



An Armed Forces Covenant

Between

Test Valley Borough Council

And

The Armed Forces Community in Test Valley

Signed August 2025

We, the Undersigned, commit to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans, Cadets, and military families contribute to our borough, our businesses, and our country.

Signed

Brigadier James Ashworth
Army Headquarters

Signed on behalf of Army Headquarters

Colonel Brendan Shaw
Commandant Army Aviation Centre

Signed on behalf of the Army Air Corps

Cllr Ian Jeffrey
Armed Forces Champion

Signed on behalf of Test Valley Borough Council

Cllr Phil North
Leader of the Council

Signed on behalf of Test Valley Borough Council

Andrew Ferrier
Chief Executive

Signed on behalf of Test Valley Borough Council

Dated this 19th day of August 2025

The Armed Forces Covenant
An Enduring Covenant Between
The People of the United Kingdom
His Majesty's Government

– and –

All those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces of the Crown
And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty.

Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Royal Navy, the Army, and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

Those who serve in the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve, those who have served in the past, and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services. Special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.

This obligation involves the whole of society; it includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations, and the actions of individuals in supporting the Armed Forces. Recognising those who have performed military duty unites the country and demonstrates the value of their contribution. This has no greater expression than in upholding this Covenant.

Section 1: Participants.

1.1 This Armed Forces Covenant is made between:

The serving and former members of the Armed Forces (both regular and reserve, and their families) working and residing in Test Valley

And

Test Valley Borough Council

1.2 Test Valley Borough Council recognises and appreciates the positive contributions of both serving and former members of the Armed Forces to the community, the economy, and wider society.



A map of Armed Forces installations in the Test Valley.

Section 2: Principles of the Armed Forces Covenant.

2.1 Test Valley Borough Council will endeavour to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, which are:

- Members of the Armed Forces Community should not face disadvantage arising from their service in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen.

- In some circumstances special provision may be justified, especially for those who are injured or bereaved.

2.2 Test Valley Borough Council will encourage support for the Armed Forces Community working and residing in Test Valley and will recognise and remember the sacrifices made by members of this Armed Forces Community, particularly those who have given the most. This includes in-Service and ex-Service personnel, their families and widow(er)s in Test Valley.

Section 3: Aims of the Covenant

3.1 The Armed Forces Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community.

3.2 The Armed Forces Covenant defines the enduring, general principles that should govern the relationship between the Nation, the Government, and the Armed Forces Community.

3.3 It aims to encourage all parties within a community to offer support to the local Armed Forces community and make it easier for Service personnel, families, and veterans to access the help and support from the MOD, from statutory providers and from the Charity and Voluntary sector. These organisations already work together in partnership at a local level.

3.4 The scheme is intended to be a two-way arrangement, and the Armed Forces community are encouraged to do as much as they can to support their community and promote activity which integrates the Service community into civilian life.



Cllr Phil Lashbrook, Mayor of Test Valley 2023-2024, lays a wreath of poppies at Andover War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday 2023.

Section 4: Demonstrating our Commitment.

4.1 We recognise the value that serving personnel, reservists, veterans, and military families bring to Test Valley, and to our country. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant, by:

- *Promoting the Armed Forces*: promoting the fact that we are an Armed Forces-friendly organisation, to our staff, customers, and the wider public.
- *Serving Personnel*: providing support to local military bases through service provision, partnership working, and aiding transition into civilian life.
- *Veterans*: supporting the employment of veterans, recognising military skills and qualifications in our recruitment and selection process; working to support the employment of Service leavers.
- *Service Spouses, Partners, & Dependents*: supporting the employment of Service and veteran spouses, partners, and dependents; providing flexibility in granting leave for Service spouses and partners before, during and after a partner's absence.
- *Reserves*: supporting our employees who are members of the Reserve Forces; granting additional paid/unpaid leave for annual Reserve Forces training; supporting any mobilisations and deployment.
- *Cadet Organisations*: supporting our employees who are volunteer leaders in military cadet organisations; supporting local military cadet units; recognising the [benefits](#) of employing cadets/ex-cadets within the workforce.
- *National Events*: supporting Armed Forces Day, Reserves Day, the Poppy Appeal Day, and Remembrance activities.
- *Armed Forces Charities*: supporting Armed Forces charities with fundraising and supporting staff who volunteer to assist.

4.2 We will publicise these commitments on staff notices, and on our website, setting out how we will seek to honour them and inviting feedback from the Service community, our staff, and our residents on our performance.

Section 5: Measures

5.1 Test Valley Borough Council recognises that renewing its commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant will provide the opportunity to work more strategically and collaboratively with the Armed Forces community.

5.2 As a forces-friendly employer, Test Valley Borough Council will continue to:

- Maintain our civilian-military partnership, the Civilian Military Forum.
- Maintain our additional leave provision for Reservists.
- Maintain our agile working model.

- Support staff considering the Reserve Forces.
- Maintain our Silver Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) status.

5.3 Moving forward Test Valley Borough Council will endeavour to:

- More actively promote that we are a Forces friendly employer.
- Partner with the Forces Families Jobs Forum to support military spouses and family members (<https://www.forcesfamiliesjobs.co.uk>).
- Support Armed Forces community integration.

