses were received from a veteran population believed to number around 14,000. The survey was commissioned to inform this document; to give further context and better insight into the local veteran community. It also provided the opportunity for veterans to voice their concerns.
- 4.2 Key findings/areas of need from this survey were:
  - Better signposting to local sources of support for veterans and their families.
  - More local assistance around benefits and pensions.
  - More local assistance around veteran employment and converting military qualifications.
  - More local assistance around debt and managing finances.
  - Non-medical interventions to help support wellbeing and mental health.
  - Work closely with NHS Services to improve positive outcomes for the Armed Forces community.
- 4.3 Recommendations and key findings from the survey have been integrated into this document to emphasise key areas of need, however, more details can be found on the [Armed Forces Veteran Survey Results](#)

## 5 HEALTHCARE FOR SERVING POPULATION

- 5.1 Armed Forces personnel are entitled to access healthcare at NHS hospitals on the same basis as other members of the public. Over and above access to NHS facilities, medical and dental healthcare is provided by the garrison medical unit.
- 5.2 Spouses and dependants are able to access local NHS GP practices and dentists.
- 5.3 HAFCP has close links with the garrison welfare team who regularly attend partnership meetings.
- 5.4 There is growing engagement between local GPs serving the Armed Forces population through meetings facilitated by HAFCP.
- 5.5 HAFCP has a good connection into NHS England via the Defence Medical Welfare Service and through Dr Jonathan Leach who regularly consults HAFCP. He is chair of the NHS England Armed Forces and their Families Clinical Reference and also sits on the Royal College of General Practice Leadership Team.
- 5.6 The vice-chair of HAFCP also sits on the Royal College of General Practice working group.

## 6 HEALTHCARE FOR VETERAN POPULATION

- 6.1 The provision of veterans' healthcare is primarily the responsibility of the local NHS. Since 2013, the NHS should be commended for putting in place a range of services specifically for veterans, in particular, Veteran NHS Trauma Network, Veterans NHS mental health services and priority treatment.
- 6.2 Significant work has been achieved between HAFCP and local NHS services in Herefordshire including:
  - Improved liaison at the county hospital and a proactive approach to working with the partnership.
  - The formation of the Veterans Mental Health Network improving referral pathways for veterans and families.
  - Encouraging GP surgeries to become 'veteran-friendly'.
- 6.3 Of the 22 GP practices registered in Herefordshire, 10 are 'veteran accredited', under the NHS and Royal College of General Practice scheme.
- 6.4 However, there still remains challenges and a wider understanding of the Armed Forces in healthcare settings which have been identified in our recommendations.
- 6.5 There has been a steep rise in numbers seeking support with drug and alcohol misuse. Having a dedicated caseworker in place who understands and is able to support members of the Armed Forces community has been a positive intervention. Within 9 months this new post supported 46 cases, therefore a funding solution should be sought to secure this as a permanent role.
- 6.6 According to the Veterans Mental Health Network recent report the most common mental health conditions for referrals in Herefordshire were depression/anxiety and symptoms of PTSD.
- 6.7 Herefordshire's Armed Forces population has a range of excellent charities and organisations offering wellbeing, occupational and mental health support, particularly in community settings.
- 6.8 Herefordshire's operational working group for caseworkers has become a valued platform for caseworkers to exchange information - particularly for complex cases where a multi-agency approach improves outcomes for individuals. These meetings take place every 6 weeks, with the opportunity to invite other agencies to inform the group. Representation from the Housing Solutions team has made a positive impact and improved communications. However, there is a lack of representation from the Department of Work & Pensions, Job Centre Plus, The Veteran Transition, Intervention & Liaison Service and the NHS Diversion & Liaison Service.

## 7 HOUSING

- 7.1 As of July 2019, there were 309 properties in Herefordshire owned by the MoD for service personnel use.
- 7.2 It is not known how many Armed Forces personnel own homes in Herefordshire. However, given the number of Armed Forces stationed in Herefordshire there may be a large percentage that are home owners or renting privately. As alluded to already, it is worth noting that a relatively high number of the serving population may be stationed but not living in Herefordshire.

- 7.3 Nationally, around 76% of veterans are homeowners, similar to 78% of the non-veteran population. In the local veteran survey, 82% of respondents live in owner occupied housing. However, it is well documented that the younger the veteran is the least likely they are to be a homeowner, particularly early service leavers and single veterans.
- 7.4 Veterans and service leavers' access to social housing has improved significantly in recent years due to changes in the 2012 Housing Regulations. In Herefordshire, these changes have been fully adopted by Herefordshire Council in their social housing allocation policy.
- 7.5 According to Herefordshire's social housing register, over the past 5 years there have been 25 registered and either housed, removed or currently trying to still register. Further investigation should be considered to ensure this is an accurate picture and to also ascertain how Homepoint capture background information on Armed Forces applications.
- 7.6 Herefordshire has two outstanding initiatives that not only provide housing for homeless veterans but also the opportunity to gain new sustainable skills and qualifications:
- The veteran self-build project based in Leominster will be completed by the end of 2020, and has enabled 9 veterans obtain construction qualifications whilst building their own home.
  - The Buchanan Trust offer a range of short-term accommodation alongside land-based skills training and work experience.

## 8 HOMELESSNESS

In a 9 month snapshot from June 2019 to March 2020 there were 1,104 households in Herefordshire who were experiencing housing difficulties and were assisted. Of those, 17 declared an Armed Forces background, with the following outcomes:

- 10 were seeking advice with no further action required
- 4 had been prevented by securing existing or alternative accommodation before applicant became homeless (202 prevented overall)
- 1 had been relieved – where the applicant was homeless but new accommodation had been secured (171 relieved overall)
- 2 were under the relief duty - where a local authority must take reasonable steps to help the homeless applicant secure suitable accommodation becomes available for their occupation for at least 6 months. (167 under the relief duty overall)
- The youngest armed forces applicant was 21 and the oldest 66 years old
- Of these applicants with an Armed Forces background 3 were registered as no fixed abode. They were 34, 38 and 45 years old.

## 9 CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

- 9.1 There are a number of opportunities for intervention in support of veterans who enter the criminal justice system:
- Arrest referral
  - Pre-sentence
  - In custody
  - Post custody
  - Community supervision

- 9.2 YSS Remember Veterans project is jointly funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Trust, West Mercia Police and the Crime Commissioner, John Campion. The project works across Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire. They work with military veterans who are currently in, or are at risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system. The service works closely with the veteran to develop an intensive 1:1 support plan which aims to enable the veteran to access sustainable, independent living whilst reducing the likelihood of offending/re-offending.
- From August 2019 to April 2020 there were 47 police convictions referrals to YSS Remember Veterans. (It is worth noting that an individual can be arrested for more than one conviction and not all individuals agree to being referred). Of those, the top 3 offences included:
- Offences against the person and Police Act offences: includes Common Assault, ABH, GBH, Assault police, Obstruct police, Impersonate police, Assault emergency worker (13)
  - Public Order Offences and Protection from Harassment: includes Drunk and Disorderly conduct, Breach of the Peace, Causing fear or distress, Harassment, Affray, Threats to Kill, Witness intimidation/ Racial (9)
  - Bail Act Offences/Recall to Prison: includes Warrant for fail to appear, Breach of Bail, Revocation of licence, Breach of Civil Order/Restraining Order (6)
- 9.3 However, the fundamental element to these schemes is that someone ‘asks the question’ and then signposts them to agencies or charities who can support them.
- 9.4 In Herefordshire, West Mercia Police and YSS: Remember veterans project have made positive improvements to capture information early and refer to other agencies and charities for additional support.
- 9.5 SSAFA have an established network of prison in-reach caseworkers running alongside their criminal justice service programme located in key parts of the country, such as neighbouring Worcestershire.
- 9.6 The NHS Liaison & Diversion Team works locally in Herefordshire. They are there to support vulnerable groups, including veterans who may have mental health, learning disability, substance misuse or other vulnerabilities. The service supports individuals through the early stages of criminal system pathway to enable them to be diverted away from the criminal justice system into a more appropriate setting.
- 9.7 West Mercia Police has a strong commitment to the armed forces as Gold ERS award holders as well as a community understanding around the potential complexities of veterans who enter the criminal justice system.

## 10 TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

- 10.1 Regional and national data indicate that the local veteran population could hold higher qualifications than their non-veteran counterparts. However, it is well recorded and reflected in the local veteran survey that over 50% state that their military qualifications and experience were not recognised by employers.
- 10.2 In Herefordshire, the Armed Forces community are employed across diverse sectors including the NHS, professional and technical roles, and in leadership positions. However, cyber, defence and security businesses are a key growth sector in Herefordshire and a significant employer.
- 10.3 There is particularly good cohesion between the transitional support at the garrison and local training providers such as New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering (NMITE), and Herefordshire Group Training.

- 10.4 There are positive projects in Herefordshire to support the Armed Forces community back into employment, such as Building Better Opportunities Programme and the Unsung Hero Business Start-Up Programme for spouses.
- 10.5 Herefordshire has a proportionally high number of businesses and employers who are actively supporting the Armed Forces community, with over 65 organisations who have pledged to support the Armed Forces Covenant and open up job opportunities. The business community is well integrated into the Herefordshire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership through regular networking and employer events. The number of organisations registered in Herefordshire who have been awarded through the MoD's Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS), include:
- Bronze ERS – 41
  - Silver ERS – 8
  - Gold ERS – there are several Gold Award winners who actively engage in Herefordshire but are registered elsewhere in the UK such as West Mercia Police, Harrison Clark Rickerbys and Balfour Beatty.
- 10.6 HAFCP works closely with the MoD's regional employer engagement team based at West Midlands Reserve Forces & Cadets Association increasing support and engagement with the local business community.
- 10.7 However, unemployment remains a priority concern, particularly with early service leavers who may be returning to the locality. Aligning to the Defence Transition Service, the new MoD arm who support vulnerable service leavers will be important. Better engagement with Job Centre Plus branches should also be reviewed.

## 11 AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

- 11.1 The Veterans Mental Health Network meets quarterly with Herefordshire's Mental Health & Disability Services within Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust to exchange information. This has resulted in improved referral pathways for veterans and families with mental health issues, and 2 years of funding for a veterans mental health support worker. From April 2020, there is a dedicated Armed Forces Champion based at the Trust, and from September 2020 the veteran's mental health support worker role will be filled by a qualified mental health practitioner based at the Trust.
- 11.2 In 2019, in Partnership with Herefordshire's Veteran Mental Health network, The Royal British Legion funded a drug and alcohol misuse caseworker from Addaction specifically to support Veterans. Within nine months, this new post supported 46 cases. Funding is being sought to continue this work beyond its initial one year.
- 11.3 The veteran self-build project based in Leominster will be completed by the end of 2020, on land transferred from Herefordshire Council to Stonewater Housing. Nine veterans, a number who are homeless, are working on the site full-time, supported by homeless charity, Alabare. The veterans will obtain construction qualifications whilst building their own homes, with the remaining allocated to the local community. 19 accommodation units, (1, 2 and 3 bed homes), will be built in total.
- 11.4 The Cart Shed offer a range of bespoke projects for veterans to benefit from the tranquillity of a woodland setting alongside trained practitioners who are able to provide therapeutic support. Their courses offer new skills in coppicing and traditional woodland management. The Cart Shed also offers rural activities for service children and families.

- 11.5 In 2017, the Defence Medical Welfare Service successfully oversaw an Aged Veteran programme, funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Trust. It provided a caseworker based at The Wye Valley Trust county hospital to support those in hospital or receiving treatment. The programme provided early intervention, prevention, and improved wellbeing. All of which enabled independent living, reduced social isolation, improved bed flow in hospital, better patient experience and prevented unnecessary re-admissions. The Cart Shed ran outdoor therapeutic activities at their base in North Herefordshire to complement the programme and Herefordshire Council delivered a strand of the bid to support older veterans in the community through the adult referral team. Two members of staff (Community Brokers), were appointed to improve information, advice and guidance for the Armed Forces community. Based on this highly successful intervention staff were kept on beyond the funding period and continue to enhance this community provision.
- 11.6 Funded by the Police Crime Commissioner and the Covenant Trust, YSS Remember Veterans project is for veterans who are currently in, or are at risk of becoming involved in the criminal justice system. Caseworkers link with police custody suites and the Probationary Service. They work closely with veterans to develop a support plan to enable them to access sustainable, independent living whilst reducing the likelihood of offending/re-offending.
- 11.7 Hereford Veteran Dementia Wellbeing Group, delivered by Herefordshire & Worcestershire Age UK run Maintenance Cognitive Stimulation Therapy sessions weekly in Hereford. This new service started in 2019 connecting and supporting Armed Forces veterans to live well with dementia in Hereford and surrounding areas.
- 11.8 In 2018, Herefordshire Council was the lead authority in a successful MoD bid to strengthening local government delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant across Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin. Funding enabled the employment of two Partnership support officers, located across two local authorities. Additional pilot funding was awarded to develop veteran hubs across each local authority.
- 11.9 Through this funding, the Herefordshire Veteran Support Centre opened in the city centre in November 2019. The Centre offers a friendly, one-stop shop for anyone from the Armed Forces community needing advice and support. The centre works closely with the military charities and a range of local service providers to match the right kind of support to meet their needs. The centre also provides much needed space for caseworkers to meet clients and run workshops.
- 11.10 Adopted from Shropshire's Armed Forces Covenant, Herefordshire runs an Operational Working Group for caseworkers that meets every 6 weeks under a data sharing protocol to discuss individual cases, particularly complex cases where a multi-agency approach would improve outcomes for the individual. This initiative is highly valued by organisations who attend. In attendance are caseworkers from the military charities, local mental health trust, drug & alcohol service, veteran self-build project, housing team, Herefordshire Council armed forces community brokers, and criminal justice organisations. From time to time, other specialist agencies will be invited.
- 11.11 New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering (NMITE), is an innovative higher education provider based in Hereford. They are a committed partner and ambassador of the Armed Forces Covenant offering a programme of bespoke CPD courses for service personnel to support their job prospects in their post-service careers. NMITE also offer work placements through their industry partners' network as well as hosting an annual event, 'Military to Business Showcase' to connect the local Armed Forces community to employers, training and job opportunities.

11.12 Law firm, Harrison Clark Rickerbys, who are a Gold ERS award winner, created 3 Counties Defence & Security Expo, an association of security and defence SMEs established to significantly raise the commercial and industrial capacity of the sector across Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire. The group provides an industry-specific platform to connect SMEs and organisations in the defence and security sector, creating opportunities to collaborate and identify partnerships and joint ventures. The network is uniquely connected to the Covenant and committed to supporting the Armed Forces community through employment, sponsorship and working strategically with local partnerships to improve services for the military.

## 12 AREAS OF NEED IDENTIFIED

- Veterans and their families facing social and/or rural isolation.
- Veteran community feeling valued in society.
- Better awareness in health services and statutory services of the barriers to accessing and using health services.
- Improve outcomes for those experiencing mental health issues as a result of their military careers.
- Better understanding of the impact on serving families and those about to leave.
- Gain deeper understanding of drug and alcohol misuse
- Improving employment and training opportunities for service leavers / spouses.
- Better clarity in order to improve outcomes for those who are homeless

## 13 STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

- Influence/improve health and well-being services for the Armed Forces community.
- Increase awareness: advocate and communicate the work of the Partnership to stakeholders, the Armed Forces community in Herefordshire.
- Engage with Covenant business community/partners using all the appropriate media channels, and through events.
- Improve outcomes and opportunities for service leavers and their families.
- Develop a range of sustainable solutions to meet the needs of veterans and their families.

# 14 TACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Outcome /Impact of Intervention. How will we know it has been successful?
<b>1. HEALTH</b>	<p>A. Support the Wye Valley NHS Trust (WVT) become a member of the veterans Covenant Hospital Alliance</p> <p>B. Work with WVT to arrange an annual event to publicise health for veterans in Herefordshire; in partnership with Taurus, the Worcestershire Mental Health Trust and Defence Medical Services (DMWS)</p> <p>C. Support Taurus and the Clinical Commissioning Group to encourage all Herefordshire GP groupings and practices to become veteran friendly by March 2021</p> <p>D. Support NHS and customer service staff having a good awareness of the AFC</p>
<b>2. HEALTH &amp; WELLBEING</b>	<p>A. Work with Social Prescribers and charities to address non clinical issues including social isolation</p> <p>B. Support We Are With You to secure long-term funding for a dedicated Drug &amp; Alcohol Misuse support worker</p> <p>C. Increase engagement with hard to reach communities by working with town and parish councils</p> <p>D. Develop a volunteer befriending service for older or vulnerable veterans</p> <p>E. Develop positive projects and outcomes for children and families</p>
<b>3. MENTAL HEALTH</b>	<p>A. Develop the veterans Mental Health Network in partnership with Herefordshire Mental Health Trust to address key needs</p> <p>B. Secure funding in financial year 20/21 for a mental health worker to provide services for veterans and their families</p>
<b>4. EMPLOYMENT</b>	<p>A. Work with Hereford and Worcester Group Training Association (HWGTA), NMiTE and the Garrison Transition Team to improve training/learning and employment opportunities for service leavers, spouses and veterans</p> <p>B. Work with NMiTE and WM RFCA to develop annual Military to Business event</p>
<b>5. VETERAN SUPPORT CENTRE (VSC)</b>	<p>A. Formally open the VSC post Covid-19 restrictions (invitation to Chairman of Defence Select Committee)</p> <p>B. Raise the awareness of VSC to a wider public as a 'one-stop' service to find support best suited to their individual needs</p> <p>C. Register the VSC as a charity and prepare funding bids by September 20</p>
<b>6. OPERATIONS GROUP</b>	<p>A. Deepen and improve participation, collaboration and coordination between the members and key stakeholders.</p> <p>B. Improve engagement TiLs, Diversion &amp; Liaison and DWP</p> <p>C. Work with YSS: Remember Veterans and West Mercia Police to identify veterans in the Criminal Justice System and gain a deeper understanding</p> <p>D. Integrate Dept of Work &amp; Pensions and Job Centre Plus to brief staff on issues for veterans such as War Pensions and applying for Universal Credit</p>
<b>7. COVENANT SIGNATORIES</b>	<p>A. Further increase the number (62) of companies and organisations signing the Covenant to (70) by March 2021</p> <p>B. Influence engagement and interaction with the business community by hosting an annual event</p>
<b>8. ARMED FORCES WEEK</b>	<p>A. Develop a week long programme of events, shows and talks to promote AFW to a wider audience</p> <p>B. Plan with the Market towns to host AFD on alternate years from Hereford in their locations - Ross 2021</p>
<b>9. HOUSING</b>	<p>A. Continue to support the self-build project in Leominster and veteran friendly housing policies in Herefordshire</p> <p>B. Brief Council housing team and social housing providers on AFC and needs of veterans by March 2021</p> <p>C. Gain deeper understanding of those who are homeless by engaging with relevant agencies to develop interventions</p>
<b>10. EDUCATION</b>	<p>A. Support the Garrison Welfare Team in promoting the service children's pupil premium to schools</p> <p>B. Seek projects to support young people's opportunities to higher education</p>