



The Prince's
Responsible
Business Network
Cymru



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

How to capitalise on military talent

INSPIRE HIRE GROW

Employers' Toolkit

**A simple guide to
employing Armed Forces
veterans and reservists
in Wales**



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About Business in the Community

Business in the Community Cymru is The Prince's Responsible Business Network in Wales.

We exist to build healthy communities with responsible business at their heart.

www.bitc.org.uk/wales

This toolkit was developed by Business in the Community (BITC) Cymru, on behalf of the Welsh Government. We would like to thank all the employers and individuals who assisted with the development of this resource in particular those that provided quotes, case studies and ideas including: The Royal British Legion, Alcumus, D.J. Rees, Excelitas Qioptic, Alun Griffiths Contractors, Empower Support for the Voluntary Sector and The Officers' Association. We would also like to specially thank the members of our Veterans Employment Leadership Group including Bouygues UK, Costain, Wales & West Utilities, Cardiff & Vale College and Wates for their passion and support of this project. We are also grateful to Business in the Community Scotland and the Scottish Government for starting the ball rolling with the first Capitalising on Military Talent guide and providing their support to this new Welsh edition.

FOREWORD

BY ALUN DAVIES AM

WE ALL RECOGNISE THE PLACE OF OUR ARMED FORCES IN WALES AND WE ARE PROUD OF OUR VETERANS AND OUR SHARED MILITARY HISTORY.

With around 385,000¹ members of the Armed Forces community living in Wales we know the value of their contribution to the Welsh way of life.

We know the majority of Service leavers settle back into civilian life effectively, using the wide variety of skills developed during their time in the Armed Forces to gain meaningful employment and contribute to their communities.

However, there are those that will need extra support. I recently launched the Welsh Government's Employment Pathway, which sets out the suite of support available in Wales. The Welsh Government wants to ensure Service leavers and veterans are supported into work and given the information relevant to their needs.

To complement the Employment Pathway I asked Business in the Community Cymru to work with the Welsh Government to develop an Employers' Toolkit.

This Employers' Toolkit is intended to raise awareness to prospective employers of the unique and broad range of skills and behaviours that ex-Service men and women possess on re-entering civilian life, experience that would be an asset to any company.

On behalf of the Welsh Government, I am very pleased to welcome this Employers' Toolkit to raise awareness amongst those companies who may not have considered the advantages of employing Service leavers and veterans before. It shows how employers can enhance their workforce by capitalising on the skills and disciplines gained during Service, including leadership, resilience and organisational skills.

Our veterans truly deserve every opportunity for a successful second career after they have given so much for their country.



Alun Davies AM
Cabinet Secretary for
Local Government and
Public Services

¹ Royal British Legion Household Survey

INTRODUCTION

THERE ARE BOTH SOCIAL AND BUSINESS REASONS FOR EMPLOYERS IN WALES TO ENGAGE MORE WITH EX-SERVICE PERSONNEL.

Recruiting well-trained, work-ready talent is a growing challenge for businesses in Wales.

The most recent Welsh Government skills survey² of Welsh employers showed that six per cent had at least one vacancy due to skill-shortage – equivalent to 9,000 vacancies across Wales.

At a time of steadily rising employment, employers are crying out for skilled staff with the right attitude and attributes to support their growing businesses – and every year in Wales veterans are leaving the Armed Forces with exactly this mix.

But while many veterans go on to have successful careers after leaving the Service, this is not always the case. Veterans are comparatively under-represented in the workforce and working age veterans are nearly twice as likely to be unemployed as civilians³. Issues such as a lack of academic qualifications or difficulties for employers in recognising military experiences within corporate recruitment structures can be significant barriers to recruitment.

So while employers are struggling to recruit, Wales has a substantial pool of uniquely-qualified, high-performing people who may just need a little extra support to bring them into the workforce. And by working with employers to increase sustainable employment opportunities, we can help to prevent the more serious social and health issues that come with unemployment such as homelessness and poor mental health.

We have developed this toolkit to help employers to recognise the valuable skills and experiences that veterans can bring to their business – and to understand the practical steps they can take to create a more veteran-friendly working environment.

Using this toolkit

This toolkit has been designed around the tried-and-tested Business in the Community employment framework model of **Inspire, Hire, Grow**. It leads business through a straightforward process of developing a strategic, forces-friendly recruitment and retention programme.



INSPIRE || HIRE || GROW

The advice in this toolkit is relevant to businesses of all sizes and in any sector. To show this in practice, within this document, you'll find inspiring examples of Welsh businesses which are benefiting already from the work they have done to employ and support veterans.

Towards the end of the document you'll find a simple checklist of positive actions you can take and a guide to some of the many expert organisations which can support and help you.

If you're one of the companies taking action and have a story you'd like us to share alongside this toolkit, please contact BITC Cymru on twitter @BITCCymru or on cymru@bitc.org.uk.

² [UK Commission for Employment and Skills - Employer Skills Survey 2015](#)

³ [The UK ex-Service community: A Household Survey 2014](#)

STARTERS' GUIDE TO LEAVING THE MILITARY

It can be difficult to understand the environment which ex-military recruits are leaving and how your business can effectively engage. This section covers the key things to know.

Snapshot of the Armed Forces

The current strength of the UK Forces Service stood at 192,130⁴ on 1 October 2018. That number includes the British Army, Royal Navy & Royal Marines and Royal Air Force. Within that total is also the Volunteer Reserves, people who make an annual training commitment and can be mobilised to support the Regular Forces at home or overseas (on a part-time or full-time basis). In the year to 1 October 2018 just under 15,000⁵ people left the UK Regular Forces. Most Service leavers successfully 'transition' from the forces and enter employment after leaving the military, but some will need more support to do so.

36,870

38,650

116,610

ROYAL AIR FORCE

**ROYAL NAVY & ROYAL
MARINES**

BRITISH ARMY

Where can your business engage?

There are many ways you can connect your business with military talent. Four key areas are highlighted briefly below but you'll find full details within our Appendix.

- **Career Transition Partnership (CTP)** - Career Transition Partnership (CTP) is a Ministry of Defence (MOD) service that provides resettlement support including career development. Employers can access free recruitment services to access the military talent pool. It is important to know that CTP is based outside of Wales but they do work with employers locally.
- **Defence Relationship Management (DRM)** - The DRM, part of the MOD, works with employers around the country to build links with the military. The team is based locally to build partnerships with companies in Wales and to promote the benefits of signing the Armed Forces Covenant.
- **The Armed Forces Covenant (AFC) in Wales** - The AFC is a promise from the nation that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly. Every Local Authority in Wales has signed the Covenant and, to date, they have been joined by more than 100 businesses, charities and organisations in Wales including many of the companies featured in this toolkit.
- **Charities & other organisations** – There are many charities and other organisations providing additional services, schemes and support for Service leavers that you can connect with. Many of these are located in our Directory.

⁴ [UK Armed Forces Quarterly Service Personnel Statistics, MOD/ONS, 1 October 2018](#)

⁵ [UK Armed Forces Quarterly Service Personnel Statistics, MOD/ONS, 1 October 2018](#)

THE BUSINESS CASE

At a time of rising employment, employers are competing to find skilled and qualified candidates. A growing number of employers in Wales are capitalising on military talent to plug this skills gap as they represent a ready-made source of top talent which businesses can tap into with the right recruitment process.

5 REASONS TO EMPLOY VETERANS IN YOUR BUSINESS...



1. VETERANS ARE HIGHLY QUALIFIED

Working-age UK Armed Forces veterans residing in Great Britain were significantly more likely to have gained their qualifications through work compared to non-veterans (63.5% compared to 45.3% respectively). This may be due to veterans using the opportunities available to gain qualifications when they were in Service, or veterans being more likely to undertake vocational training on leaving the Services⁶.

2. VETERANS HAVE VALUABLE ATTITUDES AND ARE ADAPTABLE

David Manners, who served in the British Army and now works for Abergavenny-based civil engineering and construction firm Alun Griffiths Contractors, says:

“Military people have a positive mindset, are able to get things done and aren’t afraid of responsibility. Military people are flexible, as they’re used to being thrown blind into situations anywhere in the world and getting on with it. They are also versatile, in that they adapt to change well - I moved every two years in the Army.”

⁶ [Annual Population Survey: UK Armed Forces Veterans residing in Great Britain, 2015, published 13 October 2016](#)

3. VETERANS ARE SKILLED WORKERS

With more than 200 trades in the Army alone, many veterans are trained and experienced in a range of technical roles all transferable to the civilian workplace.

David Rees, founder and director of construction firm D.J. Rees, based in Merthyr Tydfil, says:

“Small firms need to know ex-military people are electricians, fibre optic engineers, IT specialists and security guys, and a lot of them don’t need retraining. Military people have good communication skills too.”

4. VETERANS MAKE HIGHLY EFFECTIVE EMPLOYEES

In a survey of 50 employers carried out by Deloitte⁷, 76% of employers said that veterans tend to have lower rates of sickness absence when compared to their non-veteran workforce and are likely to be promoted more quickly. 40% also said veterans stay for longer.

5. EMPLOYING VETERANS IS GOOD FOR BUSINESS AND SOCIETY

A survey of 100 employers carried out by the Royal United Services Institute⁸ (RUSI) showed that 74% of employers wish to publicly support the Armed Forces. Many described their pledges as ‘the right thing to do’ that reflected favourably on public perceptions of their company.

MILITARY SERVICE FOSTERS LEADERSHIP, ORGANISATIONAL SKILLS, RESILIENCE AND MANY OTHER BRILLIANT QUALITIES WHICH ARE A GREAT ASSET TO ANY BUSINESS.

⁷ [Veterans Work](#), Deloitte, et al, November 2016

⁸ [The Art of the Covenant](#): The Armed Forces Covenant and the Role of the Commercial Sector. RUSI, October 2016
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INSPIRE TALENT



PRACTICAL TIPS TO INSPIRE AND PREPARE VETERANS FOR CIVILIAN EMPLOYMENT

1. REACH OUT TO TRANSITIONING AND EX-MILITARY JOBSEEKERS

There are a number of experienced charities and support agencies who can help you to identify military candidates at no expense to your business. These include event and careers fairs organised by Career Transitions Partnership (CTP) and the British Forces Resettlement Service (BFRS). See the appendix for a list of organisations.

Denbighshire based Excelitas Qioptiq designs and manufactures photonics products. They make use of social and professional platforms for recruitment. The HR team regularly attends recruitment fairs specifically for forces leavers, posts jobs with the Career Transition Partnership and has also started using online platform MRHQ (Military Resettlement Headquarters), which has the biggest database of Service leavers and is very active on Facebook. It also uses recruitment agencies that target ex-military personnel.

2. ORGANISE MILITARY INSIGHT DAYS

Insight days are a cost-effective way of helping ex-Service personnel to better understand your business and the types of jobs on offer.

Risk management firm Alcumus, headquartered in Nantgarw, Rhondda Cynon Taf, which helps organisations to be safer, healthier and stronger, attended careers fairs for military talent. Alcumus then held an insight day at their offices, where people they'd met at military careers fairs could talk to employees about the work culture and the organisation, ask questions and understand more about the roles and their transferable experience.

3. PROVIDE PRACTICAL WORKPLACE EXPERIENCE

Work experience, placements and internships are a good way for employers to support veterans to overcome barriers and enter employment. Jobseekers can gain vital first-hand experience of the civilian workplace and employers can find out about the benefits of employing ex-military personnel.

David Rees, founder and director of construction firm D.J. Rees, based in Merthyr Tydfil, has found business networking site LinkedIn very useful for work placements:

“I posted on LinkedIn about a veteran who was training as a plumber. I had a flood of people come back to me. He got his placement and he was kept on afterwards as an employee. It gives me a tremendous feeling to have helped with that.”

4. OFFER SKILLS AND CONVERSION TRAINING

Providing preparatory, induction or role-specific skills training helps veterans succeed more quickly in your business. Consider implementing a bespoke induction programme for new veteran recruits.

TOP TIP >> Risk management firm Alcumus has implemented a military talent scheme across the Group. Terri Foulston heads up Alcumus' in-house recruitment team:

“If you’re able to support someone who’s not the full package in terms of industry qualifications, consider their transferable skills and experience. It’s also important to consider how best to bring them on-board and ensure they have a good understanding around the recruitment process, making sure they feel secure in the role and organisation.”

5. OFFER GUIDANCE ON CV WRITING AND INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

The majority of ex-military personnel do not have experience of the civilian recruitment process and find it difficult to translate and promote their own achievements. Organise workshops or webinars that focus of helping ex-military jobseekers to translate their CV.

Lucy Morrell is Senior HR Consultant, with responsibility for recruitment, at Excelitas Qioptiq, says they’ve tailored the language they use when advertising jobs in order to meet ex-military people halfway.

“It’s a learning curve for both sides, as we’ve learned through the military recruitment fairs we’ve attended, where people would pick up our ads and ask ‘what does this mean?’. This has made us more aware of the terms military would use compared with what we would use. We’ve adapted our vocabulary and the way we pitch our roles because of that.”



HIRE TALENT



PRACTICAL TIPS TO CREATE A RECRUITMENT PROCESS THAT IS ACCESSIBLE AND FRIENDLY TO VETERANS

1. DESIGNATE A PERSON AT SENIOR LEVEL TO CHAMPION & LEAD THE PROGRAMME

Encourage a senior business leader to champion veterans and lead the planning and implementation of your programme.

The military talent scheme at risk management firm Alcumus was kickstarted by veteran Mark Burgess, Field Operations Director. He joined the firm after 23 years' military service. He made the transition into an audit role and was keen to explore how the business could capitalise on the skillset that other veterans coming out of the Services bring with them. Risk management is a growing industry but there is a shortage of skilled workers. The military talent scheme has been running for seven months now and is proving successful. Around 10-15% of Alcumus' workforce are veterans.

2. CREATE CLEAR, TRANSPARENT JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND ADVERTISEMENTS

Draw on the expertise of HR staff and veteran employees to create clear, transparent job descriptions to ensure you get the right candidates for your positions.

TOP TIP >> *Excelitas Qioptiq has changed the way it writes job adverts as a result of attending military careers fairs. Lucy Morrell, Senior HR Consultant, says:*

“We would use the term ‘material’ handler, which is a warehouse role. But a military person may put ‘logistics’ on their CV. When advertising roles online, we’re mindful of what military people may type into search engines so we’ll use both our term and the military term to ensure our job adverts are capturing the right people when they search online for jobs.”

3. TRAIN RECRUITERS TO INTERPRET MILITARY EXPERIENCE

Ensure that hiring managers and recruiters understand how to interpret military experience. If you don't have this skillset within your business, contact the organisations listed at the back of this toolkit for advice on how to do this.

4. CREATE A BESPOKE ONLINE PORTAL OR CAREERS PAGE

Developing a dedicated military jobs portal or a military page on your website which is clear and easy to use will attract ex-military jobseekers to your organisation. If you don't have the capacity to create your own, contribute to one that exists or write that you welcome applications from Veterans or Reservists on the page.

5. FOCUS ON POTENTIAL AND SKILL

Assess military candidates based on ability and potential, not past experience or qualifications. Develop a competency-based application process that focuses on the types of skills and competencies that individuals need for the job.

TOP TIP >> *David Manners served in the British Army and now works for Abergavenny-based civil engineering and construction firm Alun Griffiths Contractors. He is the firm's Armed Forces Champion. He says:*

“Don't have fixed ideas about the military. Companies need to have a much more open mind about recruiting ex-military people. Give them a chance and they'll shine, because if you don't give them that experience, they won't have it.”

6. ADVERTISE JOBS THROUGH THE CTP, MILITARY CHARITIES AND OTHER AGENCIES

Advertise roles through specialist consultancies recruitment agencies and charities, as these will often be the first point of contact for ex-military job seekers. See our list of charities and specialist organisations who advertise jobs in the Directory. Use social media, your internal network and your online job portal to share vacancies.

TOP TIP >> *When it comes to social media, Excelitas Qioptiq, D.J. Rees Construction and Empower Support for the Voluntary Sector all cite networking sites as a good place to connect with organisations and individuals in the military and business world, post jobs and find potential worker.*

7. ENCOURAGE YOUR SUPPLY CHAIN TO ADOPT ARMED FORCES-FRIENDLY RECRUITMENT PRACTICES

Communicating with your supply chain and customers on why your business champions veterans within the workplace will encourage others to follow suit.

TOP TIP >> *David Manners of Abergavenny-based civil engineering and construction firm Alun Griffiths Contractors says:*

“One of our principal clients is Network Rail, who hold an MoD Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award. We also pass the message down our supply chain and say, ‘We're a member of this scheme. If as one of our suppliers you wish to know more, please get in touch’.”

GROW TALENT



PRACTICAL TIPS TO CREATE AND EMBED A SUPPORTIVE CULTURE THAT HELPS VETERANS TO DEVELOP AND PROGRESS

1. DEMONSTRATE VETERAN-FRIENDLINESS FROM THE TOP DOWN

Prepare a written statement explaining why the business is committed to hiring military candidates from a member of the senior leadership team. Contact local media about your military programme and offer interviews with the CEO or Managing Director to show commitment has come from the top.

EXAMPLE >> *Pontypridd-based Edwards Coaches secured media coverage when they signed the Armed Forces Covenant in 2017. Managing Director Jason Edwards appeared in local media as the firm signed the covenant and pledged that no-one should be disadvantaged as a result of having served.*

He said: "Over the years, many veterans have worked with us and we've long considered ourselves as a Forces Friendly business. We were delighted to sign the Armed Forces Covenant and formalising our support has opened opportunities for us to hire more veterans."

2. ESTABLISH AN INTERNAL MILITARY NETWORK FOR VETERANS, RESERVISTS AND MILITARY SPOUSES

The creation of an internal military network as a forum for networking and information is a positive way to connect with the military community.

TOP TIP >> *Check out the top tips from the Officers' Association on creating an internal network as detailed on Page 18.*

3. PROMOTE COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING EX-MILITARY PERSONNEL VIA YOUR WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

Making a commitment to having a visible military programme is a positive way of ensuring new entrants to your firm who are ex-military feel confident they'll be supported. Publish case studies of veteran employees on the company website to highlight roles ex-military personnel have successfully transitioned into within the company.

EXAMPLE >> *Based in Blackwood, General Dynamics UK is one of the UK's leading defence companies and an important supplier to the UK Ministry of Defence (MoD). General Dynamics has a dedicated page on the company website explaining its commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant.*

On its careers pages, General Dynamics UK highlights different team members. One of these is Ian Taylor, system integration and test engineer, who completed eight years' army service and competed as a member of the UK team for the 2017 Invictus Games in swimming, powerlifting, rowing and athletics.

4. PROVIDE CLEAR PROGRESSION ROUTES AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR VETERANS

As with any new employee, it's important to manage employees' expectations, whether that be salary or progression opportunities. Ensure that military candidates understand the full scope of benefits, career progression and development opportunities from the outset. Military candidates are used to a very structured career path of continuous learning programmes, so it is important to be explicit about the opportunities to progress within the organisation.

TOP TIP >> *Terri Foulston explains risk-management firm Alcumus' military talent scheme.*

"A Service leaver or veteran can have the opportunity to shadow one of our existing employees, an auditor or health and safety consultant, and get a feel for what the role is like. If they are still keen to become an auditor or consultant, we then invite them in for a formal interview. They would start as a trainee consultant or auditor and, as we put them through the training they require to be fully competent, the salary increases in increments as we get them more skilled. Once they're up to full consultant or Lead Auditor level, they're signed off that programme which typically lasts six-months."

5. ENSURE YOUR HR POLICIES SUPPORT RESERVISTS

Having a visible reserves policy will help to attract and retain military recruits that would like to continue as a reservist. For guidance on what to include in a reservists HR policy, check out the [UK Government's template](#).

EXAMPLE >> *Employers can sign the Armed Forces Covenant and tailor the covenant pledge to what their business can support. Civil engineering and construction firm Alun Griffiths has signed up to support the local cadets, work in partnership with the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers and support people in the business who are reservists.*

6. SUPPORT A MILITARY-FRIENDLY WORK ENVIRONMENT AND GROW YOUR MILITARY CULTURE

- Participate in events that celebrate the sacrifices and contributions of the military, such as Armed Forces Day.
- Make sure there is regular internal communications around the organisation's support for the military community – news article, blog posts and social media.
- Create financial incentives for existing employees when they recommend a veteran who successfully passes probation.



SME INSIGHT: D.J. REES

The Merthyr Tydfil-based firm is small – 15 employees in total – but its work with the Armed Forces is mighty – demonstrating that businesses of all sizes have the potential to capitalise on military talent.

Construction firm D.J. Rees was formed in 1991 by Director David Rees. Originally a decorating firm, over the 28 years the company has been trading, it has progressed into a complete building maintenance specialist while keeping their decorating division. It is a signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant, demonstrating the firm's commitment to being an Armed Forces-friendly employer, and was the first business in Wales to be awarded a coveted MoD Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold Award.

Getting started

David's involvement with the Armed Forces came about after he went to price some work for the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations (RFCA), a unit for Service people injured in conflict.

"Not all injuries were physical and that really changed my perspective of military veterans and reservists and I wanted to help. I met some of them and they were unbelievably positive, while others were shells of their former selves. When I heard about the Armed Forces Covenant, I wanted to sign, and I become more involved with veterans.

"I'm a small company but I have employed reservists and I help find veterans and reservists work through my supply chain, thanks to [business networking site] LinkedIn. I'll post on there, basically saying 'who can help this veteran?'"

"Three months ago, I posted about a veteran who was training as a plumber. He had done the course but needed 12 weeks' site experience to get his qualification. I had a flood of people come back to me and he got his placement, which then led to him being retained. It gives me a tremendous feeling to have helped with that.

"I have found placements for at least three veterans through LinkedIn over the past 18 months and over the past two years I've placed about 12 veterans and reservists. I currently have one veteran who has been with us for four months as a trainee carpenter. I employed a female veteran as a painter prior to that."

Apprentices

Have been recruited from the Armed Forces Employability Pathway scheme helping young unemployed veterans

Cadets

Financial assistance provided to Army Cadet Force in Wales

Reservists

Have been supported in employment in the business and with suppliers

Engaging others

David is an advocate of the Defence Employer Engagement agenda and is passionate about getting more SMEs involved.

“In the South Wales Valleys, where I am based, there are very, very few big employers. Most in Merthyr are SMEs but few know about the covenant.

“Small firms need to know ex-military people are electricians, fibre optic engineers, IT specialists and security guys, and a lot of them don’t need retraining. Military people have good communication skills too.”

If all the employers our size in Wales got involved, that would add up to a lot of firms taking on a lot of military talent altogether.

“Military people also have discipline – that goes from how they behave in the workplace, to their timekeeping, to how they drive. I’m a small business, it helps me to have staff take good care of my vehicles, because if one is out of action that hurts my business.”



D.J. Rees have recruited apprentices from the Veterans Employment Pathway Scheme

INSIGHT: ALCUMUS

Alcumus is active in recruiting military personnel as their skills are an excellent fit for the health and safety profession. Terri Foulston heads up Alcumus' in-house recruitment team, while Mark Burgess is ex-army and a Field Operations Director. Here they explain how they worked together to implement a military talent scheme across the Group to tackle a skills shortage.

Alcumus, headquartered in Nantgarw, Rhondda Cynon Taf, helps organisations to be safer, healthier and stronger. It has five offices across the UK and serves over 40,000 clients in the UK. Some 40% of its 550-strong UK workforce is based in Wales. The firm provides risk management solutions within the fields of Health, Safety, Environmental and Quality Management, for organisations across multiple sectors.

Context

Terri says: "Risk management is a growing industry but we do face difficulty recruiting skilled workers. The reason for this is two-fold. Firstly, there's increased awareness of the importance of health and safety following tragedies such as the Grenfell Tower fire. Secondly, because of increased demand, there's more competition for workers in this industry. We realised this was an opportunity to look at our own in-house training team to support people who were skilled but weren't fully qualified to grow our own talent."

An opportunity spotted for veteran talent

Terri says: "Nine months ago, Mark returned from a short period working at a competitor to become Field Operations Director. Mark reviewed his team and identified that there were some skill shortages within certain industries (IT Security, Construction and Food Industry) which he knew we could fill with Service leavers and veterans. The military talent scheme was designed and rolled out as a result. We've been running this program for seven months now and it's proving successful."

"In terms of veterans' transferable skills, it's very much about structure and process. Mark worked his way up to Warrant Officer Class 1 (WO1) – that's a senior warrant officer in the Armed Forces. Anybody who works in that environment is used to high risk – they will be very methodical, detailed and thorough. That's like how our consultants will work with a client, following rules and regulations. A lot of what they do concerns ensuring the health and safety of themselves and others. At the same time, on the auditing side of business, it's also about following rules and regulations. It's comparable to an infantry soldier going out on exercise and checking through their kit beforehand, for example. Veterans will bring all of that existing experience and way of working with them to our business."

10-15%

**Of the Alcumus workforce
are Veterans**



Terri Foulston
Head of Recruitment
Alcumus

Method

Terri says: “We partnered with the British Forces Resettlement Service (BFRS), a Social Enterprise created to help the Armed Forces community with their transition into civilian life. We attended a couple of their careers fairs for military talent held at Aldershot in Hampshire and Tidworth in Wiltshire. Off the back of that, we ran an industry day, so people we met at those careers fairs could attend one of our offices, talk to employees about our work culture and the organisation and be able to ask questions, understand more about the roles and their transferable experience.

“If a Service leaver or veteran decides to take it up, they can have the opportunity to shadow one of our existing employees, an auditor or health and safety consultant, and get a feel for what the role is like. If they are still keen to become an auditor or consultant, we then invite them in for a formal interview. They would start as a trainee consultant or auditor and, as we put them through the training they require to be fully competent, the salary increases in increments as we get them more skilled. Once they’re up to full consultant or Lead Auditor level, they’re signed off that programme which typically lasts six months.

“A lot of our roles are field-based roles, based from home, so it’s not a 9-5 office job. That’s why it’s important to have the right level of support for Service leavers who join us, so they feel confident out in the field, managing their own diaries.

Mark says: “In my role as Field Operations Director, I’m responsible for 76 full time auditors and 40 Sub-Contractors. I left Service after 23 years in 2009. I was ready to leave the Services but found leaving to be a challenge. I am very proud to have served my country, but now looking back realise that the jump into civilian life can be the start of a new chapter and I have used my transferable skills to help me.

Transferable Military Skills

“Over the last few years I’ve helped people with writing CVs and trying to coach them on finding a job. There’s always much more to what Service leavers have done in their military career than what they think they’ve done, so it’s getting them to convert their military training, skills and experience into civilian speak.

“For example, if you’re auditing an organisation against ISO 27001 – which provides the specification for best-practice information security management systems – someone coming out of the Royal Signals in the Army, or a signal specialist from the Navy or Airforce has sound qualifications and a background in IT and knows all about managing top secret information, that a civilian wouldn’t have.

“At military recruitment fairs I talk to people getting ready to leave Service. They say they’ve never done auditing before. But for example, in Service you’ve got soldiers on parade, you’re inspecting them to see if they are wearing their uniform correctly and carrying the correct equipment. By checking those individuals, you’re carrying out an audit. Similarly, if you’ve checked weapons systems in stores, that’s another auditing process.

“At Alcumus we have had great success recruiting Service personnel. They have a lot of skills and experience to benefit businesses and it’s a strategy that we believe more organisations could benefit from.”

Mark Burgess
Field Operations Director
Alcumus



TOP TIPS ON BUILDING A MILITARY NETWORK WITHIN YOUR BUSINESS

An Internal Military Network is a great way to maximise the benefits that veterans can bring to your organisation. We asked Lee Holloway, CEO of [The Officers' Association](#) for some top tips on building a strong network for ex-Service personnel within your business.



Lee Holloway
Chief Executive Officer
Officers' Association

- 1** Have a network with clear purpose and vision aligned to your organisation's brand/vision and values ensure activity is linked back to this.
- 2** Have an individual or group with the commitment/motivation to make the network succeed and share the workload.
- 3** Learn and leverage from other schemes/activities already being run in the business and what other business and sectors have already done.
- 4** Communicate activity with colleagues, customers, stakeholders – to gain exposure and to retain support.
- 5** Report back to senior management on benefits (and successes).
- 6** Respond quickly to any interested parties.
- 7** Learn from other organisations and be generous in sharing your own experience.
- 8** Identify blockers – tackle what is achievable.
- 9** Think carefully about how to manage a large or geographically dispersed network.
- 10** Make it inclusive not exclusive – engage those without a military background and integrate with other areas of the business.

“THE OA WORKS WITH EMPLOYERS TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THE BENEFITS OF RECRUITING VETERANS AND WE ENCOURAGE BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE TRANSLATION OF MILITARY SKILLS. WE PROVIDE EMPLOYER-LED RESEARCH WHICH CONFIRMS THAT RECRUITING FROM THE VETERAN TALENT POOL IS NOT JUST ‘THE RIGHT THING’ TO DO, IT IS A DIRECT BENEFIT TO BUSINESS.”

HIRING TALENT: Q&A WITH QIOPTIQ

Lucy Morrell is Senior HR Consultant with responsibility for recruitment at Excelitas Qioptiq, which designs and manufactures photonics products for a range of markets including medicine, life science, defence, manufacturing and aerospace. In 2018, the Denbighshire-based business opened a new £3.7m warehouse to support its £83 million MoD contract to service vital night-vision equipment to UK Armed Forces around the globe. The company employs around 650 people across its St Asaph and Bodelwyddan sites, is a signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant and holds an MoD Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Silver Award. We caught up with Lucy to find out how they are identifying and attracting military talent to their business.



How are you recruiting ex-service personnel?

This year, we've been to three Service leaver recruitment fairs. We are also diverse in where we advertise our jobs to ensure we attract the right people, including ex-military staff. We were posting jobs with the Career Transition Partnership. We've also started using MRHQ (Military Resettlement Headquarters) after they got in touch with us, having seen that we had signed the Armed Forces Covenant. MRHQ is an online platform that helps ex-military personnel find employment. It has the biggest database of Service leavers and is very active on Facebook. We also use a few different recruitment agencies that target ex-military personnel.

Why is military talent so useful?

At Excelitas Qioptiq we sell, among other things, defence products. The best people to sell these into defence organisations are ex-military people. They understand the products, they know how the kit works, and they know how to pitch the goods. Similarly, when it comes to warehousing roles for these products, ex-military people understand how these products need to be packed. We make products that are sold into any defence organisation worldwide including the UK, America and Australia. If we're selling our product into the British Army, for example, using someone who has served in the Army, who is familiar with Army terms and acronyms, who has their own contacts even - that's helpful.

How have you adapted your recruitment?

With recruiting ex-Service personnel, there is a language barrier to consider. For example, we would use the term 'material' handler, which is a warehouse role. But a military person may put 'logistics' on their CV. Where we would advertise for a test engineer, a military person may use the term validation engineer. It's a learning curve for both sides, as we've learned through the military recruitment fairs we've attended, where people would pick up our ads and ask 'what does this mean?'. This has made us more aware of the terms military would use. We've adapted our vocabulary and the way we pitch our roles because of that. We now use both our term and the military term to ensure our job adverts are capturing the right people when they search online for jobs.

What tips would you give others?

I would really think about using social media to tap into the military network. LinkedIn is good for that as you get to see people's CVs. When I've spoken with senior leaders in the military, they say it's part of their role to ensure veterans' transition to civilian life is as smooth as possible, so they welcome connections with employers. If you connect with just a couple of those senior military leaders, online or in real-life, your network of military contacts will grow and you can develop a military audience for your recruitment efforts.

INSIGHT: ALUN GRIFFITHS CONTRACTORS

David Manners is Health, Safety and Environment Advisor, Admin Manager and Rope Access Coordinator for the Rail Division at civil engineering and construction firm Alun Griffiths Contractors, one of Wales' leading civil engineering firms. He served in the British Army and is now an Army Reserve Officer. Now as the company's Armed Forces Champion, David reflects on his own experience and the business benefits of hiring reservists and those with a military background.

I started with Alun Griffiths Contractors in May 2017. Together with one of the company's directors, Richard Bruton, who is also ex-military, we pushed for the MoD's Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Bronze Award and received it in January 2018.

“We pledged to support the local cadets and support people in the business who are reservists.

“Army Reservists have a 27-days-a year minimum commitment, though a lot of that takes place at the weekend. For employers there is huge value in employing reservists; the military gives them people who have had additional training in communication, leadership skills and more, plus professional training in the role they do in the reserves.

“Military people are flexible and resilient. They're used to being thrown blind into situations anywhere in the world and getting on with it. Military people also have a lot of soft skills. For example, they're used to working with people they hardly know, in very austere circumstances - where you can't clock off and walk away at 5pm.

“Another great quality ex-military people have is that they're very versatile; they adapt to change well.

“I moved every two years in the Army. You move location, move your family - everything. Military people have a positive mindset, are able to get things done and aren't afraid of responsibility.

“In the civil engineering and construction industry, communication is important. In the military, the first time you're promoted you're sent on public speaking courses so you become used to speaking in public and to large groups. When military people write a CV they think of public speaking, for example, as an inherent skill everyone has and they don't mention it. But recruiters don't realise that military people have this skill, resulting in a missed opportunity for both parties.

“Civil engineering and construction has an ageing workforce. One of things we're trying to do is persuade people leaving the military to consider entering this industry and also support reservists as a way of attracting talent. Reservists connected to the military can extol the virtues of civil engineering and construction to people leaving the military.

“Companies need to have a much more open mind about recruiting ex-military people. Give them a chance and they'll shine, because if you don't give them that experience, they won't have it.

“The British Army runs the biggest apprenticeship scheme in Britain – proper, qualified apprentices in mechanics, engineering, as dental technicians, doctors, HR, IT.

“The misconception is that you join at 16 and spend your whole life doing one job. But you don’t do one job for life when you’re serving. I started as an infantry soldier and when I left I was looking after a regiment’s HR and finance. You train as soldiers but you also train in whatever your trade is and military people are used to training. You start off doing one job, then you’re told to go away and do another job and with every change comes training. Training is completely embedded in the military.

Inspiring talent

“We built the bypass at Newtown, Powys. The Royal Engineers military unit run a BTEC course in civil engineering and construction for personnel to get promoted to Warrant Officers. We provided the 4-6-weeks industry placement on the Newtown Bypass. That came about because of an ex-Royal Engineer in the business.

Alun Griffiths Contractors has 800 direct employees and 150 contractors and sub-contractors. With the HR director, we’re trying to tease out who all those ex-military are. Once you know how large your military network is, you can work out how this might benefit the business.

Supply chain engagement

“One of our principal clients is Network Rail, who hold an MoD Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award. Network Rail demands things of their supply chain and we are pleased to have the bronze award and will go for the silver award next year. Going forward, we’ll be passing the message down our supply chain and saying: ‘We’re a member of this scheme. As one of our suppliers if you wish to know more, get in touch’.

“As a larger business we are in a great position to promote positive messages about being an Armed Forces-friendly employer down our supply chain.”



Skills for the future: Alun Griffiths have created placement opportunities on site to build links with the military

SME INSIGHT: EMPOWER SUPPORT FOR THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Bev Garside is Director of Empower Support for the Voluntary Sector, an SME which works to support the charity sector. The Brecon-based company is a signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant and holds an MoD Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Silver Award. Bev says Wales' charity sector could plug its skills gap by capitalising on military talent – but as a small business her experiences are also highly relevant to SMEs.

Getting started

It was about two-and-a-half years ago that I met a friend who was a Commissioned Army Officer. We were sharing information about our respective sectors when we realised that a lot of trouble-shooting in the charity sector that I undertake would not be necessary if the right structures and processes were in place. What my friend impressed on me was that the military are focussed on structure and process and are seeking roles where they can really make a difference.



We realised there was a gap. The other issue is that lower ranks who leave the Armed Forces find that often their skills aren't recognised in civilian life. So, they end up in low-paid service or retail sector work. I felt they would be strong recruits for the charity sector in a range of roles – leadership roles, support roles, project management work.

My friend then introduced me to one of his Regimental Sergeant Majors to discuss the bespoke support that some Service leavers needed.

I started reviewing CVs, translating military language into civilian-speak. From there, lots of people started finding out about me. I also use NLP (Neuro-linguistic programming) and I talked to them about how people recognise their own language and why it was important to reflect the language of the sector in CVs and application forms.

I asked these Service leavers to seek roles that they felt they could do and strip out the person specification. Look at how employers define that role and those skills and consider whether you can meet them and how you can evidence that.

Then I started helping with interviews. There's a very strong hierarchy in the forces. If you're being interviewed then you're generally being interviewed by your superior and that has its own power dynamic. But in an interview in the civilian world, not asking questions limits the level of engagement.

I would say 'Ask the interviewer what would make a difference for you? What would you need from me to make you more effective? Then go on to explain how you would deliver on that.' Culturally, a lot of them really struggled with that. But an employer will rarely put into a job description the critical problems they face. No-one else is going to ask that so you've scored points from asking them that question.

The Armed Forces are a great network. From this initial voluntary work, I had the opportunity to meet a very senior and inspirational Army Officer at the Defence Academy in Shrivenham. I shared with him the size of the charity sector and the vast opportunities for Service leavers. Most charities are small but collectively they're a massive employer base. He introduced me to the Defence Relationship Management Team (DRM).

"I'm now working with DRM team in London, [which provides support to organisations on employing the military community and the value of signing the Armed Forces Covenant] with a view to bringing an event to Wales that will see

military personnel and the charity sector coming together so we can provide opportunities for veterans and Service leavers to work in the charity sector. There's a lot of synergy between Armed Forces skills and the skills the charity sector wants and needs.

Military personnel today receive far wider training than traditional warfare training. I don't think many people realise that when you prepare to leave the Armed Forces, you receive a £2,000 training budget. So if you hire that Service leaver, they'll benefit from that training pot because they'll have a worker who can go for training but the employer won't have to pay for it.

"I've employed a Reservist, Ashley. He was brilliant to work with: confident, good at

presenting, and, with a small business like mine, you could chuck anything at him.

"It was Ashley who suggested we sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant. And he helped us apply for the Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Bronze Award. We now have the ERS Silver Award.

Leadership skills

"Within the charity sector or indeed within many smaller businesses in Wales, there is often a lack of funding or capacity to invest in leadership. Leadership within the Armed Forces is culturally built in to the system and many Service leavers have ILM (Institute of Leadership and Management) Level 3,4 or 5 qualifications in Leadership and Management. Armed Forces Reservists get the same opportunities for training and therefore allowing staff to be released into the reserves. This enables them to access valuable leadership training and experience."

"I would say to all employers in Wales: Have a Reserves policy. Encourage your staff to join the Reserves; there are valuable training and professional development opportunities. Recruit Service leavers and veterans as well. They are great for your business."

CHECKLIST

STEP 01



Find out if any of your employees, or individuals within their networks, have a military background

If you don't have anyone with an understanding of the military environment within your recruitment team, call upon the advice and knowledge of employees / contacts with a military background.

Designate a champion at a senior level to act as a focal point for all military-focused activity. This person should be a visible and vocal advocate and help raise awareness.

STEP 02



Develop your military employment strategy to include these actions:

INSPIRE



Inspire and prepare veterans for civilian employment

HIRE



Create an accessible recruitment process

GROW



Retain, develop and progress your military talent

Provide information and guidance - attend careers fairs organised by CTP or military charities. These are sometimes outside of Wales but you can also host your own insight day or work with others to put one on

Offer one-to-one support - CV writing workshops, mock interviews, culture 'conversion' training and mentoring

Create strong partnerships - with the CTP or a military charity to gain access to military talent

Provide practical workplace experience - civilian work attachments, internships work placements

Attract military talent - create careers pages online and advertise in the right places

Be military-friendly - produce clear and transparent job descriptions, conduct effective interviews and provide feedback

Understand and value military experience - train and support your recruiters to interpret military experience, facilitate effective skills mapping

Focus on potential, not experience - develop a competency-based application process, challenge the assumption that industry experience is an essential requirement

Offer military-friendly inductions – develop a supportive on-boarding process

Support military employees' wellbeing – promote positive mental and physical health, provide education about mental health difficulties amongst veterans

Develop a military-friendly culture - ensure HR policies support reservists, fundraise for military causes, support military commemorations and events, set up an internal network

Progress and retain military talent – create clear routes for progression and structured development plans

Show your commitment – by signing the covenant (find out more in our Appendix)

STEP 03



Connect your activities to create a holistic, sustainable military employment programme

Identify ways to join up the dots between different actions across the three areas of your programme

Identify KPIs, set reasonable targets and put steps in place to record and evaluate the impact.

Share your best practices and experiences in employing military candidates with other employers.

Encourage your clients and supply chain to adopt a military-friendly recruitment process

MY ACTIONS & NEXT STEPS

DIRECTORY

This directory lists relevant contacts for employers seeking to engage with the Armed Forces community and capitalise on military talent.

Career Transition Partnership (CTP)

CTP is the official provider of Armed Forces resettlement, offering resettlement support, career transition and training opportunities.

Central Support Team

0121 236 0058

EmployerSupport@ctp.org.uk

www.ctp.org.uk

The Forces Employment Charity (RFEA)

The RFEA provides a job-finding service for all Service leavers and Veterans. Employers can register to list vacancies. In Wales, their base is the Royal British Legion pop-in centre on High Street in Cardiff city centre.

0121 262 3058

info@rfea.org.uk

www.rfea.org.uk

Defence Relationship Management (DRM)

The DRM is the single point of contact linking employers with the Ministry of Defence (MoD). DRM manages the Armed Forces Covenant on behalf of the MoD and is responsible for the MoD's Employer Recognition Scheme.

[See the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations below for contact details.](#)

www.gov.uk/government/groups/defence-relationship-management

Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations (RFCA)

The RFCA for Wales' Employer Engagement team help and advise organisations, companies, reservists and Cadet Force Adult Volunteers relating to Defence People-related employment matters. They work with the MoD's Defence Relationship Management (DRM) organisation to build relationships with employers.

Audrey Nealon, Regional Employer Engagement Director for South Wales

029 2037 5734

wa-reed@rfca.mod.uk

Tony Fish, Regional Employer Engagement Director for North Wales

01352 755 309

wa-reed2@rfca.mod.uk

www.wales-rfca.org

The Officers' Association

Supports former officers of the Armed Forces. Offers employers access to a talent pool of former officers with a diverse range of skills.

0207 808 4178

recruitment@officersassociation.org.uk

www.officersassociation.org.uk

The Royal British Legion Wales

The Royal British Legion provides lifelong support for the Armed Forces community - serving men and women, veterans, and their families. The Wales Area Office can be found on High Street in Cardiff city centre.

0808 802 8080
wales@britishlegion.org.uk
www.britishlegion.org.uk

The Poppy Factory

The Poppy Factory is the UK's leading employment charity for veterans with health conditions.

020 8940 3305
workwithus@poppyfactory.org
www.poppyfactory.org

Military Resettlement Headquarters (MRHQ)

An online platform that helps ex-military personnel find employment. Employers can post jobs and search CVs.

0330 043 2505
support@mrhq.co.uk
www.mrhq.co.uk

Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)

The FSB offers members advice, financial expertise and support, aimed at helping small businesses achieve their ambitions. This includes signposting to organisations which can support businesses in developing Armed-Forces friendly recruitment practices.

029 2074 7406
wales.policy@fsb.org.uk
www.fsb.org.uk

British Forces Resettlement Services (BFRS)

BFRS is a Social Enterprise created to help the Armed Forces Community with their transition into civilian life. They run careers fairs linking military personnel with employers, virtual career fairs, and offer recruitment services.

02476 939 931
info@bfrss.org.uk
www.bfrss.org.uk

Please note, all these organisations offer support to employers in Wales.

GLOSSARY A – Z

Terminology	Definition
EARLY SERVICE LEAVERS (ESLS)	Service leavers who complete less than 4 years' Service in the Armed Forces or who are compulsorily discharged.
ENHANCED LEARNING CREDITS (ELCS)	Military personnel are given personal development credits linked to time served. These credits can be used not only whilst in the Services but also for a limited time after leaving. More on ELCs see www.enhancedlearningcredits.com
MEDICAL DISCHARGE	Someone no longer able to meet military medical standards for operational activities. It does not mean major restrictions on civilian work – a pilot may have impaired vision but be perfectly capable of working in other environments.
MOBILISATION	Used in the context of those holding a reserves liability being called upon for active military duty.
NON COMMISSIONED OFFICER (NCO)	Officers gain a 'commission' from the Queen whilst other ranks such as Warrant Officers and Sergeants do not and are known as Non Commissioned Officers. They generally hold management responsibilities.
OFFICER	Person selected for management and technical training and who has attended the military colleges at Dartmouth, Sandhurst or Cranwell. Early training is akin to a Graduate Scheme within a large plc.
OTHER RANKS	Those members of the Armed Forces who are not officers. Includes the most junior sailors, soldiers, airmen, through NCOs, Senior Non Commissioned Officers (NCOs) and up to Warrant officers.
REGULAR FORCES	Military personnel employed full time and have signed long-term contracts.
RESERVE FORCES	The reserve forces are made up of volunteer and regular reservists. Regular reservists are former full-time members of the Armed Forces. Volunteer reservists are people who have careers outside the military who have joined from the civilian community.
RESETTLEMENT	The term given to cover the combination of activities, time and financial support given to assist transition from military Service to civilian life.
VETERAN	The Government defines a veteran as someone who has spent time (one day or more) serving in the Armed Forces as a regular or reserve.
WOUNDED, INJURED AND SICK (WIS)	A relatively new expression which reflects the support put in place in response to operations in Iraq and Afghanistan where Service personnel are now put under the 'Wounded, Injured, Sick' category. Many have the ability to return to a normal role in civilian life.

APPENDIX

EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL

Career Transition Partnership

The Career Transition Partnership (CTP) provides resettlement services, including career development support, to anyone leaving the armed services. Regardless of time served, the CTP offers free services to make the transition to civilian life as smooth as possible.

Starting from two years before discharge, and running through to two years after, the CTP delivers a range of employability support from creating a CV and researching job opportunities, through to applications and interview skills. It also operates specialist vocational training courses.

The CTP is a partnering agreement between the Ministry of Defence and Right Management Ltd, a global career development and outplacement specialist which is part of the ManpowerGroup.

14,760

Left the military in the last year

82%

of Service leavers using CTP are in employment six months after leaving⁹

> 6 YEARS' SERVICE

CTP Core Programme

Long-serving personnel (over six years) and anyone who has been medically discharged are offered the most comprehensive package of support. This includes individual career advice to develop a Personal Resettlement Plan. The programme offers careers workshops, a range of vocational courses, trial attachments (work placements) and ongoing access to CTP RightJob, its online job-finding service.

4 – 6 YEARS' SERVICE

CTP Employment Support Programme

For those leaving with between four and six years' Service, the Employment Support Programme offers access to support including a range of employment events and help to find a job through CTP RightJob.

< 4 YEARS' SERVICE

CTP Future Horizons

Leavers who serve less than four years or those who are compulsorily discharged are offered help to find future employment via a specialist advisor. These personnel, known as Early Service Leavers (ESL) can be at a disadvantage in the labour market and Future Horizons links them to the most appropriate level of support through a network of partner organisations.

⁹ [Career Transition Partnership Annual statistics: UK Regular Service Personnel Employment 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2017](#)

CTP services for employers

The CTP also offers a free recruitment services for employers. With access to a high-quality ex-military talent pool, the CTP RightJob service has been created specifically to help employers find the skills and experience they need. It is easy to register as an employer and CTP provides support for employers to help them recruit through the platform.

Visit ctp.org.uk for more information on CTP services

Defence Relationship Management (DRM)

DRM offers support and advice on employment members of the Armed Forces community, linking employers with the Ministry of Defence. The DRM team works with employers in Wales and throughout the UK to build mutually beneficial partnerships and to promote the benefits of signing the Armed Forces Covenant. Support for employers includes help to:

- create flexible HR policies to support the employment of reservists and work with CTP to offer employment to regular forces personnel at the end of their Service
- support more challenging transitions to employment for the wounded, sick or injured
- offer employment to the spouses/civil partners of Service personnel
- create joint skill development opportunities in fields such as engineering, medical, communications and cyber security

Visit gov.uk/government/groups/defence-relationship-management

The Armed Forces Covenant (AFC) in Wales

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise from the nation that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly.¹⁰

The Covenant became law in the 2011 Armed Force Act and ensures that:

- no member of the Armed Forces community should be disadvantaged as a result of their Service in accessing public or commercial services
- special consideration is given in some cases for those who have given most, such as the bereaved or injured.

Every Local Authority in Wales has signed the Covenant and, to date, they have been joined by more than 100 businesses, organisations and charities across Wales.¹¹ Businesses signing the covenant can pledge based on what support their business can provide.

To promote those organisations which have made greatest efforts in become more forces friendly – both in supporting reservists and employing ex-Service personnel – the MOD runs the Employer Recognition Scheme. These awards are a recognition of the employers who have pledged and demonstrated support for the Forces community.

To sign the Armed Forces Covenant visit armedforcescovenant.gov.uk

¹⁰ [Armed Forces Covenant: Guidance and Support](#), MOD, January 2014

¹¹ [Armed Forces Covenant: who has signed the covenant?](#)

Employer Support for Reservists

Reservists train and serve alongside regular personnel across all our armed services. These men and women make a commitment to regular training and can be called on to support at home or abroad. Employers can benefit from the skills and experiences that reservists gain through their service and, in return, have certain rights and responsibilities. Some of these are covered by legislation and the MOD has published clear guidance on everything employers need to know in its Reservist Employers' Toolkit¹² at gov.uk.

Welsh Government Support for Service Leavers and Veterans

The Royal British Legion estimates there may be as many as 385,000¹³ members of the Armed Forces community living in Wales. To support this community and in line with the UK Armed Forces Covenant, the Welsh Government has established an Armed Forces Expert Group and a Package of Support for service leavers, veterans and their families.

In November 2018, Welsh Government launched its Welsh Government Pathway to support veterans and service leavers. This resource includes information on the main sources transition support and also the range of employability, skills and training support available in Wales, including:

- Communities for Work and Communities for Work Plus
- Jobs Growth Wales
- Employability Skills programme
- Working Wales
- Business Wales
- Careers Wales
- Military Charities

In addition to helpful case studies, it also includes contact details of many organisations which provide support for employment, education, work placements and mentoring.

To find out more and download the Welsh Government Pathway visit gov.wales/armedforcessupport

“In recognition of their service for their country, the Welsh Government believes that every former member of the Armed Forces should be helped, if needed, to find suitable employment, whether directly on discharge or later in life.”

Welsh Government Pathway

¹² [Reservist Employers' Toolkit](#)

¹³ Royal British Legion