

WHAT IS THE LANCASHIRE ARMED FORCES COVENANT HUB?



**THE LANCASHIRE
ARMED FORCES
COVENANT HUB**

Set up in July 2018, The Covenant Hub is a partnership between Lancashire County Council, Army Headquarters North West, the NHS and the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan).

It works alongside The College of Military Veterans and Emergency Services (CMVES), for practical reasons, as both are based at the university.

The project is led by Ian Barber, a former regular soldier and current member of the Army Reserve, *pictured below right*. He left military service in 2011 as a Warrant Officer Class 1 and worked in the military welfare sector with The Royal British Legion, and the Royal Air Force Association, while also studying mili-

tary transition and its impact in veterans and their families at Anglia Ruskin University.

In 2018, a joint bid secured £152k from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust allowing the Hub to be established. Since then key areas of work have been defined as councils, education, employment, health and wellbeing and welfare and Ian is working with stakeholders to ensure Armed Forces Covenant pledges are honoured.

Ian said: "Local Authorities benefit from thinking about their covenant pledge and the needs of the armed forces community when they are setting policies and agreeing procedures for access to services such as housing, social care or health provision. Making sure they have made

adjustments to meet the unique needs of the armed forces community is cost effective and can reduce the numbers of people who struggle to access the help they need. This is important regardless of how long a person has served."

The Hub name reflects the 'Hub and Spoke' model which is employed by the project to engage with local authorities and key stakeholders. However, Monday and Thursday afternoons have been assigned as office days so that members of the armed forces community can visit the Hub if they wish.

The Hub can be contacted on 01772 892300 in office hours, or by emailing Ian at ibarber@uclan.ac.uk or messaging the Facebook page @LancsCovenant



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YOUR COVENANT AT WORK

VETERANS' LEAGUE

A pilot project is set to lead to a North West Veterans' Football League being set up.

Health and Wellbeing Officer at Burnley Football Club in the Community Naomi Greene set up the project involving veterans teams from Preston, Manchester City, Wigan, Curzon Ashton and of course Burnley. The mini-league saw four of the five teams playing 5-a-side matches each month from May to August.

Naomi said: "It was quite successful and we now want more teams and even more veterans to get involved. We are hoping that even more football clubs will come forward and set up their own teams. We had around 45-50 military veterans involved and we are looking for even more to get involved. This was a pilot project, but the next step is to set up a proper league."

To get involved can contact Naomi on 01282 704716



SHOP'S SUCCESS

A veterans' charity opened a town centre drop-in shop in Accrington Arndale Centre and the response has been phenomenal.

Veterans In Communities (VIC), based in Haslingden, works throughout East Lancashire and has recruited a new team of volunteers to run the shop. Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell has relocated his popular Tuesday art group to a back room at the shop and the premises is open for people to drop-in on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Operations Manager Bob Elliott said: "We have had an outstanding start to the veterans' drop-in and we weren't expecting so many people to have visited us at this early stage. The shop is looking brilliant and we are very grateful to veteran volunteers Brian McEvoy and Gary Horrocks for decorating the inside."

BUSINESS BREAKFAST

A series of Forces Friendly – Business Breakfast Events are being held across Lancashire to help companies be better informed about the opportunities to work with the Armed Forces.

The first was in Burnley at the new UCLan complex and, as a result of attending the inaugural event, the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce has now invited

The Lancashire Armed Forces Covenant Hub to deliver a further meeting for its members.

Speakers explained the partnership opportunities including signing up to the Ministry of Defence Employer Recognition Scheme; a graded honour to encourage companies to work more closely with armed forces personnel and their families.

They also explained the advantages a veteran can



bring to the workplace and the transferable skills they will have from their military career. Ashley St John-Claire, training and development manager for BCW Manufacturing in Burnley, said that of 240 employees at the BCW 15

were veterans. The Royal Navy veteran said: "On my second day of employment I got the company to sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme. It is easy, it is valued and the rewards are massive."

YOUR COVENANT AT WORK

HELPING HAND FOR FORCES FAMILIES

Children from Lancashire's military families are set to benefit from additional support in education and wellbeing thanks to an alliance of partners hosted by the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan).

The University is hosting the Lancashire and North West Service Children's Progression (SCiP) Alliance Hub, which will allow children with parents in the Armed Forces to access additional support in school to help them progress into further and higher education. Traditionally, military children are underrepresented in this area. The children commonly face additional



pressures from a young age that can affect their education, such as moving school multiple times and coping with a parent being deployed on duty.

In Lancashire alone 1,137 service children receive service pupil premium, a government funded grant given to schools

in England to reduce the attainment gap for the most disadvantaged children.

The Lancashire & North West SCiP Alliance will work with local agencies and charities such as local councils, Army Welfare, Future U, the Lancashire Armed Forces Hub and the College for Military Veterans and Emergency Services (CMVES) to raise awareness of the added burdens children from military families face and offer additional support and guidance. This may include hosting family events throughout the year, educational visits to colleges and universities and additional pastoral care and counselling when needed.

TRUST MAKES GRADE

Blackpool hospital staff pride themselves on the care they give to members of the armed forces community and that commitment has been honoured with Veteran Aware accreditation.

The award, from the Veterans Covenant Hospital Alliance, acknowledges Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust's dedication to treating veterans with compassion and empathy. The Trust is now one of only 33 hospital trusts nationwide to be accredited.

Trust Equality Diversity Lead and Armed Forces Champion Tina Daniels, pictured above, said: "We are honoured to receive this award because we have a lot of veterans living on the Fylde coast. We pride ourselves on our empathy and compassion towards our brave veterans and have always strived to ensure they receive top class care."



The award acknowledges the Trust's commitment to ensuring members of the armed forces community have specific contacts within the organisation who they can talk to if necessary and that staff are trained in understanding veterans' specific cultures and needs.

It also recognises the Trust's support of staff who volunteer in reserve forces and the commitment to ensuring veterans, reservists and service families are aware of appropriate services which could be beneficial to them.

ROYAL VISIT

The Duke of Kent met former members of the armed forces and emergency services who have been supported by FirstLight Trust in Lancaster.

On a visit to the city, the Duke also met supporters who had raised funds through running the Bay Gateway, Morecambe 10km, Pilling 10km and members of Team Flight who raced 30 miles while carrying a 30lb pack through Exmoor during Storm Callum.

Hub support coordinator and Team Flight's leader Gary Parish said: "It was a real honour to have the Duke here so he can find out more about our work and how we support veterans in Lancaster."



YOUR ARMED FORCES CHAMPIONS

CONTACT DETAILS

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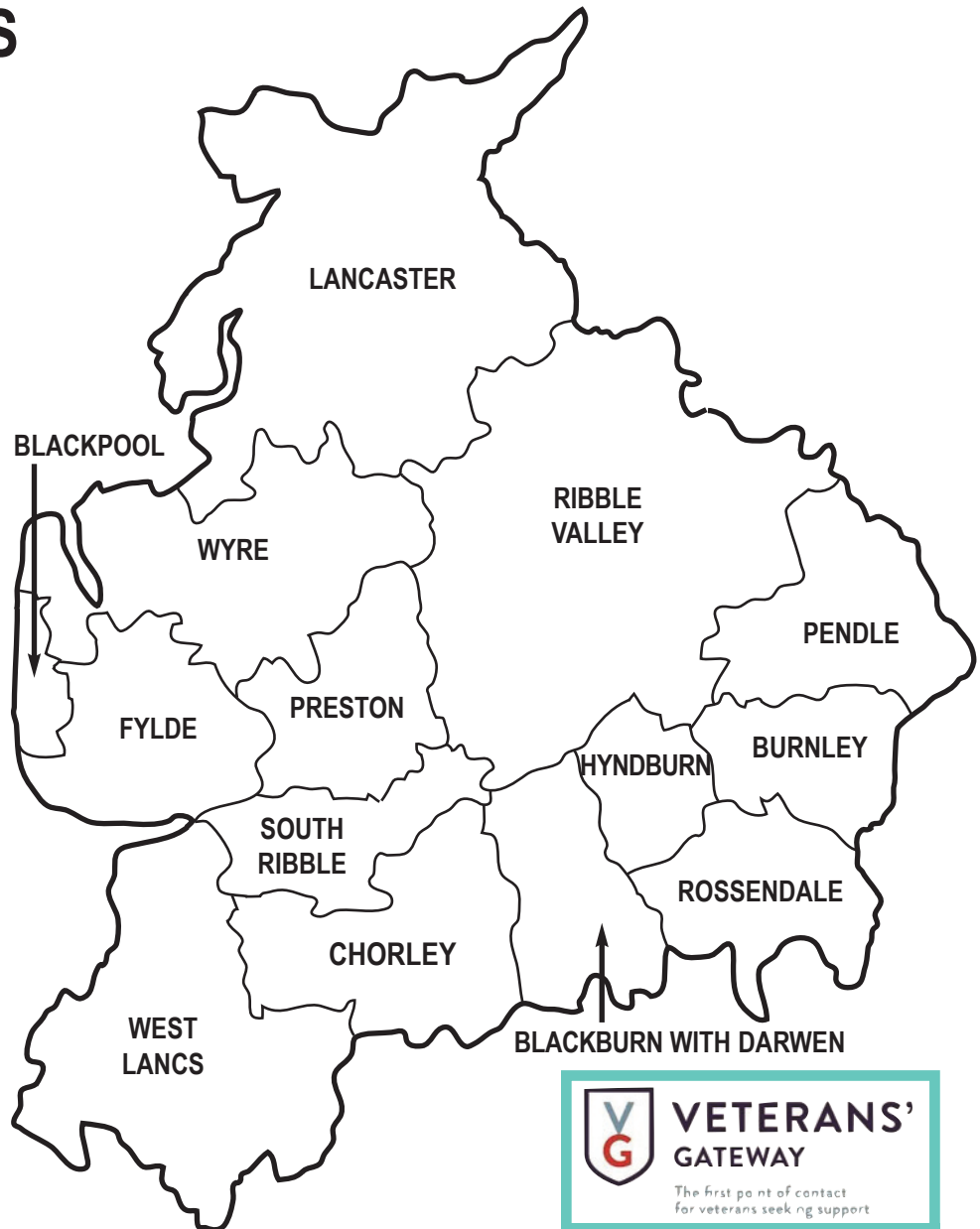
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It's good practice for local authorities to appoint an Armed Forces Champion as part of their Covenant pledge.

The champion acts as an ambassador for armed forces people and provides a bridge between the forces family and the local authority.



VETERANS' GATEWAY

The first point of contact for veterans seeking support

Veterans' Gateway

This is the single point of contact for Armed Forces personnel and their families who are seeking advice and support.

The service links a network of organisations that support Armed Forces personnel and works with people on a one-to-one basis to provide quick and effective help.

For more information call for free on 0808 8032 1212 or visit www.veteransgateway.org.uk