



SERVICE to CIVVY STREET



A booklet to help ex-service personnel and their families navigate healthcare, employment, housing, education and other support available in Herefordshire.



Is this booklet for me?

This booklet is for you if you have served in the armed forces or if you are the partner, spouse or family member of someone who has served in the armed forces. An ex service person, also called a veteran, is someone who has served at least one day in the Armed Forces regardless of their rank, gender, age or reason for leaving. There may have been time to plan for discharge from the armed forces or this may have happened suddenly. Whatever the discharge circumstances, this booklet is to help you and/or your family members settle into civilian life in Herefordshire.

This booklet was funded by the Ministry of Defence's Community Covenant Grant Scheme and produced for Herefordshire's Civilian Military Task Group in partnership with Worcester County Council.

For further information please visit www.herefordshire.gov.uk
If you have any questions, comments or matters of clarification,
please email le1@herefordshire.gov.uk or telephone **01432 260613**

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The Herefordshire Civilian Military Task Group would like to thank Public Health Warwickshire and Warwickshire County Council for allowing us to use their 'Service to Civvy Street' booklets as a guide. Thanks also to the members of Herefordshire's Civilian Military Task Group and partner organisations for contributing to this booklet.

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INTRODUCTION

In the military there is a clear chain of command, free medical and dental care, subsidised social clubs, welfare support and camaraderie with other service men and women. Unsurprisingly, things are different in civilian life. Prescriptions and dental care are not free, attending social clubs often cost more than on military bases, and typically it can be difficult to find answers to the simplest of questions. This booklet is therefore intended to signpost you to where you can find those answers.

Herefordshire Council is responsible for providing many services in the county. A visit to the council's web site may well provide an answer to some of your questions. On page 6 of this booklet, there is a map of the county together with the council's web site details and main telephone number.

It is important to note that there are a number of important initiatives both locally and nationally that have been put in place specifically to support the Armed Forces Community.

The **armed forces covenant** is a promise between the nation, the government and the armed forces to recognise that the whole nation has a moral obligation to members of the armed forces and their families, and it establishes how they should expect to be treated.

The covenant's two core principles are that:

- the armed forces community should not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services; and
- special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given the most such as the injured and the bereaved.

The covenant exists to redress the disadvantages that the armed forces community may face in comparison to other citizens, and to recognise sacrifices made.

The armed forces covenant is supported by the **community covenant** and the **corporate covenant**.



The **community covenant** encourages local communities to support the armed forces community in their area and promote public understanding and awareness. The **corporate covenant** is a public pledge from businesses and other organisations who wish to demonstrate their support for the armed forces community.

Additionally here in Herefordshire we have the **Military Charities Helpdesk** - this is a free, drop-in facility to support armed forces personnel, their families and veterans with a range of issues, including welfare and benefits.

The helpdesk operates at the Customer Service Centre, Blueschool House, Hereford on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10am and 2pm.

The Herefordshire Armed Forces Civilian Military Task Group, with the help of the Royal British Legion and SSAFA, is running the helpdesk. Staffed by volunteer caseworkers from both charities, they are working closely with Herefordshire Council staff at the Customer Service Centre to ensure the best possible support is in place.

ABOUT HEREFORDSHIRE AND THE WYE VALLEY

Located in the heart of the Marches, the historic border countryside where England meets Wales, Herefordshire is one of the most rural and sparsely populated counties in England. With excellent road links with the rest of the UK Herefordshire boasts beautiful unspoilt countryside and distinctive heritage. From the picturesque market towns, to Hereford City, the Black & White villages, ruined castles in Mortimer Country and the aptly named Golden Valley.

If you love the outdoors, two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty - the

Malvern Hills and the Wye Valley, offer wonderful walking and river activities. Hereford city is home to restaurants, bars, nightclubs, a theatre and a state of the art cinema.

Unlike other rural counties that have large areas with no residents, Herefordshire's 82,700 homes and 184,900 residents are scattered across its 842 square miles. The county has an excellent reputation for the quality of its schools and access to a wide choice of further and higher education courses.



Herefordshire Council | www.herefordshire.gov.uk

Herefordshire Council Customer Services: 01432 260500

HOUSING

You may have already bought your own home in Herefordshire, or may be in the process of buying one. Alternatively you may be looking to privately rent a property or looking to move into social housing.

The **Joint Service Housing Advice Office** (JSHAO) provides housing information and advice to service personnel and their families to assist them in their transition to civilian life. JSHAO also co-ordinate the MOD Referral Scheme to assist eligible service leavers to apply for social housing.

You may have attended one of their Civilian Housing Briefings before leaving the military but if not you can find information on civilian housing schemes, service temporary and transit accommodation and homelessness by searching 'civilian housing advice' on their website at www.gov.uk or you can call their advice line on 0800 3287641.

You can also contact the following service charities for advice and guidance on housing.

SSAFA (Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association) provide a number of housing schemes to support both serving personnel and veterans whether it's somewhere to stay for you and your children if your marriage breaks down, a

residential care home, or a place to be near your loved ones whilst they recover from illness or injury.

They also have a dedicated Housing Advisor who can offer impartial guidance on anything to do with housing, including Housing Law and homelessness. For more information visit www.ssafa.org.uk and search for 'housing advice' or call them on 020 7463 9398. The Herefordshire Branch of SSAFA can be contacted on 01432 273932.

The **Royal British Legion** (RBL) can also provide help and advice on housing matters. For more information visit www.britishlegion.org.uk and click on 'Can We Help?' or call them on 0808 802 8080. You can also find information on housing on the Civvy Street website at www.civvystreet.org.

These organisations can be contacted before or after leaving the military but there are other ways to find out about getting a home in Herefordshire.



BUYING A HOME

If you are thinking of buying it is best to get advice and guidance about deposits, mortgages and loans. **MoneyForce** is an online organisation that provides independent advice for UK military personnel, for more information visit www.moneyforce.org.uk.

Banks or building societies can also provide free advice and the Joint Service Housing Advice Office has information for first time buyers by searching 'civilian housing advice' on their website at www.gov.uk.

RENTING A HOME

You may choose to privately rent through a letting agency or directly with a landlord. There are websites that list all of the letting agencies in Herefordshire that rent homes, for example, www.uklettingagent.co.uk.

SOCIAL HOUSING

The other renting option is social housing which is owned and managed by a range of registered housing providers across the county. All vacancies in the county are advertised through Home Point.

Home Point is Herefordshire's

Choice-Based Lettings Agency; a partnership between Herefordshire Council and the county's largest Housing Associations covering over 97% of the affordable housing www.home-point.info 01432 260300.

You will need to complete the on-line Enhanced Housing Options Wizard, which provides detailed housing advice and information on the next steps for each housing option.

Alternatively you can visit the housing drop-in service at Blueschool House (please see details in section below).

The range of housing options available to you can also be found on the Herefordshire Council website www.herefordshire.gov.uk and search 'Housing Advice'.

OPTIONS FOR SINGLE PERSONS

If you are a service leaver, don't have any dependants and aren't really sure about living in Herefordshire you may wish to contact the Single Persons Accommodation Centre for the Ex Services (SPACES) project. The project is based within The Beacon at Catterick Garrison, North Yorkshire. They provide support to service leavers in securing accommodation placements across the country. This service is available for single personnel leaving the service. For more information visit www.spaces.org.uk or call them on 01748 833797.

The Joint Service Housing Advice Office can help ex-military personnel explore a range of single person living options. Visit www.gov.uk and search for 'civilian housing advice'.

HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING ADVICE

Occasionally people are unable to find accommodation after leaving the forces and have to spend time sleeping at friends or on the streets.

The council's Housing Solutions Team can offer advice on homelessness, homelessness prevention, threats of eviction and eligibility for the council's rent/bond scheme.

Please ring for advice or for information regarding our office drop-in times.

Telephone: **01432 261600**

Out of hours emergency telephone: **01432 260000**

Email: housing.enquiry@herefordshire.gov.uk

Address: **Housing Solutions, Blueschool House, 4 Commercial Road, Hereford HR1 2BB**

Telephone calls will be answered Monday to Thursday from 8.45am until 5pm and Friday 8.45am until 4.45pm.

If you are homeless due to an emergency situation outside of office hours or at the weekend, please telephone 01432 260000 and you will be directed to the out of hours service.

You can also visit the housing drop-in service at the Customer Service Centre, Blueschool House, Hereford on Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10am to 4pm or on Tuesday and Thursday 1.30pm to 4pm. The office is closed 12.30pm to 1.30pm daily.

Please note that Blueschool House closes to the public at 4.15pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and 4pm Thursday.

ELECTORAL REGISTRATION

If you're not on the electoral register, you can't vote in elections or referendums. It's your choice if you vote or not, but if you're not registered, you don't have that choice.

The electoral register is also often used to confirm an individual's address, especially by credit reference agencies when someone applies for credit, such as a mortgage, personal loan or even a mobile telephone. If you are not registered, you might well be refused credit, as well as losing your right to vote.

To register to vote or to update your name, address or other details on the electoral register visit www.gov.uk/register-to-vote. Registering takes around 5 minutes and you will need your National Insurance number (if you have one).

Everyone who is eligible is required to register by law, even if you choose not to vote.

EMPLOYMENT

Veterans with military experience have unique and transferable skills. There are a number of organisations that can help sell those skills to potential civvy employers.

For Veterans the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) can help to find a new job and provide further training. The CTP is specially designed for ex-service personnel regardless of rank or armed force served in. For more information visit www.ctp.org.uk or call them on 0121 236 0058 for job advice and 0207 469 6661 for general enquiries.

One of the things that you will need to do is create a Curriculum Vitae, known as a CV. This document should outline education, job and life achievements history. There are many websites and books available that can help you create a CV.

You can find useful books on CV creation in the Herefordshire libraries. Visit Herefordshire Council's website and type in 'find a library' to find your nearest library.

Help with CV creation can also be found in the Herefordshire Jobcentre Plus offices. How to contact Jobcentre Plus depends on the help needed, for example: finding a job, changing an appointment, checking an existing claim or making a new claim or complaint.

For more information visit: www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus.



FURTHER INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

CivvyStreet is a website for serving and former members of the UK armed forces and their dependants. It offers free information and advice about resettlement into civilian life, learning and work. They have a list of job vacancies and can help with writing a CV. Visit www.civvystreet.org or call their careers advice service free on 0800 678 5848.

SORTED! comprises seven well established charities, which provide a wide range of employment related services and support for the Forces community (including spouses/partners and dependants) to find and stay in work. These services have now been integrated into seamless employability support and guidance. For more information visit www.sorted.org.uk.

The Poppy Factory Team specialise in getting wounded, injured and sick ex-service personnel back into work, using a team of specialist employment experts. Visit www.poppyfactory.org or call them on 020 8940 3305.

Access to Work is a government funded programme available to support people including Service leavers who have been medically discharged and disabled veterans to get back to work. For more information visit www.gov.uk/access-to-work or call them on 0345 268 8489.

RBLI Life Works is a fully funded 5 day course which equips ex-Armed Forces personnel with the tools to get into and maintain a civilian job that is appropriate for them. For more information email lifeworks@rbli.co.uk or call 0800 319 6844 or www.rbli.co.uk.

Hire a Hero supports service leavers and veterans to make the successful transition into civilian life. Trained staff, mentors and volunteers can work with you to help you make the right choices through the transition period. For more information email info@hireahero.org.uk or call 01495 761084 or visit hireahero.org.uk.

As part of your search for employment it may be helpful to identify which local businesses have signed up to a corporate covenant. This is an initiative where national and local companies and charities publicly acknowledge their support to the Service community, whether serving, veterans or reservists, and their families. Participating businesses pledge as little or as much as they can. Examples of the types of pledges that have been made include: guaranteed interviews, flexibility with leave, supporting Armed Forces Day, time off for reservists and discounts. To find out if a local business/charity has signed the corporate covenant

and what they have pledged visit www.gov.uk and search for 'corporate covenant'.

The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme rewards and recognises UK employers for their support and commitment towards Defence. The scheme encompasses awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to Defence and the armed forces community, and align their values with the corporate covenant. For more information visit www.sabre.mod.uk.

OTHER WORK OPTIONS FOR SERVICE LEAVERS

SkillForce works with partner organisations to give service leavers the skills, experience and basic qualifications to explore a new career working with young people. For more information visit www.skillforce.org or call them on 01623 827651.

Troops to Teachers is a government scheme which encourages service leavers who have suitable qualifications to become teachers. For more information visit www.troopstoteachers.ctp.org.uk or call them on 0800 389 2500.

You can also visit the Herefordshire Council website to view their current job vacancies.

STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS

There are many benefits to starting your own business and becoming self-employed but it is not always an easy option. There are lots of issues to consider but thankfully there is plenty of advice and support available if you are considering becoming your own boss.

For example you can find information on starting a business on the CivvyStreet website at www.civvystreet.org and the government website has information on self-employment at www.gov.uk/business.

ARMED FORCES DEPENDANTS' BUSINESS START-UP PROGRAMME

The **University of Wolverhampton** has introduced a funded business start-up programme for service dependants offering support to start and maintain a business. Supporting the Unsung Hero has been designed specifically for armed forces families, equipping participants with transferable skills and the ability to start a business regardless of location.

Whether you want to go it alone, or start a business with a couple of friends, this programme should provide you with the knowledge and reassurance you need to make your idea a reality.

For more information visit www.wlv.ac.uk/supportingtheunsunghero or you can contact them by emailing enquiries@wlv.ac.uk or by calling 01902 322760.

BECOMING A RESERVIST

If you are aged 16-40, regardless of whether you have or do not have any previous military experience you may consider becoming a Royal Navy, Royal Air Force or Army reservist. Full details can be found by visiting the SABRE website at www.sabre.mod.uk and click on 'Becoming a Reservist'.

If you are interested in becoming a reservist take a look at the following

websites for more details about the roles available and how to join.

The Royal Naval Reserves & Royal Marines Reserves
www.royalnavy.mod.uk

The Army Reserve
www.army.mod.uk

The Royal Air Force Reserves
www.raf.mod.uk



Air Cadets, Army Cadets & Sea Cadets Cadets are a great way for young people to have fun, make new friends, learn skills and take part in activities that are not normally available at school or college and, in some cases, will support them to gain a nationally recognised qualification at the same.

Children need to be between 10-18 yrs old to become a cadet. For more specific information and criteria on each of the cadet units, please see the websites or contact information below.

Contact for local Air Cadets -124 (Hereford City) Squadron:-
Phone:- 01432 267801
Email:- 124@aircadets.org
Website:- <http://www.124sqn.co.uk/staff.html>

Contact for local Army Cadets - Hereford & Worcester ACF on:-
Phone – 01432 359917
Email – wm-hw-aoa@rfca.org.uk
Website – www.hwacf.comContact

for local Hereford Sea Cadets :-
Phone – 01432 341963
Website: - <http://www.sea-cadets.org/hereford/>

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is a really good way of getting involved in the local community and meeting new people as well as helping to develop skills that could assist employment chances. If you want to volunteer but don't know how, or want some volunteering ideas that meet your interest, there are two volunteer centres in the county where you can receive advice.

Volunteering your skills and - the most precious resource of all - your time, can be a huge benefit to voluntary and community sector (VCS) groups and to the people who rely on their services. At the same time, being a volunteer can be a very satisfying experience, it can help you to learn new skills and it can provide the



chance to do something you really care about.

For more information about volunteering in the Ledbury area telephone the Ledbury Volunteer Centre on 01531 635339 and for the rest of the county ring the Herefordshire Volunteer Centre on 0800 912 2339.

There is also a national website called Do-It, www.do-it.org.uk that advertises volunteering opportunities. You can expect to get expenses paid for travel or anything you are asked to buy as part of your volunteering.

Volunteers play a crucial role in delivering every aspect of SSAFA's work - from getting out and visiting people to raising money in local communities and making sure that people know they are there to help. If you are interested in joining their network of local volunteers or would like to find out more you can contact them on 01432 273932.

Air Cadets, Army Cadets & Sea Cadets

Adult volunteers play a vital role in all aspects of cadet life, whether organising activities, encouraging and educating cadets or helping the units run smoothly. No prior experience or qualifications are required and where training is required this will be provided. It is well known that volunteering can support an individual's self-worth and wellbeing as well as being a great addition to any CV. All that is needed is the enthusiasm and the ability to

communicate with young people.

Contact for local Air Cadets -124 (Hereford City) Squadron:-
Phone:- 01432 267801
Email:- 124@aircadets.org
Website:- <http://www.124sqn.co.uk/staff.html>

Contact for local Army Cadets - Hereford & Worcester ACF on:-
Phone – 01432 359917
Email – wm-hw-aoa@rfca.org.uk
Website – www.hwacf.com

Contact for local Hereford Sea Cadets :-
Phone – 01432 341963
Website: - <http://www.sea-cadets.org/hereford/>



The Marches Growth Hub is supported by a comprehensive business support website www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk and a dedicated business support hotline 0345 6000727 across the Marches LEP

For the Herefordshire team call: 01432 261758 or find out more online www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk/about-us/hereford

To receive regular business bulletins from the Herefordshire team with the latest information about grant funding, business support and

events please email business@herefordshire.gov.uk including your business name, address and contact details.

Please follow us on Twitter @ [hfdsbusiness](https://twitter.com/hfdsbusiness)

Are you working with a former member of the UK Armed Forces?

Ubique Partnerships Ltd has secured Armed Forces Covenant funding and is working in partnership with HMPPS First Step Project to focus on identifying and working with former members of the UK Armed Forces who have been discharged from the services because of criminal behaviour and convictions and resettling in the West Midlands area.

We aim to provide a holistic level of support through case management and peer support focusing on common issues including: employability, accommodation, health, debt and relationships. As part of this project we will be delivering employability courses tailored to reflect the experiences and needs of Veterans in the criminal justice system

Locations/Offices covered in Mercia

Herefordshire - Hereford, Leominster, Ross-on-Wye

Referral/Contact Details

Contact Ubique Partnerships Project Manager by email: firststep@ubiquepartnerships.com (link sends e-mail)

Or through The Remember Veterans Criminal Justice Referral & Helpline :

Telephone: 024 7634 8227.

HEALTHCARE

The National Health Service (NHS) is now arranged into Primary and Secondary Care. Primary care is the local healthcare that we receive from General Practitioners (GPs), NHS-walk-in centres, dentists, pharmacists and optometrists. These are the services that most often bring people into contact with the NHS. They are provided and managed by NHS England (NHSE) and local clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) previously known as the primary care trust (PCT).

Secondary (or 'acute') care is the healthcare that people receive in hospital. It may be unplanned emergency care or surgery, or planned specialist medical care or surgery. If you go to hospital for planned medical care or surgery, this will usually be because your GP, or another primary care health professional, has referred you to a specialist.

It is really important that you and your family are registered with a GP practice. If you are a Veteran you need to tell the practice when registering so that it can be recorded on your medical notes. Additionally some health services can be accessed more quickly if your health is suffering as a result of your military service.

HOW TO REGISTER WITH A GP PRACTICE

To register with a GP you need to choose the surgery you want to register with and make sure that it covers your area. You can do this by searching online at www.nhs.uk. You should contact the surgery you want to register with, and ask to register with them.

YOUR FIRST VISIT TO THE GP PRACTICE

Veterans are issued with Form FMED133 at their discharge medical. This should be given to the new GP practice, so they can obtain details of the previous medical history.

NHS DENTISTS

Like finding and registering with a GP, the NHS Choices website can be used to find a dentist in Herefordshire. Go to www.nhs.uk look for the services near you, select 'dentist' and type in your postcode.

PAYING FOR HEALTH CARE

Visits to a GP practice are free but if the GP writes a prescription, for an adult then there is normally a 'standard prescription charge'. There is no prescription charge for children. Similarly, to have teeth checked and cleaned at a NHS dentist there is a standard charge. These costs are much cheaper than paying for private healthcare. Some people can get help with these costs, for example people receiving benefits may be entitled to free prescriptions. To find out more information on help with prescription and dental costs visit www.nhs.uk and search for prescription costs or call 0300 330 1343.

OUT OF HOURS AND WALK-IN SERVICES

Many GP surgeries offer extended hours and some walk-in appointments, please contact them directly for details. You can see a GP or nurse for minor ailments.

YOUR LOCAL PHARMACY

Your local Pharmacist is trained to provide confidential expert advice and medical treatment for a range of common illnesses.

NHS 111

Need medical advice quickly? When you call NHS 111 you will speak to an adviser who will help you decide what medical help you need, tell you where you need to go to get medical help and transfer you to the

service you need.

Calls to 111 are free, including from mobiles, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

You should use the service if you urgently need medical help or advice but it's not life threatening.

A&E AND 999

Accident and Emergency departments (A&E) and the 999 ambulance service should only be used in a critical or life threatening situation, for example:

- loss of consciousness
- acute confused state and fits that are not stopping
- persistent, severe chest pain
- breathing difficulties
- severe bleeding that cannot be stopped

Dialling 999 and stating an emergency situation will result in a response vehicle being sent to your location.

The A & E department in Herefordshire which is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, is located in:

The County Hospital

Tel: 01432 355444

Union Walk, Hereford, HR1 2BN

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Fitness is a big part of life in the military. In life outside the military keeping fit is more difficult, as there is no longer access to a free gym.

In Herefordshire we have negotiated a corporate discount of £5 per month off the normal membership price at the Halo Leisure centres - just tell reception staff that you are veteran or service family member. Visit Halo Leisure website to find a centre near you: www.haloleisure.co.uk. The Point4 Gym and Leisure Centre, Hereford also offer a corporate membership to veterans and their families, visit www.thepoint4.co.uk for more details.

SPORTS CLUBS

There are a wide range of sports clubs in Herefordshire providing opportunities for participation, competition, socialising and volunteering. For more information about clubs in the county visit www.morethansport.com or www.herefordshiresport.co.uk.

FITNESS FOR FREE

There are many ways to keep fit that are totally free. Visit the NHS choices website www.nhs.uk and click on 'live well' to find lots of advice on healthy living.

OTHER WAYS OF IMPROVING PHYSICAL HEALTH

There are other things that keep our physical health good such as not drinking too much alcohol, cutting down or giving up smoking, eating a balanced diet and drinking lots of water. GP practice staff can provide support and advice about healthier lifestyles as can a number of services in Herefordshire.

HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

The Healthy Lifestyle Trainer's Service is a free, confidential service offering practical advice and support to people who want to: lose weight, eat healthier, get fitter, stop smoking and/or cut down on alcohol.

For more information ring 01432 383567 or e-mail on hlts@herefordshire.gov.uk.



DRUG AND ALCOHOL SUPPORT

Addaction Herefordshire offers information, advice and support to people who are affected by alcohol or drug issues. The service aims to support people to overcome any substance misuse and reach their recovery goals while also developing the skills necessary to go on to live a fulfilling life. Addaction also supports the carers, families and friends of its clients. The service includes 1 to 1 work, counselling and group work with peers as well as a variety of other opportunities.

Addaction has extensive experience working with veterans via its Right Turn project. The veteran's specific programme was developed alongside the RBL and involves training staff in

veteran awareness, providing veteran-only groups and linking in with all veteran services in the area to make sure all an individual's needs are met. A duty worker can be seen by either dropping by the office during working hours or a GP can make a referral.

**Addaction's base is at 6 Bridge Street, Hereford, HR4 9DF.
Telephone 01432 802487.**

Opening times are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 9am-5pm, Tuesday 9am-8pm and Saturday 10am-1pm.

Addaction Herefordshire can also be contacted via Facebook and Twitter.

Herefordshire Service User Group advocates on behalf of people using drug and alcohol services in Herefordshire and meet once a week on a Monday at 48 Gaol Street, Hereford, and have an open door at St Peters Church, Hereford on the last Monday of the month.

Family Drug Support offers support to family members or friends affected by a loved one's drug or alcohol misuse. They can be contacted 7 days a week between 9am and 9pm on 01981 251155, website www.familydrugsupport.com.

Alcoholics Anonymous provides help and support to individuals with a desire to stop drinking. In Herefordshire there is:

Hereford Beginners Mondays at:
St Peters Church, St Peters
Square, Hereford, HR1 2LC

Lunchtime Living Sober
Tuesdays at:
Friends Meeting House, 21 King
Street, Hereford, HR4 9BX

Hereford Daily Reflections
Saturdays at:
The Stonebow Unit, County
Hospital, Hereford, HR1 2ER

Narcotics Anonymous provides help to anyone with a desire to stop using drugs of any kind. This includes alcohol, pharmaceuticals and prescription drugs and/or marijuana.

For more information visit www.ukna.org or call the national helpline on 0300 999 1212.

Cocaine Anonymous provides help to anyone with a problem with cocaine or other mind altering substances. For more information visit www.cauk.org.uk or call the national helpline on 0800 612 0225 (free from landline) or 0300 111 2285 (from mobile phones).

STOPPING SMOKING

For stopping smoking support visit www.herefordshire.gov.uk and search for 'Healthy Lifestyle Trainer's Service' or go to NHS www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Services/S both have useful information on services available to help quit.

SMART Recovery UK helps people recover from addictive behaviour and lead meaningful and satisfying lives. For more information visit www.smartrecovery.org.uk or contact them via the national helpline on 0845 603 9830.

HEALTHY EATING AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

For healthy eating and general lifestyles advice, visit the NHS choices website www.nhs.uk and click on 'Live Well' or for hints and tips for the whole family visit the Change 4 Life website at www.nhs.uk/change4life.

SEXUAL HEALTH

Sexual health services offer confidential advice and information on contraception, sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy choices and planning a pregnancy. To find your nearest Sexual Health Clinic visit www.nhs.uk.

Sometimes you might need to see a healthcare professional if you think you might have a sexually transmitted infection or you would like advice about contraception. To find out more about the sexual health services available in Herefordshire go to www.herefordshire.gov.uk and search 'sexualhealth' or go to see your GP.

WELLBEING INFORMATION AND SIGNPOSTING FOR HEREFORDSHIRE (WISH)

WISH is a website providing a wide range of information and guidance, plus a comprehensive directory of services and activities that support the wellbeing of adults, children, young people and families across Herefordshire. It aims to provide everyone with the information that is needed to support wellbeing. Where appropriate, it will signpost to other organisations and agencies that can provide support. The WISH directory can be used to find providers, support groups and services, as well as a range of activities that are happening in the local community and across Herefordshire. Services and activities in the county, can register their details and promote on WISH for free. Website www.wisherefordshire.org.

Telephone and face to face support is also provided by a local charity, Services for Independent Living (SIL), through a dedicated team of people working from the WISH premises in St Peters Street, Hereford. If the website is unable to provide the answer the WISH team are able to help - please telephone 01432 383880.

Older People

The 'Keeping Safe, Healthy and Happy' handbook has been developed with a number of agencies and partners in the county and gives advice and tips on health and wellbeing for older people and those caring for them. The handbook is available online - please visit www.herefordshire.gov.uk and search for 'Keeping healthy'. Hard copies are available from a number of agencies.



MENTAL HEALTH

Keeping your mind in good shape is really important. Taking care of your physical health can also improve your mental health. In everyone's lives there are times which are more difficult than others, changing jobs and moving home are two of these. Most people cope with life changing events really well, but sometimes people need to talk to someone, who isn't a friend or family member, about these events. Your GP can put you in touch with these services. Alternatively you can find out more about how to access these services by searching 'mental wellbeing' on the council website at www.herefordshire.gov.uk or on the NHS Choices website www.nhs.uk.

Some veterans have reported having thoughts of taking their own lives. If you have had these thoughts, talk to someone as soon as possible. There are people who can help

you. You might wish to talk to a friend or family member, or call The Samaritans. They are a free listening service open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, you can phone them on 08457 909090 (national number) or 01432 269000 (local number for callers and enquiries about volunteering) or you can see someone at the Samaritans Hereford Branch at 44A Berrington Street, Hereford HR4 0BJ between 08:00 and 21:30 Monday, Wednesday and Saturday or between 11:30 and 21:30 Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday.

You could also call your GP and ask for an emergency appointment or go to A&E and tell the staff how you are feeling or contact NHS111.

For more information and advice visit the NHS Choices website at www.nhs.uk.

Some veterans have said that years

after leaving the military they have something happen to them, for example, one of their parents' dies, which then reminds them of a bad situation they were in when they served in the military. This may cause sleep disturbance, mood swings with friends and family, and generally hinder everyday life.

There is also a condition called post-traumatic stress disorder, more commonly known as PTSD. The NHS state that PTSD is an anxiety disorder caused by very stressful, frightening or distressing events. Being involved in military combat, terrorist attacks or witnessing violent deaths can cause PTSD. The condition can develop immediately after experiencing one of these events, or it may develop weeks, months or years later. For more information on PTSD, including the signs and symptoms visit www.nhs.uk and search PTSD.

PTSD can be treated. If you think you or your family member might be suffering from PTSD talk to someone, for example, your GP.

Let's Talk

2gether NHS Foundation Trust provide a wide range of mental health assessments, treatment and support to people across Herefordshire. As part of their commitment to the Military Covenant they have a Mental Health Veterans Support Worker.

The worker, who is a veteran understands some the difficulties and challenges that can be faced and will support veterans access the right level of mental health care.

The Veterans Mental Health Support Worker can be accessed via referral from veteran and military charities in Herefordshire. They can also be accessed through referral from your GP.

For more information about Let's Talk, please visit www.talk2gether.nhs.uk

Big White Wall 2gether has partnered with award-winning digital support service, Big White Wall, to offer 24/7 support to veterans living in Herefordshire. The service is also available to serving personnel and their families aged 16+ for free. The service is designed for veterans and their families who do not wish to see someone face to face to talk through their problems. Those that have used the service have found that it can relieve stress, loneliness, anxiety and depression. Veterans can join Big White Wall for free, by visiting www.2gether.nhs.uk/bww.

Combat Stress is a UK Veterans' mental health charity. Their treatment and support services are also free of charge. For more information www.combatstress.com or call the 24 hour helpline 0800 1381619.

OTHER SOURCES OF HEALTH CARE SUPPORT

Hereford Veterans Support Group consists of a group of veterans and their wives/partners dedicated to supporting any veteran and his/her family within Herefordshire. The group offers once monthly meetings on the second Friday of every month 19:00 hrs- 21:00 hrs and a twice weekly drop-in Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:00 hrs - 16:00 hrs at Saxon Hall, Hoarwithy Road, Putson, Hereford.

Since leaving the Armed Forces these Veterans between themselves have experienced a wide range of problems and understand the complexities of adapting to living within a civilian system and are there to offer any support and advice, also signposting veterans to other agencies.

HVSG meets at Saxon Hall, Hoarwithy Road, Hereford on Mondays and Thursdays between 11am and 4pm. For more information, call Chris Bailey 07975 549 493, email cmbdh1982@gmail.com or visit the Herefordshire Veterans Support Group website.

AFVBC Armed Forces and Veterans Breakfast Club

We are a group of veterans and serving members of Her Majesty's Armed Forces, and like other Veterans Breakfast Clubs around the country, and overseas, our ethos is mutual support; it works because we all have a similar humour and

outlook, and the social life we now enjoy is like our service days.

We meet every fortnight from Saturday 19 August 2017 at 9.30am at The Imperial, 31 Widemarsh Street, Hereford HR4 9EA

Facebook page Hereford Veterans Breakfast Club or for further information contact Lynne Gladwin 07964011353.

A Leominster AFVBC will be starting at 9.30am on Saturday 10 March 2018 at The Dukes Head, 3 Corn Square, Leominster, HR6 8LR.

NHS Choices has lots of information about healthcare provision for military personnel and veterans available by visiting www.nhs.uk and searching for 'armed forces healthcare'.

Veterans UK also has information on specialist support available by visiting www.veterans-uk.info or calling 0808 1914 218.

The Veterans Hearing Fund (VHF) provides support to veterans who acquired hearing loss during Service. It is open to those who have a wellbeing need that cannot be met through statutory services (such as the NHS). VHF may fund hearing aids, peripherals or therapies (e.g., lip reading).

HearWell in Hereford will help you through the application process and

how to submit your documents for approval. To start the process all you need do is contact HearWell to book an initial consultation to discuss your needs and to complete the necessary hearing test.

Eligibility HearWell is supporting the Veterans Hearing Fund (VHF) for all current serving personnel and veterans of the armed forces who live in Herefordshire, Shropshire, Monmouthshire, Gwent and Worcestershire.

Locations/Offices

Herefordshire - Hereford,
Leominster, Ross-on-Wye

Referral / Contact details

Website: hearwell.org.uk

Telephone: 01432 623090

HearWell, Unit 2, Plough Lane,
Hereford, HR4 0ED

Veterans Hip & Knee Surgery Service – a service for military veterans to have their hip or knee arthritis assessed and, if appropriate, have joint replacement surgery. This is available for anyone who has been in regular military service, including national service. It takes place at The Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust at Oswestry. You need to be referred through your GP, ask to be referred to the Veterans Hip & Knee Surgery Service at Oswestry and ask your GP to make a named referral to Lt Col Meyer.

Contact information email Rebecca.ann.jones@rjah.nhs.uk tel 01691 404067.

Defence Medical Welfare Service (DMWS) is an independent charity providing an independent and confidential medical welfare service to frontline staff whenever they are receiving medical treatment. We know that any hospital treatment or healthcare intervention whether planned or unplanned can be stressful and can bring with it feelings of isolation, stress and worry, all of which may hamper recovery.

DMWS Welfare Officers work with patients when their medical needs are being met but when other issues, problems or social influences may be distracting them from their recovery. We provide practical and emotional support to ensure that no family goes through the worry of injury or illness alone. The support we offer is tailored to the individual needs and may include a confidential and impartial listening ear, helping to explain and resolve any medical care issue, referrals to other agencies for support.

We operate across the UK, and overseas, supporting those who put themselves in harm's way to serve our country. This includes Armed Forces personnel, Reservists, Veterans and their families, the Police, and increasingly other front line services as well as to their

primary care givers and healthcare professionals.

DMWS are currently working on an Aged Veterans Project (veterans over 65yrs) within Herefordshire details including contact details are found at <https://www.dmws.org.uk/veteran-support-herefordshire>

Red Cross Independent Living:

free support up to 6 six weeks for shopping, helping when family is away, support by telephone or personal visit, getting you help from other services and providing transport to hospital appoints. Referral by GP surgery or self-referral.

Call: 01432 373 020

Mobility Aids loan service aims to help people who require medical equipment on a short term loan basis, typically a six to eight week period. The service is free of charge except disponsibles. They ask for a donation towards the running costs. Call: 0300 456 1914

Crisis Response operates throughout the UK responding to incidents every 4 hours, our Emergency Service Vehicle is housed at Malvern Fire Station.

Emergency Response is what we do on a local level, but when we need to, we are all part of the national Crisis team able to mobilise and react to the needs of people in crisis wherever they are in the UK.
www.redcross.org.uk

FIVE WAYS TO WELL-BEING

The NHS suggests that if you approach the following five steps with an open mind and try them, you improve your mental wellbeing.

1. Connect

Means connecting with the people around you; your family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. Spend time developing these relationships.

2. Be Active

Step outside, go for a walk or run. Cycle. Play a game. Garden. Dance. Exercising makes you feel good. Most importantly, discover a physical activity you enjoy and make it part of your life.

3. Take Notice

Be more aware of the present moment, including your feelings and thoughts, your body and the world around you. Some people call this awareness “mindfulness”, and it can

positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges.

4. Keep Learning

Learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and a new confidence. So why not sign up for that cooking course, start learning to play a musical instrument, or figure out how to fix your bike?

5. Give

Even the smallest act can count, whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word. Larger acts, such as volunteering at your local community centre, can improve your mental wellbeing and help you build new social networks.

Find out more at: www.herefordshire.gov.uk and search ‘Mental Wellbeing’.

DOMESTIC ABUSE

It is an all too common myth that domestic abuse/domestic violence only occurs between a husband and wife. Domestic abuse can occur between partners of the same sex, between family members, or between partners in a current relationship, or one that has ended. Sadly, it is also a myth that domestic abuse is just about violence. It isn't. You can be experiencing domestic abuse if your partner doesn't allow you to control your finances, stops you seeing your friends and family, controls your access to information, or even what you wear. Domestic abuse is, in many ways, all about control. If you are a victim of domestic abuse or know someone who is, there is help available:

- **Herefordshire Domestic Abuse Support Service Helpline**
operates 24 hours a day: 08700 7831359. This service supports both men and women who are victims of domestic abuse.
- In an emergency phone 999.
- **Mankind Initiative**,
www.mankind.org.uk;
01823 334244.
- **Horizon** is a project for men who feel they are or could be abusive in their relationship and would like to address their behaviour
Tel 0300 777 4321;
Email: horizon@hhl.org.uk.

Additionally your GP can put you or your loved one in contact with local support groups or you can call the National Domestic Violence Helpline: (24 hour freephone) 0808 200247.

Information and guidance for those affected by or dealing with cases of domestic abuse in the armed forces community is also available on the government website. This site is for members of the armed forces community who are male or female victims, perpetrators looking to change their behaviour, military or civilian practitioners, chain of command or concerned family and friends. For more information visit www.gov.uk and search for 'domestic abuse'.

BEREAVEMENT

The death of someone close can be one of the hardest things anyone has to face. The early days following the death can be bewildering and difficult. It can be a very confusing time with mixed feelings, thoughts and emotions. Grief reactions are varied and frightening and remain a very individual experience.

Talking about death may be difficult and make some people feel uncomfortable. They often don't know what to say. Some people may find it easier to avoid the subject but most bereaved people find it helpful to talk, despite it being upsetting. It is not easy to know with whom to talk - with friends, family or professionals. Nor is it easy to know where to get help.

Phoenix Bereavement Support Services - is unique in Herefordshire and is one of a very few specialist bereavement support services across the country. They support children, young people and their families when someone close to them dies. For more information visit www.phoenixbereavement.org or call 01432 264555.

Compassionate Friends supports people who have lost a child or grandchild. Tel: 0845 123 2304, email: helpline@tcf.org.uk, www.tcf.org.uk.

The Diocese of Hereford can put you in contact with a priest local to you at the time of your loss or at any time in the future to support you and your family through the grieving process. Tel: 01432 373300.

Herefordshire Council Bereavement Service provides advice and information on all aspects of cremation and burial as well as registering a death. Tel: 01432 383200.

The Department for Work and Pensions Bereavement Service carries out eligibility checks on surviving relatives to see what benefits they are entitled to. It also takes claims for bereavement benefits and funeral payments. Tel: 0345 606 0265. More information can be found on www.gov.uk/bereavement-allowance/eligibility.

Cruse Bereavement Care can support you after the death of someone close. If someone you know has died and you need to talk, call them on 0844 477 9400.

Additionally, **Hope Support Services** support young people when a close family member is diagnosed with a life threatening illness. See more at www.hopesupport.org.uk or call on 01989 566317.

EDUCATION

During their service personnel would have had basic and trade training. In some trades the training you receive is widely recognised in Civvy Street, for other trades the training is specialised for the military environment. As part of resettlement you may have started re-training for a new career, or you may now be thinking about gaining new skills. The Career Transition Partnership (p. 11) can help you to decide what job it is you would like to do so that they can help you work out the best options around education.

Benefit claimants may also be entitled to training courses which enables them to start work.

As a spouse or partner you may have put your own education on hold whilst your family member or friend was in the military. You may now decide that you would like to return to education either to pick a previous career back up or to start a new career. Information found at the following links could help you to decide how best to go forward.

NATIONAL CAREERS SERVICE

This service provides information, advice and guidance to help you make decisions on learning, training and work opportunities. The service offers confidential and impartial advice. This is supported by qualified careers advisers. Their website aims to:

- Help you with careers decision and planning

- Support you in reviewing your skills and abilities and develop new goals
- Motivate you to implement your plan of action
- Enable you to make the best use of high quality career tools

For more information visit: www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk or call 0800 100 900.

APPRENTICESHIPS

Apprenticeships combine practical training in a job with study. For more information visit; www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/apprenticeships.

HEREFORDSHIRE COLLEGES

At college you can study full time during the day, apprenticeships, part time during the day or evening, or by distance learning depending on which suits you best.

You can study vocational qualifications, 'A' levels or a degree. The options available to you in Herefordshire are:

Herefordshire 6th Form College (16-19 year olds)

www.hereford.ac.uk

01432 355166

Folly Lane, Hereford, HR1 1LU

Herefordshire and Ludlow College of Technology

www.hlcollege.ac.uk

0800 032 1986

- **Hereford Campus**
Folly Lane, Hereford, HR1 1LS
- **Holme Lacy Campus**
Holme Lacy, Herefordshire,
HR2 6LL
- **Ludlow College**
Castle Square, Ludlow,
Shropshire, SY8 1GD
- **Hereford College of Arts**
Folly Lane, Hereford, HR1 1LT
www.hca.ac.uk
01432 273359
01432 341099

POST 16 EDUCATION AND LEARNING

For more information about post 16 school options and further education and apprenticeship providers visit www.herefordshire.gov.uk and search 'post 16 education'.

DISTANCE LEARNING

The Open University offers a range of fascinating and challenging subjects across all levels. Choose from their wide and varied curriculum that covers a range of subjects: from arts to science and everything in-between. For more information visit www.open.ac.uk or call on 0300 303 5303.

RDI has 25 years' experience providing online courses and UK university qualifications by distance learning, helping thousands of people to succeed in their careers. Visit www.rdi.co.uk for more information or call them on 0800 2687737.

HEREFORDSHIRE ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING

There is a range of adult courses available in Herefordshire delivered by a variety of organisations. Courses are run during the daytime and evening at many locations across the county. They range from qualification courses in English, Maths, employability skills, ICT, parenting skills and rural crafts.

The Herefordshire and Ludlow College has an extensive range of qualification courses available at their college sites. If you want something less formal, there are many courses to choose from, here are some examples: yoga, Nordic walking, gentle exercise, craft, creative writing, cooking, family history and beginners' computer courses.

To find out what's available visit www.learnherefordshire.co.uk or Herefordshire and Ludlow College www.hlcollege.ac.uk.

HELP TO PAY FOR EDUCATION

As part of the Armed Forces Covenant there will be financial support available to help pay for University study. This scheme is for ex-military personnel leaving on or after 17th July 2008. Visit www.courses4forces.co.uk for more information or call them on: 0845 3005179.

Before leaving the military you might have registered for Enhanced Learning Credits (ELC), these can be used up to ten years after leaving the forces. Visit www.militaryresettlement.com for more information on ELC.

Enhanced Learning Credits (ELC) may be available for veterans if they qualify for lower or higher tier payments and they are still within the post service access period.

- It changed on 1 Apr 17
- Lower tier of £1k - 3 times or 1 payment of £3k but must have served 6-8 years.
- Higher tier of £2k – 3 times but must have served at least 8 years.
- Veterans will have access to ELC for 5 years post discharge.

OTHER PROVIDERS OF EDUCATION FOR SERVICE LEAVERS

Access Training provides many vocational courses such as plumbing, decorating, bricklaying, and carpentry but can also give you advice on starting your own business. Visit www.accesstraininguk.co.uk for more information or call them on 0800 345 7492.

Best Practice provides training courses in IT, management, business, learning and development. Visit www.bestpractice.uk.com/elc.html for more information or call them on 01923 225225.

EDUCATION FOR YOUR CHILDREN

If you have children and would like them to go to school you will need to register them with a school in your local area. Herefordshire Council is responsible for school admissions. The instructions for finding primary (children aged 4 to 11) and secondary (children aged 11 to 16) schools in the area are available at www.herefordshire.gov.uk/education and learning. If you would prefer to talk to somebody call 01432 260926 or email schooladmissions@herefordshire.gov.uk. You can also find out about school transport online by visiting the Herefordshire Council website.

The council website also has information on nursery and pre-school schools and childminders for

children that haven't yet reached primary school age, as well as after school childcare. All 3 and 4 year olds can access up to 15 hours of free childcare per week, and this is also applicable for some eligible 2 year olds. Visit the council website to find out more.

There is also information about further education for dependants who are aged 16 and over. To find out more information visit www.herefordshire.gov.uk and click on 'schools'.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN HEREFORDSHIRE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

The local offer sets out, in one place, the support and services available for children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) in Herefordshire. To find services and support for your child or young person, or for yourself visit: www.herefordshire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/local-offer.

FAMILY SERVICES

Herefordshire Council website gives information on a range of support services available for families covering help on all aspects of family life to parents, carers and young people and a wide range of services such as finding childcare, schools, dealing with bullying, legal advice, as well as counselling and bereavement services. To find out

more: www.herefordshire.gov.uk/education-and-learning/local-offer.

FOSTERING

Have you considered fostering? If so Herefordshire Council would love to have you on their team.

Leaving the armed forces you will be used to challenges. Fostering will not only provide you with daily challenges but will give you an immense feeling of achievement and reward. Being in the armed forces will have provided you with a unique set of skills that are ideal for inspiring young people and encouraging them to grow into young adults.

Full support and training is provided along with a generous and reliable financial package.

To find out more about how you can make a difference to vulnerable people who need your help ring the Fostering Service on 01432 383240 or visit www.herefordshire.gov.uk/fostering.

COUNCIL TAX AND BENEFITS

COUNCIL TAX

When in the services you may have paid Contribution in Lieu of Council Tax (CILT) for your accommodations. In civvy street you will need to pay Council Tax. The amount of council tax paid depends on three factors; where you live, the value of your home and if there is one or more adults living there. The website www.gov.uk/council-tax explains everything you need to know about council tax, or contact Herefordshire Council.

Some people are eligible for council tax discounts, for example, if you live on your own you will pay 25% less. There are various ways you can pay your council tax. When an annual bill is issued in March, you can pay in ten monthly instalments over the financial year, which runs from 1 April to 31 March. Instalments are due on the 10th of each month, unless you pay by direct debit where a choice of payment dates is offered. If you move house, the number of instalments on your new bill will reflect the full months left in the financial year less one. If you pay late, the council will remind you about your bill. If you repeatedly fail to pay on time, the council may stop your right to pay by instalments. You can opt to pay your Council Tax over 12 instalments from April

to March. Applications to pay by 12 instalments must be received by the 5th April. Please apply in writing to the Tax and Rates Section, Herefordshire Council, P.O. Box 224, Hereford HR1 2XW or by email to counciltax@herefordshire.gov.uk. Council tax can be paid by direct debit, credit card (a surcharge will be added) online or by telephone, paying at the Post Office and paying with PayPoint. For more information contact 01432 260360 or visit www.herefordshire.gov.uk and search 'council tax'.

It is now easier to manage your council tax account online please visit: www.herefordshire.gov.uk/myaccount and sign up.

HOUSING BENEFITS AND COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION

Housing benefit provides help towards the cost of accommodation. If you live in rented accommodation you may qualify for this help. The amount of help will depend on your income, personal and family circumstances. To find out about benefit entitlement you should contact Herefordshire's Benefit section on 01432 260333 or go to www.herefordshire.gov.uk and search benefits where you can also visit the online benefit calculator.

OTHER BENEFITS

The world of benefits can be complicated however, Herefordshire Council's benefit section (contact details on p.32) can help you identify what you may be entitled to and how to claim it. Additionally the Government's website shows all the different benefits available (www.gov.uk/browse/benefits).

In terms of benefits and/or pension queries, one of the veterans' organisations listed on pages 36-38 may be able to assist.

You could also visit 'entitled to' which enables people to anonymously calculate their benefit entitlements. Visit www.entitledto.co.uk for more information.

LOCAL WELFARE SCHEMES

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES AWARD

If you need urgent help with the costs of essential items such as food or gas/electricity, Herefordshire Council may be able, in the form of goods or vouchers, to provide some temporary help to prevent risk to health, well-being or safety, or to ease financial worry. This may be due to an emergency such as fire, flood, or gas explosion, or due to a crisis in your family circumstances.

COMMUNITY CARE AWARD

If you need help to set up home after being in care, or after being homeless, or if you have had to move due to a disaster (such as a flood or fire), or because of violence or fear of violence and you need

furniture or domestic appliances Herefordshire Council may be able to help.

They may also be able to help in other situations where you are facing a crisis which is making it difficult to remain in your home.

To find out if you are eligible or if you need more information visit www.herefordshire.gov.uk and search 'support in an emergency' or telephone 01432 383838.

EXCEPTIONAL HARDSHIP SCHEMES

Some councils offer a discretionary hardship scheme associated with their local council tax scheme.

If you get Council Tax Support and can't pay your remaining Council Tax due to exceptional circumstances, you can apply for help from a hardship scheme.

The amount you receive and the length of time you receive it for depends on your circumstances. It is a limited fund and is prioritised based on the needs of each applicant. Hardship payments reduce Council Tax Bills, they do not provide cash. For more information visit www.herefordshire.gov.uk and search 'Council Tax Discretionary Hardship Policy'.

Veterans UK administers the armed forces pension schemes and compensation payments for those injured or bereaved through service. Veterans UK is part of the Ministry of Defence and can offer advice on where to get help on a range of issues including benefits, pensions, loans and grants, emergency accommodation, finding a job, retraining, health issues welfare concerns, service records and medals. For more information visit their website at www.veterans-uk.info or call the Veterans UK helpline on 0808 1914218.

DISCOUNTS

The Government as part of the Armed Forces Covenant has introduced a scheme that gives ex-service personnel discounts. It is called the **Defence Privilege Card** which costs £4.99 and is valid for five years. This card allows veterans to obtain discounts in some high street shops, some online retailers and also cashback with some online shopping. Visit www.defencediscountservice.co.uk to find out more.

Rewards for Forces is a national discount scheme that offers premium discounts and benefits to anyone who is part of the armed forces community. Serving personnel and their partners in the Navy, Army, Air Force and Veterans, Service Widows/Widowers, Reservists, Cadets, MOD Civil Servants and the Royal British Legion are all welcome and are all entitled to claim forces discounts and make savings for the whole family. The scheme is free to join and an extensive list of the discounts available can be found at www.rewardsforforces.co.uk.

Exclusive to Herefordshire the **Truffle Card** is designed to offer customers treats and offers across a wide and varied range of Independent Herefordshire Businesses. To get your free card go to www.truffleherefordshire.co.uk.

GENERAL MONEY ADVICE

If you are struggling to keep on top of your finances or worried about debt it is important to talk to someone. You can either visit your own bank or contact any of the following organisations who can provide free and impartial advice on all money matters.

MoneyForce (www.moneyforce.org.uk) is a website which provides money guidance for UK service people. A joint initiative between Standard Life Charitable Trust and the Royal British Legion and the Ministry of Defence, the website aims to assist all service personnel, their partners, families and dependents, to be better equipped to manage their money and financial affairs.

Money Advice Service provides free and impartial advice and guidance to help improve your finances. For more information visit www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk or call them on 0300 500 5000.

Money Box Credit Union www.moneyboxcu.org.uk is a financial co-operative, providing a place for you to save and borrow without the excesses you may associate with bigger banks. If you take out a loan you automatically receive free life insurance on the loan. Money Box is open from Monday to Friday - check the web site for opening

times. Offices are in Legion Way, Hereford, HR1 1LN, or you can call on 01432 354103 or email on info@moneyboxcu.org.uk.

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) offer free, confidential, impartial and independent advice to help people resolve their problems with debt, benefits, employment, housing, discrimination, and many more issues. In Hereford city there is a 'walk in' provision at 8 St Owen Street, HR1 2PJ. To find out about opening times visit their website or for an appointment ring 01432 270 536. Please note they can't give advice on this number. 24hour advice can be found at www.citizensadvice.org.uk.

VETERANS GROUPS AND SERVICE CHARITIES

There are more than 2,200 military charities which can offer advice, support or practical help to serving personnel, veterans and their families. The challenge is knowing which one to turn to and whether they can offer the type of support that is needed.

Here are some details of just a few of those charities and how they can help.

Veterans' Gateway Support for Veterans

The first point of contact for veterans seeking support.

We put veterans and their families in touch with the organisations best placed to help with the information, advice and support they need – from healthcare and housing to employability, finances, personal relationships and more.

The Veteran's Gateway provides website, online chat, phone line and text message services available to any veteran, from anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day. Veterans can access face-to-face support through the Veterans' Gateway network of partners and organisations across the UK and overseas.

Eligibility

Anyone who has served in the Armed Forces, regardless of when

and how long they served for, including reservists.

Referral / Contact Details

Signpost to:

Tel: 0808 802 1212

Contact online: [Veterans' Gateway - Contact us webpage](#) (link is external)

Website: [Veterans' Gateway website](#)

SSAFA provides lifelong support to those who are serving or who have ever served in the British Army, the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force and their families.

They offer practical, emotional and financial support to meet individual needs through their network of trained volunteers and professional staff. They are based in the local community so help is always close by when it is needed. To contact Herefordshire branch email Herefordshire@ssafa.org.uk, or call them on 01432 273932.

The **Royal British Legion (RBL)** provides practical care, advice and

support to help serving members of the Armed Forces, ex-Service men and women, their families and dependants.

RBL can provide help and advice with: financial problems, returning to civilian life, training grants, compensation claims and appeals (if you've been injured in service), death in services inquests, care homes, dementia units, providing breaks for veterans, families, children and carers, small household repairs/maintenance and general grant assistance.

There are local RBL groups in Herefordshire, to find your nearest visit: www.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/herefordshire/contact-us/branches or call them on 0808 802 8080.

Hereford Veterans Support Group are a local self-help group offering advice and support to veterans and their families. For more information visit www.herefordshireveteranssupportgroup.org or call 01981 241465.

Blesma, The Limbless Veterans is a national charity that directly supports all of our Service men and women who have lost limbs and the use of limbs or the loss of eyesight in the honourable service of our country. Visit www.blesma.org or call them on 020 8590 1124.

The Not Forgotten Association is a unique national tri-service charity which provides entertainment, leisure and recreation for the serving

wounded, injured or sick and for ex-service men or women with disabilities. Visit www.nfassociation.org or call them on 020 7730 2400.

Blind Veterans UK provides vision impaired armed forces and national service veterans with the person-centred services and tailored support they need to discover life beyond sight loss. Visit www.blindveterans.org.uk or call them on 020 7723 5021.

Help for Heroes supports serving and reservist personnel and veterans who have suffered injuries or illness as a result of their service to the nation. The Charity also helps their close family and dependants. Visit www.helpforheroes.org.uk or call them on 01980 844 280.

ABF The Soldiers' Charity provides financial assistance to all soldiers and their families when in need. Even when a soldier leaves the Army they are still eligible for help. Visit www.soldierscharity.org or call them on 0207 811 3966.

Combat Stress, the veterans' mental health charity supports veterans of the British Armed Forces and members of the Reserve Forces, through effective treatment and support for mental health problems. Visit www.combatstress.com or call their 24hr helpline on 0800 138 1619.

Stoll provides housing and support to vulnerable and disabled ex-service men and women, acknowledging the sacrifices they have made for our country. Visit

www.stoll.org.uk or call 020 7385 2110.

Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity is focussed on giving a better quality of life for serving and former naval personnel. Visit www.rnrmc.org.uk or for general enquiries call 023 9254 8128.

The **Royal Naval Association** has over 20,000 members across 370 branches in the UK and overseas, providing a family of current and former Naval Service personnel, relatives and supporters of our country's Royal Navy. Visit www.royal-naval-association.co.uk or call on 023 9272 3747.

Royal Marines Association (RMA) maintains and promotes esprit de corps and comradeship amongst all Royal Marines and their families, past and present. The RMA is established in branches all over the country and overseas to keep members in touch with one another. Visit www.royalmarinesassociation.org.uk or call their central office on 023 9265 1519.

Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund is the RAF's leading welfare charity with a proud tradition of looking after its own. They can provide a range of support including help with day to day living costs for serving and former members of the RAF as well as their partners and dependant children. Visit www.rafbf.org or call on 0800 169 2942.

RAFA, The Royal Air Forces Association is a membership organisation and registered charity that provides welfare support to the RAF Family. Visit www.rafa.org.uk or call on 0800 0182 361.

RFEA, The Forces Employment Charity provides a job-finding service which generates quality and sustainable employment outcomes for service leavers. Visit www.rfea.org.uk for more information.

To make life easier, you may wish to look at the **Confederation of Service Charities (COBSEO)** website. All of the members of this organisation have to meet strict eligibility criteria and you can easily access their on-line Member Directory. You can search this database and filter the information according to the particular subject that you are interested in e.g. charities which offer accommodation for veterans. Visit www.cobseo.org.uk or call them on 0207 8113224/5.

You can also access information about other organisations which are able to support Armed Forces families via the on-line **British Legion Knowledge Hub** at www.support.britishlegion.org.uk.

SupportLine also have a list of organisations that can help and support ex-military personnel on their website at www.supportline.org.uk.

Veterans UK is part of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and helps ex-service personnel get appropriate

support from government, local authorities, independent bodies and the charity sector. Veterans UK administer the armed forces pension schemes and compensation payments for those injured or bereaved through service. They also provide welfare support for veterans through a national Veterans Welfare Service and Veterans Helpline facility. For more information visit www.veterans-uk.info.

SERVICE FAMILY ASSOCIATIONS

Service Family Federations are independent and confidential charities which provide essential links between families, the armed forces, government and local authorities.

They help families resolve problems by mediation, advocacy and education as well as championing policy changes where discrimination occurs. They are the legitimate voice of the armed forces.

A Service Family Federation can help families with a wide range of issues including housing, health and additional needs, education and childcare, army reserves, deployment, money matters, employment and training and family life.

For more information on the **Army Families Federation** (AFF) visit www.aff.org.uk.

For more information on the **Navy Families Federation** (NFF) visit www.nff.org.uk.

For more information on the **Royal Air Force Families Federation** (RAF FF) visit www.raf-ff.org.uk.

SOCIAL GROUPS

The **Royal British Legion** has 2,500 branches around the UK and overseas. Branches provide support for people in their local communities and a meeting place to get together.

The Legion has a number of branches in Herefordshire. To find your nearest group visit www.britishlegion.org.uk and search for 'branches' or call them on 0808 802 8080.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

If you have been the victim of, or seen a crime, you need to report this to the Police. You can contact West Mercia Police in a number of ways:

101 in non-emergency
999 in an emergency

www.westmercia.police.uk

If you have information to report about a crime, you can also call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or visit: www.crimestoppers-uk.org.

WEST MERCIA POLICE - SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAMS

Working alongside officers and staff from a range of specialist departments, Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT) consist of at least one local constable (Safer

Neighbourhood Officer) and one Police Community Support Officer (PCSO).

You can find contact details for your local SNT by visiting www.westmercia.police.uk and looking for 'Safer Neighbourhoods'.

In addition to using their full enforcement powers to deal with crime and anti-social behaviour, their key role is to ensure that communities have a genuine say in what local issues are addressed as priorities and how their communities are policed.

Nuisance or anti-social behaviour (ASB) can cause individuals alarm and distress. If you are experiencing ASB you can report this to the Council who will investigate and take appropriate action.

COMMUNITY TRIGGER

The Community Trigger is a process you can use to ask your local Community Safety Partnership to review the response to anti-social behaviour incidents you have reported.

The Trigger is designed to ensure that responsible authorities work together to try and resolve recurring concerns about anti-social behaviour.

WHEN CAN I USE THE TRIGGER?

The Community Trigger can be used in the following situations:

- You have made three or more reports relating to the same anti-social behaviour problem in the past six months to the Council, Police or a Registered Housing Provider (social landlord) and you feel that no action has been taken.
- At least three individuals and/or groups in the local community have made reports about the same problem in the past six months to the Council, Police or Registered Housing Provider (social landlord) and they feel that no action has been taken.
- You can activate the Community Trigger on behalf of someone else if you have their written consent.

HOW CAN YOU USE THE TRIGGER?

To use the Community Trigger you will need to contact Herefordshire Council 01432 260000 and say you are requesting a community trigger. Or go to the council web site and search community trigger.

VICTIM SUPPORT

If you have been a victim of any crime or have been affected by a crime committed against someone you know, Victim Support can help you find the strength to deal with it. Their services are free and available to everyone, whether or

not the crime has been reported and regardless of what happened. You can contact the support line 0808 1689 111, 8am to 8pm weekdays or 9am to 7pm weekends, or go to: www.victimsupport.org.uk.

HATE CRIME

Herefordshire has a Fairness, Acceptance, Community and Equality (FACE) Values Partnership Board, formed by groups of local organisations that work together to provide help and support to victims of hate crime.

All hate crimes and incidents should be reported. By reporting incidents, you will enable the police, local council, housing associations etc. to build up patterns of behaviour locally, and highlight areas of concern within your community.

If you have been a victim of crime committed because of who you are (known as a hate crime), or have been a witness of hate crime, you can report it to a dedicated helpline by calling 101 or 0300 333 3000. In an emergency you should call 999. You can also report a hate crime online, and find information about other services that can support victims of hate crime at: www.report-it.org.uk.

TOURISM AND EVENTS

Visit Herefordshire is a website full of information on things to see and do in Herefordshire. You can explore the attractions and enjoy the great outdoors including the countryside and many waterways, visit heritage and gardens, historic houses and castles and see the famous 'mappa mundi' and the chained library, as well as having some family fun and some unique shopping experiences.

The county boasts a wide range of mouthwatering locally produced food and drink which can be purchased locally or sampled in many of Herefordshire's pubs, restaurants and cafes.

You can also search for many festivals and special events happening throughout the year. Visit www.visitherefordshire.co.uk to find out more.

MARKETS AND FAIRS

A number of markets and fairs take place in Hereford and the market towns, ranging from weekly retail markets to Christmas markets, garden fairs, antiques and arts markets. The popular annual May fairs in Hereford and Leominster take over the city and town centre streets. Find out more at www.herefordshire.gov.uk and search 'markets and fairs'.

The museums hold events and exhibitions ranging from art exhibitions at Hereford Museum and Art Gallery to Christmas activities at the Old House, Hereford. For more information visit www.herefordshire.gov.uk and search events and exhibitions.

LIBRARY EVENTS

Activities in libraries range from adult readers' groups, teenage sessions and bounce and rhyme for under 5s. To find out more go to www.herefordshire.gov.uk/libraries and search 'find out what's on'.

There is no charge to join the library. Public access computers are available to use without charge for up to two hours a day. Free wi-fi access is available in Hereford, Leominster, Ross and Ledbury libraries.

FINDING OUT ABOUT THE COUNTY

If you want to find out more information and facts and figures about Herefordshire please visit: <https://factsandfigures.herefordshire.gov.uk>.

A final note

We hope the information in this booklet helps you and your family to easily navigate some of the services available in Herefordshire. We recognise that the transition from military to civilian life can be quite stressful but there is lots of support available and hopefully this booklet will make it easier for you to access that support.

This booklet is also available electronically, visit:
www.herefordshire.gov.uk and search Community Covenant.

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SERVICE to CIVVY STREET