



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

REPORT, DOCUMENT

Support for Serving Armed Forces personnel and their families

Guide to provide information and contacts to Serving personnel and their families leaving the Services and settling in Wales.

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Introduction

The Welsh Government warmly welcomes you to Wales. Working with our partners the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) and the Armed Forces in Wales through 160th (Welsh) Brigade, we have developed this guide to provide key information and contacts for you as Serving personnel and your families on leaving the Services and settling in Wales.

The Welsh Government is the overarching Governmental body in Wales and has devolved powers from the UK Government. This means transfer of powers by a central government (the UK Government) to the Government of Wales. It means that there are distinct legislatures and governments in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland which have powers over a range of policy areas which have previously been the responsibility of the UK Government. In Wales devolved powers include health, social care, education, housing and local government. The UK Government currently retains responsibility for defence, foreign policy and most benefits.

As a Government we work closely with the Armed Forces sector. We have an Armed Forces Expert Group which is chaired by the Minister with portfolio responsibility for the Armed Forces community in Wales. The membership consists of the Tri-services and partners in the public and third sectors to ensure services meet your needs as members of the Armed Forces community. The Expert Group advises us and helps us ensure you are supported and have a voice.

Wales is a vibrant nation with its own language, heritage and cultural identity. It has a proud military tradition. We recognise the valuable contribution the Armed Forces make to the communities in which they live.

This report gives you information on some of the services provided which was correct at the time of publication but may be subject to change. Using the

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contact details provided will enable you to access more detailed information should you wish to.

Government and Parliament in Wales

Wales is governed by the Welsh Government, which is based in the capital city of Cardiff. The First Minister is the leader of the Welsh Government. His official office is based in Ty Hywel in Cardiff Bay.

In Wales we have our own Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales which was established by the Government of Wales Act 1998 and elections take place every five years.

From 6 May 2020 the National Assembly for Wales changed its name to the Welsh Parliament or Senedd Cymru, commonly known as the Senedd.

The Senedd in Cardiff Bay is the main building of the Welsh Parliament. As it is a public building you are able to visit seven days a week (subject to Covid restrictions) and access the public galleries to listen to debates when Parliament is sitting. [Find out more information on the Senedd.](#)

Everyone in Wales is represented by Members of the Senedd (MS). It is the role of our MS' to carry out the work of the Welsh Parliament; they represent the interests of Wales and its people, make laws for Wales and hold the Welsh Government to account. [Find out your Member of the Senedd.](#)

Wales Office

The Office of the Secretary of State for Wales supports the Secretary of State in supporting and promoting the best interests of Wales within the wider United

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Kingdom, ensuring Welsh interests are effectively represented within the UK Government, and the UK Government's responsibilities are effectively represented in Wales.

Welsh Local Government Association

The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) represents the interests of local government and promotes local democracy in Wales. Its primary purposes are to promote better local government, to promote its reputation and to support authorities in the development of policies and priorities which will improve public services and democracy.

The WLGA is a politically led cross-party organisation that seeks to give local government a strong voice at a national level. The Association is a membership organisation that represents all 22 Local Authorities in Wales, the 3 Fire and Rescue Authorities and the 3 National Park Authorities are associate members. [Find out more about the role of the WLGA.](#)

Local Authorities

Wales has 22 Local Authorities. These cover all local government responsibilities including education, housing, waste or recycling, open spaces and parks. Each local authority has an Armed Forces Champion. The role of the Armed Forces Champion is to provide a voice for the Armed Forces community ensuring their needs or identified issues, are heard and supported in Council business. All local authorities in Wales have signed the Armed Forces Covenant.

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Armed Forces Liaison Officers

There are 7 Armed Forces Liaison Officers (AFLOs) based in Wales, each covering more than one local authority. They work closely with the Welsh Government and the Armed Forces sector and are responsible for raising awareness of the issues affecting the Armed Forces Community in Wales along with promoting and coordinating work to honour the Armed Forces Covenant. The AFLOs would be your first point of contact if you have a query or issue you would like to raise. They will also be able to provide you with detail on local support groups, hubs and organisations available in your area.

Resettlement: reflections from ex-Service personnel

What did the experience teach you?

- To remain flexible, the first employment will not necessarily be the enduring opportunity so choose the stability or balance over maximising your potential if necessary.
- The various resettlement briefs will focus on you 'owning' your resettlement process and transition, and whilst you might feel that you own your military career management to a degree, this is really the first time in several decades where you fully own the direction in which you will head, the objectives and priorities you set as a family, and the manner in which you will do this. No matter what background and rank, this is a change in mindset to be developed and managed, in order to make the most of the opportunities of civilian life.
- Networks are probably the most important aspect of resettlement, the successful offers and opportunities came from those who understood what I

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had achieved in my military career and how that would help their organisation.

- There are no shortage of organisations and individuals who are prepared to provide advice, and create a generally supportive environment for those who have served.
- Nothing is guaranteed. You can find yourself in resettlement at very short notice. Grasp the opportunities it presents with both hands and try to remain positive. Engage in your own future, whilst the system will give you the tools to find your feet in a new guise, it will not put you there. You HAVE to engage.

What would you have done differently?

- The period of reflection and research only starts when you change gear and leave the services. It's important to realise that you need to adjust and not to rush in to a new role whilst you/family and lifestyle are also in transition.
- I didn't plan to leave when I did (as is the case with most), and so I had not thought through the requirements in detail, as to employment sectors and roles. Ideally, I would have identified what I wanted to do sufficiently far out, in order to develop a network, gain or formalise the experience and qualifications, and transition smoothly into that area. However, as a note of caution, even if one does plan carefully, it may not mean that this equates to a smooth transition and landing into civilian life.

What did the process not do that you expected it to?

- It was a lonely process so I think it is just a case of networking and ensuring that you have the support of family and friends, particularly if starting in a new location.
- I was lucky in that I did not need much from the system in terms of advice on housing, social, medical, education and spousal employment requirements. What would really have helped is that personal link to an organisation or sector, to help open the doors.

How could you have prepared better?

- I think the benefits of journaling, goal setting (coaching and mentoring) would have complemented the transition process well. Injury management outside of the military system is an additional challenge that military personnel can face so preparing for all eventualities is essential.
- When leaving at short notice this is difficult. Take all you can while in service.
- Keep your eyes open to what is going on outside the wire. Do not forget one day you WILL be outside the wire yourself!

Should I join as a Reservist?

- The process of leaving regular service and re-joining as a reserve is complex to navigate, I would advise starting the process well before you leave regular service.
- Join the Reserve!! For many it will be the last thing you will want to do, that much is well understood. From my perspective there is a readymade social network of like-minded people out there local to where you are going to settle. Join it before you leave the regulars. Especially true if you are going to be new to an area.

Resettlement: support available

Career Transition Partnership (CTP)

CTP is a partnership between MOD and Right Management and delivers 3rd line support to all Service leavers (1st is delivered by Unit staff, 2nd by the Individual Education and Resettlement Officer (IERO)).

Resettlement is a Service Leavers responsibility. CTP provide a framework and

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support for Service leavers planning your resettlement. Entitlement will vary depending on length of your service, see JSP 534 for details ([page 36, paragraph 0313 for the table of entitlement](#)). Their Career Transition Workshop includes transferrable skills, CV writing, networking, interview skills and career planning.

The CTP have a full catalogue of training courses to assist with your resettlement, courses are tailored to Service leavers needs, and in many cases linked to employment. [Access more info on the training website.](#)

The CTP run numerous employer led events throughout the year for you to attend. [Find out further information on all events.](#) The CTP also have an extensive job board, RightJob with many Forces Friendly employers exclusively for use by Service leavers. Through the main website there is a range of [online tools](#) as well to assist with your resettlement such as Interview Simulator, CV Builder, Industry Sector Guides, Regional Employment Bulletins and more.

Veterans UK

Veterans UK is the Ministry of Defence (MOD) department which provides free support for veterans and their families, including a helpline, Veterans Welfare Service and injury or bereavement compensation scheme payments. They also provide welfare support for veterans of any age, and their families through the Veterans Welfare Service and the Veterans UK helpline: Freephone (UK only): 0808 1914 2 18, (overseas): +44 1253 866 043.

They are responsible for:

- [Armed Forces Compensation Scheme \(AFCS\)](#)
- [War Pension Scheme \(WPS\)](#)
- [Armed Forces Pensions](#)
- [Veterans Welfare Service \(VWS\)](#)

- [Defence Transition Services](#)
- Veterans UK helpline

Through the website they also have up to date information on [central/local government and ex-Service organisations, and other voluntary groups](#).

Veterans Welfare Service (VWS)

VWS sits within Veterans UK which is the statutory body within the Ministry of Defence (MOD) that assists Service personnel, Service leavers, veterans and their families. VWS provides assistance following a change in situation that may have resulted in a welfare need, such as leaving the Services, bereavement, changes in disablement, changes affecting income or finances and changes affecting housing. VWS assists anyone who has Served in HM Armed Forces, regular or reserves including National Servicemen), their families and dependants, anyone who is eligible for, or in receipt of compensation from the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) or the War Pensions Scheme (WPS), Service personnel who are to be medically discharged or have an enduring welfare requirement on discharge and bereaved families of Service personnel.

VWS works hand-in-hand with its sister organisation, the Defence Transition Services (DTS).

The VWS website provides [further information](#).

You can contact VWS via the Veterans UK Helpline between 8.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday: on Freephone (UK only):0808 1914 2 18.

Telephone (overseas): +44 1253 866 043.

You can also contact the Veterans Welfare Service through [email](#).

Defence Transition Services (DTS)

DTS sits within Veterans UK which is the statutory body within the Ministry of Defence (MOD) that assists Service personnel, Service leavers, veterans and their families.

DTS provides tailored support to Service leavers and their families, who are likely to face the most significant challenges as they transition from the military into civilian life on any transitional issue, including post-military housing, access to civilian healthcare, drug, alcohol or other dependencies, finances, children and relationships, and education, employment and training.

VWS works hand-in-hand with its sister organisation, the Veterans Welfare Service (VWS).

Please contact DTS via their central email address.

Alternatively, you can contact DTS via the Veterans UK Helpline between 8.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday:

Freephone (UK only): 0808 1914 2 18

Telephone (overseas): +44 1253 866 043

160th (Welsh) Brigade: life skills

160th (Welsh) Brigade is the Headquarters of the Army in Wales based in Brecon. Whilst there is no veteran specific focus in the brigade, those Serving personnel who are in the process of settling in Wales should contact SO2 Life Skills who can advise on preparations which should be made prior to discharge. This should be done in addition to gathering advice and support from within the

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normal unit chain of command, for example Unit Resettlement Officers and Welfare Officers.

Army Education Centre

The Army Education Centre is in Beachley Barracks, Chepstow. Not only can advice on training and education for life after service be gained by contacting them, this is also where the Individual Education and Resettlement Officer (IERO) is stationed. One of the first points of contact for those serving in Wales and wishing to settle here, the IERO will be able to ensure that Service leavers are registered for all the appropriate entitlements, such as Graduated Resettlement Time, Individual Resettlement and Training Costs, Standard and Enhanced Learning Credits, Warrants and access to Career Transition Partnership (CTP).

The Welsh Government

If you are posted to or settling in Wales it is important to understand how some things differ from the rest of the UK. [Welcome to Wales](#) is a guide designed to help Serving Personnel, Families and Service leavers living in Wales.

It provides practical information to Service personnel and their families on topics including housing, education, healthcare and employment.

Housing

The Welsh Government has produced a Housing Pathway for service leavers, veterans and their families. [Find out more on your options available when settling in Wales.](#)

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When you leave service accommodation and would like to get on the first rung of the property ladder the Forces Help to Buy Scheme may help you to do that. The Forces Help to Buy Scheme is a home loan scheme, which has been set up to help serving

UK Military personnel to buy their first home or to move house. [Find out more information on the Forces Help to Buy Scheme.](#)

Help to Buy – Wales is an initiative that provides shared equity loan assistance to home buyers from Help to Buy (Wales) Limited (HtBW) with funding provided by the Welsh Government. [You can contact Help to Buy \(Wales\) if you'd like further information.](#)

Rent First is a Welsh Government scheme which provides rented housing at intermediate rents and gives tenants an opportunity to buy their property outright. Local authorities can allocate funding for the scheme through their Social Housing Grant allocation. To find out more about the scheme contact the local authority in your area.

You may wish to rent accommodation. There are many companies and individuals who offer accommodation for rent. You may wish to rent privately or register with a letting agency. All landlords have a legal duty to provide you with details of your rights and responsibilities whilst you are living in their accommodation. Your local authority should be able to provide you with a list of agencies that rent properties in your area. [You can contact Landlords in Wales to find out about the new set of rules to comply with when moving in tenants.](#) From 28 February 2020, new regulations demand landlords give tenants a list of information before they ask for a holding deposit.

On 15 May 2019, the Renting Homes (Fees etc) (Wales) Bill received Royal Assent, it has now passed into law and is an Act. The Act permits letting agents and landlords to only charge fees relating to rent, security deposits, holding deposits, or when a tenant breaches a contract. The ban on fees came in to

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force on 1 September 2019. [Find out about tenant fees in Wales.](#)

Local authorities use allocation schemes when dealing with applications for housing. If you are interested in applying for social housing you can contact your local authority housing department for more information. Local authorities will also be able to direct you to Registered Social Landlords, or as they are more commonly known, Housing Associations. They own and manage housing stock across Wales. Their primary role is the development of new homes for rent (and in some instances for shared ownership), the repair and improvement of existing homes, and the provision of housing management services.

[For more information of Housing Associations in the area you wish to settle contact your local authority or Community Housing Cymru.](#) You may find it beneficial to do this before leaving Service.

The Joint Service Housing Advice Office (JSHAO) provides Service personnel and their families with housing information and advice on housing options. [Access further information on housing and the options available to you.](#)

SSAFA Forces Help Housing Advisory Service provides advice and guidance about a range of housing options. [Please contact them for details of estate agents and housing organisations in the area.](#)

Haig Housing

Haig Housing (UK wide) is a charity that provides housing assistance to ex-Service personnel and their dependants. They provide rental accommodation at affordable prices and when required specific solutions for individual needs. [More information on the properties in Wales.](#)

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Wales Homes for veterans

Wales Homes for Veterans provide dedicated support to Veterans in North and South Wales specifically in Cardiff, Pontypridd, Swansea, Carmarthen and Conwy.

If you have served in the UK Armed Forces and are homeless, or you fear you could become homeless in the near future, and you are in need of support (perhaps due to depression, PTSD, ill health, unemployment, family breakdown or similar), then they may be able to help you. [Contact Alabaré's Homes for Veterans.](#)

Welsh Veterans Partnership

The Welsh Veterans Partnership provides housing pathways and all round wellbeing support for veterans and their families using a whole life approach. The WVP is here to assist you, whether you are a veteran or a Serviceman or woman about to leave the Forces in finding the answer to your concerns whatever they are related to. They work in partnership with multiple third sector organisations, local authorities, Housing Associations and developers to provide low-cost affordable housing.

The Welsh Veterans Partnerships Referral partners respond to the challenges of achieving a positive transition to civilian life for the veteran and Service family as one. [Find out about the support available.](#) Contact: David Price. Telephone: 07794197253

Shelter Cymru

Shelter Cymru is Wales' people and homes charity. They work for people in housing need by providing free, independent, expert housing advice and

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campaign to overcome the barriers which stand in the way of people in Wales having a decent, secure home. Telephone: housing advice helpline 08000 495 495 (phone lines operate between 9.30am to 4.00pm, Monday to Friday). **For further information visit their website.**

Health and wellbeing

The National Health Service (Wales) (NHS Wales) is responsible for providing health care which includes medical, dental and optical treatment. In Wales you can find information about registering with a GP, NHS Dentist or Optician through visiting the **NHS Wales** website. **Access each Local Health Board (LHB) and full details of the primary care services in your area.**

GPs will look after your general health needs. To register with a GP you should contact your chosen practice and ask to be included on their patient list. You will be asked to fill in a form to ask for your medical records to be transferred there. It is important you tell your GP you are a veteran and give your GP the paperwork that your military medical centre gave you, including any medical records. This will help to ensure that your military health record transfers to your NHS record. It will also enable your GP to ensure any ongoing medical care or treatment you are receiving continues.

You will be able to arrange for your child to receive immunisations from your GP Practice.

Your GP will also be able to advise on family planning and contraceptive advice.

The Family Planning Association also provides information on all aspects of sexual health, including contraception and pregnancy. **To find a family planning clinic located in your area please access the Family Planning Association website.**

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Ex-Service women and their dependants can access cervical screening services through NHS Wales. To find out more information contact your local GP Practice.

If you or a member of your immediate family is on a NHS waiting list and you have moved to another part of the country, any waiting time accrued will be carried forward with you. All LHBs in Wales are aware of this commitment. If you have any concerns about your wait, these can be raised with the Armed Forces Champion of the relevant Health Board.

You may wish to consider becoming an organ donor. The legislation introduced in 2015 in Wales is 'deemed consent'. This means if you haven't registered an organ and tissue donation (to opt in or out) you will be considered to have no objection to becoming a donor. If you live in Wales it is important that you discuss your organ donation decision with your family and friends. [You can find out more about your donation decision.](#)

[You may also like to donate blood and can register to do so via the Welsh Blood Service.](#) Whilst most people are able to give blood, checks will be carried out prior to each donation to ensure your safety, and the safety of any patients who may receive your blood.

Veterans NHS Wales (VNHSW)

Veterans NHS Wales (VNHSW) is a service unique to Wales, and enables delivery of evidence-based treatment for service-related mental health conditions. It employs therapists across all Local Health Boards in Wales, to deliver treatment and support to improve the mental health and wellbeing of veterans with a service related mental health problem. The service works with partners to ensure veterans can access all the services they may need. [Find out more about their work.](#)

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Combat Stress

Combat stress provide specialist treatment and support for veterans from every service and conflict, focusing on those with complex mental health issues related to their military service.

Telephone: 24-hour helpline 0800 138 1619.

They provide support on the phone and online in the community and at their specialist centres. [Read additional information their support and how they can help.](#)

MIND Cymru

Mind Cymru provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. Mind Cymru provide online support, local support via 20 local Minds and Infoline for information on types of mental health problems, where to get help, medication, alternative treatments and advocacy. [Find out about their mental health support](#) or call 0300 123 3393 or [contact MIND through email](#).

C.A.L.L is a free 24 hour helpline which offers emotional support to people suffering mental distress as well as their friends, carers and relatives. [If you are concerned about your own mental health, or that of a relative or friend, you can access the service](#) , call 0800 132 737 or by texting 'help' and your question to 81066.

You can also access confidential emotional support and advice by contacting the Samaritans. The Samaritans provide a 24 hour helpline, 365 day a year and can be contacted on 116 123.

You can contact DAN 24/7 a 24 hour drug and alcohol helpline, for information and advice relating to substance misuse. Freephone 0808 808 2234, Text DAN to 81066.

You and your family are entitled to free prescriptions on the presentation of an Exemption Certificate which can be obtained from the Local Health Board area in which you live. **Find out more about how you can do this.**

Therapies4services C.I.C.

Therapies4services C.I.C. provides complementary and alternative therapies free of charge. Helping serving military personnel, reservists, veterans and their families, they focus on emotional, physical and mental health, offering meditation, mindfulness, life coaching, psychotherapy, psychology, reflexology, body realignment, nutrition, and general wellbeing. They offer a bespoke service focusing on the person as a whole rather than only one aspect of the specific ailment. **Find out how they can support you** by visiting the website or **contacting by email** or 24 hour helpline 0300 772 9611.

Help for Heroes

Help for Heroes provides support for wounded veterans, both regular and reserve personnel, who have suffered injuries or illness during, or as a result of, service, which impacts on their daily life, to enable them to lead active, independent and fulfilling lives.

Its specialist team in Wales focuses on five key areas of an individual's life; medical, mind, body, spirit and family delivering welfare, medical and fellowship support, including wellbeing activities.

Find out how they support the whole family to help them cope with the

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challenges they face. Long-term recovery is more than repairing damaged bodies and minds: it's about rebuilding lives.

The Warrior programme

The Warrior programme is a personal motivation and training programme. The course teaches you as individuals how to take control of your life, and how to increase your confidence, motivation and focus, enabling you to create a healthy, independent and balanced life style. The programme is particularly suitable for ex Service and Serving personnel in transition post operations. [Find out more.](#)

Blesma

Blesma, The Limbless Veterans, is dedicated to assisting serving and ex-Service men and women who have suffered life-changing limb loss or the loss of use of a limb, an eye or loss of sight. They work for Members and their families and, since 1932, have been the only national Service charity that supports limbless veterans for the duration of their lives. Its Members range from the youngest amputee veterans to those who fought in WWII, some having lived with limb loss for more than half a century. [Find out about their specialist support.](#)

Contact: 020 8548 7098 or 020 8590 1124 or you can [email the Blesma Support Officer](#), Tom Hall (BSO Wales and West) 0778 0165 085

NHS Direct Wales is a telephone line providing health advice and information 24 hours a day.

You can call the service on 0845 46 47 if you are feeling unwell, or need information on health services. [Access the website for further information.](#)

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For immediate life threatening emergencies **call 999**.

Education and skills

Support for children

As is the case across the UK, education is free in state schools in Wales. The local authority is responsible for providing education in the area where you live.

As with the rest of the UK, the school year comprises 3 terms:

- Autumn Term usually runs from the beginning of September until Christmas time.
- Spring Term starts at the beginning of January and lasts until Easter (usually the end of March).
- Summer Term starts from the end of the Easter holidays (usually early April) until the middle of July.

Each term also has a half term break: schools are usually closed for a week.

Your child might well attend different schools according to their age.

All 3 to 4 year olds in Wales are entitled to a minimum of 30 hours per week of early education and childcare for working parents. This could be in a childcare setting (which can be a day nursery, sessional playgroup or childminder) approved by your local authority, or a school.

Your child would start early education from the term following their third birthday.

Every child is required by law to receive full-time education from the beginning of the school term following their fifth birthday, although most children in Wales will be offered a place in a Reception class at the beginning of the school year

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(September) in which they become five.

From 4 to 11 they will normally attend a primary school and then move to secondary school from the age of 11. In some areas in Wales we are now moving to campuses that provide education from 3 to 18.

Again your local authority will be able to provide further information.

You can contact your Local authority Family Information Service (FIS) who will be able to provide information and support on services including childcare and education, including a list of settings in your area which are registered to provide funded, part time places in the Foundation Phase.

The School Admission Code makes provision for your child or children to be admitted to an infant class mid-term even if it means the class will breach the infant class size limit. Your child's or children's place will be kept throughout the duration of their stay in the Foundation Phase in school.

Welsh language and bilingual education is available in schools across Wales. Your child does not have to speak Welsh to attend a Welsh language or bilingual school they will have the best opportunity to become fluent in both Welsh and English. Schools will provide support for children learning Welsh or English as an additional language.

To find a place for your child in a school local to you and information on the provision of Welsh language and bilingual education, please contact your Local Authority for information.

The Supporting Service Children in Education (SSCE) Cymru

The SSCE Cymru mission is to provide the best possible educational support to

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children of Armed Forces Personnel in Wales. This is achieved through the following three areas of the programme mission:

- gathering knowledge and evidence
- producing resources and coordinating activities
- supporting policy and systems

A whole host of resources are available for you and your family to access. These include guidance and digital resources for schools and families, a directory of support and films showcasing experiences of other Service children.

Access these resources for you and your family. Alternatively you can contact SSCE Cymru through **email**.

Regional School Engagement Officers (RSLOs)

Regional School Engagement Officers (RSLOs) have been appointed in Wales for two years from September 2020. Each of the RSLOs cover 5/6 Local Authorities and are hosted by four lead Local Authorities (Isle of Anglesey, Newport, Pembrokeshire and Cardiff).

The focus of the RSLOs is to champion the needs of Service children and work with schools and Local Authorities or partners across Wales. The RSLOs work collaboratively with the SSCE Cymru Programme Manager to deliver activities linked to the workplan that was developed in collaboration with the SSCE Cymru Network members. The plan focuses on supporting schools to understand the experiences and needs of Service children and embed activities that will ensure sustainable support systems.

At the age of 16, school is no longer compulsory in Wales. If your child wishes to continue his or her education they may be able to access financial help through the Welsh Government's Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) or the Welsh

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Government's Learning Grant.

You can find careers advice (for those aged 16 years and over) and advice on Apprenticeships and Traineeships to gain skills whilst working, or skills to gain employment or further their education. [Find out more about furthering your career or education.](#)

The Motivational Preparation College for Training offers opportunities for young people through training and education, equipping them for post 16 and Higher Education. [Information on the opportunities available.](#)

[Find out other sources of information which may help you in making an informed choice regarding your child's education through The Children's Education Advisory Service \(CEAS\).](#) It provides guidance and information to Service families on education and schools. When children move frequently from one school to another or between different educational systems obtaining appropriate provision can be complex, CEAS provides a dedicated service providing professional advice about all aspects of children's education both in the UK and Overseas. [Information can also be obtained through email.](#)

Army Accreditation Officer

Serving personnel are encouraged to take advantage of the Army Accreditation Offer. The offer is a scheme in which the Army will pay for soldiers and officers (Regular and Reserve) to receive free civilian qualifications through their Army training and service. These qualifications range from national Level 1 (GCSE level) to Level 7 (Masters level) and include academic and vocational (role-based) qualifications.

[More details on how to apply.](#)

Application Process: All soldiers and officers (Regular and Reserve) that have

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completed an eligible course can apply for their free qualification.

Enhanced learning credits

Service Leavers with 6 years or more service should be reminded that if they haven't already used their Enhanced Learning Credits (ELCs) then they can still use them for up to 5 years after leaving the services. [Access guidance on how to claim ELCs.](#)

Universities and Colleges Wales

As you start to consider transition from service life into civilian life it is important you have all the options highlighted, from entering the workforce to considering higher or further education. Education should not be dismissed as an option due to misinformation around the cost of study, methods of study and the time it takes to receive a qualification. There are many flexible study options available through the university and college route which should be explored.

There are a wide range of options for Service personnel going through transition in terms of accessing higher or further education.

Further Education (FE)

Grants and loans are available if your child wishes to access Higher Education (HE) such as University. [Find out information about EMA, WGLG \(FE\) and HE grants/loans.](#)

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Universities and Colleges in Wales

Our universities offer a diverse range of locations and learning experiences from world-class cities to breathtaking seaside locations.

Universities Wales represents the interests of universities in Wales, and is a National Council of Universities UK.

[Find out about details of the Universities in Wales and available courses.](#)

Colleges in Wales

[Find out information on courses offered and where they are located.](#)

Student Finance Wales

If you would like to start a full-time undergraduate course you'll probably have a few questions about student finance. You can apply for a Tuition Fee Loan to pay for your tuition fees and a Maintenance Loan to help with your living costs. You can also get a Welsh Government Learning Grant (WGLG), which you won't need to pay back.

Your student finance entitlement will be based on where you're living and studying during term, this means the amount you can get is not based on your household income.

You can get extra student finance if you have children or adults that are dependent on you financially. These grants do not need to be paid back. [Find answers to your questions on student finance.](#)

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Further and Higher Education Commitment scheme

You may also be eligible for financial support for further and higher education through the Welsh Government's Further and Higher Education Commitment scheme. [Find out what support you can access.](#)

Apprenticeships

Welsh Government Apprenticeships

As an apprentice you will earn while you train. It's a great career choice whether you are leaving school or college, returning to work after starting a family or looking for a new career after leaving the Services. There's a wide range of jobs on offer. A job at the Welsh Government is unlike any other in Wales.

At the Welsh Government you'll be given support and guidance so you can develop your skills in the workplace. You will also need to set aside time to study for your apprenticeship. You'll be a valued member of the team from day one. [Find out how you can become an apprentice.](#)

Business Wales Apprenticeships

Wales has a highly successful apprenticeship programme, built in partnership with our Welsh businesses. We focus on providing great quality, the right skills pathways and the right level of support to help achieve economic durability and your goals.

To find out more and advice about what apprenticeship may be relevant to call **03000 6 03000**. Join us on social media through [facebook](#) or [twitter](#).

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Employment

Business Wales is the Welsh Government's business support service, providing fully-funded, impartial and independent advice to people starting, running or growing a business in Wales.

This includes access to an experienced team of advisers, up-to-date business information, online resources, specialist support and a range of webinars on topics such as Starting and running your own business, managing your finance and tax, HR, marketing and many more. [Find out more about Business Wales on their website](#) or by telephoning 03000 6 03000.

Working Wales

Working Wales is a new service delivered by Careers Wales and will provide advice tailored to your needs;

Employability Skills programme

The Welsh Government's Employability Skills programme aims to support unemployed adults into a job and to stay in work by improving employability skills. The Programme offers a high quality work placement or employer specific training which is combined with work preparation training, and essential skills provision if required. [Find out more about how it can help unemployed adults who have a reasonable chance of being ready for employment within six months](#) or telephone on 0800 028 4844.

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Great place to work for veterans: Welsh Government

The great place to work initiative is designed to encourage more veterans to join the Civil Service when they leave the Armed Forces, ensuring the Civil Service benefits from the wide-range skills and talents in the Armed Forces community.

[Find out more about the scheme.](#)

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in Wales ensures provision is in place for veterans, Service personnel and their families in need of advice and support.

Across Wales, Armed Forces Single Points of Contact (SPoCs) are located in all 59 Jobcentre Plus sites, supported by district Armed Forces Champions and a Wales Champion. As well as the full range of existing Jobcentre Plus services available they provide an additional level of support to the Armed Forces community to access benefits, find employment and as a gateway to other support services and organisations. [Find out your local point of contact and the support they can offer.](#)

Hywel Dda University Health Board

Vacancies within the Health Board are advertised on CTP and Forces Families Jobs websites because they recognise the extensive range of transferrable skills the Armed Forces community bring to roles in Health. The Health Board offer a guaranteed interview scheme for applicants who meet the essential criteria for a job. A wide variety of roles are available including logistics, IT, estates functions, management, administration and of course medical, nursing and allied health professional roles.

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RFEA, the forces employment charity

The RFEA are a UK wide charity that provide life-long, life-changing support, jobs and training opportunities to Service leavers, reservists, veterans, irrespective of circumstances, rank, length of service, or reason for leaving and their families, through a range of programmes. [Find out more on how they can offer information, advice and guidance to help you find employment and can provide specialist case working support for those who need it.](#)

Officers Association

The Officers' Association (OA) exists to help officers find employment and to provide advice and support to relieve hardship amongst those who have held a commission in the Armed Forces, their families and dependents.

They support serving, reservist and former officers to enable them to achieve a sustainable and fulfilling transition from military to civilian life. [Read more information on the Officers Association.](#)

The Poppy Factory

The Poppy Factory supports veterans with health conditions on their journey into employment, helping them to overcome any challenges.

Four out of five of the veterans we work with report a mental health condition. Whatever their situation, and whatever they are going through, their employment team is on hand to offer one-to-one support.

[Register for support](#) through the website or call 020 8939 1837. [Email for support.](#)

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Business in the Community (BITC) Cymru

Business in the Community (BITC) Cymru work with more than 200 companies in Wales from small and medium sized businesses to leading brands. They offer tailored advice and support to help companies to improve their responsible business practices.

[Read the BITC Cymru guide for companies to help them through the practical steps of setting up accessible, Armed Forces friendly recruitment practices.](#)

In 2020 BITC Cymru produced a new toolkit 'Capitalising on Military Family Talent' which explains how employers can recruit and retain military family members. Produced in partnership with the Welsh and Scottish Governments, Business in the Community (BITC) has published this guide to help businesses extend support to family members of those serving in the military. **[Access their English and Welsh language toolkit.](#)**

The British Training Board cic

The BTB is a community interest company offering services for the Armed Forces community.

A full Military Skills translation service that will translate your Military Qualifications into civilian recognised one, a full career development service, Guaranteed Interview Scheme and Access to Higher Education pathways. It also runs a Veterans Enterprise UK-Full Business start-up support program and offers a Support and Wellbeing plan for Service leavers, veterans and their families. **[Find out more on the support they provide](#)** or alternatively **[send them an email.](#)**

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RBLI

RBLI are a charity providing employment and career support to members of the Armed Forces community. [Visit their website for further information.](#)

Hire a Hero

[Get in touch with Hire a Hero the charity that supports Service leavers through the transition into civilian life.](#) It works in partnership with public, private and third sector organisations to provide a network of support and to signpost Service leavers to the most appropriate resources as required.

Contact: 01495 366670, Jinty Morgan – Operations Director or [send him an email.](#)

British Forces Resettlement Services (BFRS)

BFRS has been assisting the Armed Forces Community (AFC) for the past 10 years and are there to help, whatever stage you are at within your current career. With thousands of Job Vacancies, training opportunities and events at the click of a button.

[Register for free](#); services are open to Service leavers, reserve forces, veterans, civilian MOD employees, partners and families.

SaluteMyJob

SaluteMyJob is a Social Enterprise providing consultancy, recruitment and training services to employers and helping former members of the Armed

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Forces, and reservists, into employment. It helps employers plan and implement structured, sustainable and measurable 'veterans' programmes, aiming to inform and increase demand 'pull' for ex-military people as employees, contractors or consultants.

Find out how they can help with access to a range of job opportunities from employers looking for ex-military talent:

- 1-to-1 careers advice
- help creating a stand-out CV
- assessments to identify your strengths
- free cyber training and other courses.

Forces families jobs

Is an employment and training platform specifically designed to support Service families into meaningful employment and provide opportunities for training and development.

Delivered by a Tri-service partnership between the Naval Families Federation (NFF), Army Families Federation (AFF) and Royal Air Force Families Federation (RAF-FF) the service is available to military spouses/families seeking employment and training with the secure knowledge that the employers have signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant. This includes:

- Spouses and partners of currently Serving and Reserve personnel, and adult children (aged 18 to 25).
- Spouses and partners of Service personnel who have left the Armed Forces within the last 12 months, and adult children (aged 18 to 25).
- Bereaved spouses and partners for up to two years post service, and adult children (aged 18-25). **Visit the site for more information.**

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X-Forces offers a similar service if you are considering self-employment. [Find out more on the support they can provide](#) or telephone 0207 022 0600.

Recruit for Spouses is run by military spouses and will help you find employment. [Contact them if you are looking for employment support](#) or telephone 0333 2020 996.

Pensions, benefits, finance and advice

The Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) is a UK Government service providing free unbiased money and pensions guidance to help people make informed choices. It brings together three respected providers of financial guidance; the Money Advice Service (MAS), Pension Wise and the Pensions Advisory Service (TPAS).

They are committed to ensuring that people throughout the UK have guidance and access to the information they need to make effective financial decisions over their lifetime. [Visit the MaPS website for more information.](#)

Money Advice Service offers money guides, tools and calculators to help everyone make the most of their money. [For information and guidance go to the website](#), telephone, webchat and WhatsApp services.

Pension Wise offers free, impartial guidance through face to face and telephone appointments to people aged 50 or over with a personal or workplace defined contribution pension who want to make sense of their options as they approach retirement. [For additional information visit their website.](#)

The Pensions Advisory Service offers free and impartial pensions guidance on workplace and personal pensions for everyone through its website, telephone and webchat services. [Find out about their services and support.](#)

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Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)

Contact the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in Wales if you are a veteran, Serving personnel or your family is in need of advice and support.

Across Wales, Armed Forces Single Points of Contact (SPoCs) are located in all 59 Jobcentre Plus sites, supported by district Armed Forces Champions and a Wales Champion. These posts are driving the Armed Forces agenda across the three Districts and work closely with the site SPoCs to ensure its offer meets the needs of this community. As well as the full range of existing Jobcentre Plus services available they provide an additional level of support to the Armed Forces community to access benefits, find employment and as a gateway to other support services and organisations.

Citizen's Advice Wales

Citizen's Advice Wales give people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward whoever they are, and whatever their problem. Its national charity and network of local charities offer confidential advice which includes benefits, debt and finance, housing and legal and more, online, over the phone, and in person, for free. [Find out more.](#)

Families

Childcare

The Welsh Government recognises childcare is one of the biggest challenges facing working parents in Wales. Through our Welsh Government funded childcare offer we are providing 30 hours a week of government funded early

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education and childcare for working parents of three and four year olds, for up to 48 weeks of the year. Part time early education is universally free for 3 and 4 year olds with local authorities offering a minimum of 10 hours to learners. The difference is then made up with Government-funded childcare. This support is available across all Local Authorities in Wales and can be accessed by working parents. [Find out more information on the Childcare Offer.](#)

Flying Start

Flying Start is the Welsh Government's targeted early years programme which aims to make a decisive difference to the life chances of children aged 0 to 4 in the areas which it runs. It includes four core elements; these being fully funded quality childcare, parenting support, intensive health visitor support, and support for speech, language and communication.

Flying Start is targeted at some of the most disadvantaged communities in Wales and offers fully funded quality childcare to parents of all eligible 2 to 3 year olds for 2 and a half hours a day, 5 days a week for 39 weeks a year.

Family Information Service

There is a local Family Information Service (FIS) in each Local Authority area across Wales who can provide information about a range of services in your area. [Any questions you have about the Flying Start, early education or the Childcare Offer, for example eligibility and how to apply, you can contact your local FIS.](#)

Tros Gynnal Plant (TGP)

TGP Cymru is the leading Wales based Children's Rights Charity, which

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supports and represents vulnerable children and young people through a range of projects, training and campaigning. [Find out more about their services.](#)

Service Families Federations

The Families Federations provide an independent voice for all personnel (single, married or in a partnership), and their families. They work to improve quality of life around the world, at work or at home. [Find out more information on the RAF Families Federation, the Army Families Federation and the Royal Navy Families Federation.](#)

Army HIVE Information Service

The HIVE Information Service provides information on behalf of the Chain of Command to the Service community and welcomes enquiries from Service personnel, dependants, partners, extended families, and the wider military community, including veterans and MOD civilians.

An extensive range of information is available, focusing on relocation information, local area information, education, accommodation, employment and training opportunities, healthcare, finance, childcare and travel.

HIVE staff also work closely with the Unit welfare staff to provide additional support at times of deployment.

[Find out the latest information from HIVEs on local HIVE blogs.](#)

Armed Forces support groups and hubs

The Veterans Gateway

The first point of contact for veterans seeking support. They 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. [Find out more about the variety of organisations providing support.](#)

The Royal British Legion (RBL)

The Royal British Legion is here to help members of the Royal Navy, British Army, Royal Air Force, veterans and their families. And it's not going anywhere.

The RBL support Serving and ex-Serving personnel all year round, every day of the week.

Its support starts after one day of service and continues through life, long after service is over. [Visit the website for further information.](#) You can also call 0808 802 8080 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week

SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity

SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, has been providing lifelong support to our Forces and their families since 1885. Last year its teams of volunteers and employees helped more than 85,000 people in need, from Second World War veterans to those who have served in more recent conflicts or are still currently serving, and their families.

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SSAFA understands that behind every uniform is a person, and are there for that person any time needed, in any way that is needed, for as long as needed.

If you are a member of the Armed Forces community and you need help, support or advice from SSAFA then [visit the website](#) or phone Forcesline: **telephone: 0800 260 6767** or send them a message using [the form on their webpage](#).

Alternatively, you can contact your local branch directly using [our branch finder](#).

Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association for Wales

RFCA for Wales is the enabling voice for Reserves and Cadets in Wales.

Its primary tasks are:

- To provide advice and support on behalf of the volunteer Reserve Forces and Cadets in Wales.
- To work with the chains of command of the three services to deliver support to the Reserves and Cadets in Wales against Service Level Agreements.
- To establish and maintain links with the community and to deliver employer engagement on behalf of Defence in Wales.
- To deliver the volunteer estate in Wales through the maintenance and support of Reserve training centres, Cadet centres and training areas.

[Find out more about how the RFCA can support you](#) or telephone 029 2037 5375.

“In the Squad”

Is a programme delivered jointly by Swansea City Community Trust, and the Ospreys in the Community.

It delivers weekly sports based activity sessions, indoors and outdoors, based around rugby and football, for veterans in the Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend areas. In addition and at the end of the physical activity session, it is developing wraparound support in a ‘veteran-friendly’ environment, to promote wellbeing and to help combat social isolation. [Find out more about its online platform for veterans to meet up monthly a veteran led safe space to share stories and experiences, to support each other. Find out more information from Swansea City Community Trust on how you can get involved. You can also contact the Ospreys if you’d like to get involved.](#)

Woody’s Lodge

Woody’s Lodge is a meeting space where those who’ve served can find expert advice across a range of topics as well the chance to make new friends and re-connect with their loved ones. [Find out more about the services they offer.](#)

The VC Gallery

The VC Gallery provides art and social active engagements throughout its 4 hubs in Pembrokeshire West Wales. [Visit the VC Gallery website to see the range of activities provided.](#) Alternatively you can [contact Barry John if you have any questions.](#)

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Change Step

Change Step offers effective support for veterans, their families and carers in Wales, enabling access vital support services and tackle serious stress and related issues. Their team of peer mentors use their own experiences to help fellow veterans and their loved ones confront challenges in their lives, and manage their journeys of recovery. [Find out more about the services they provide.](#)

Adferiad Recovery

The Joining Forces team support veteran's organisations and veterans, throughout Wales.

With its 'Digital Skill for Veteran, Wales' they train veterans to be 'Digital Champions', supporting those veterans that are digitally challenged to get more from their devices.

'Navigating out of Isolation', delivers a combination of direct support and help for veterans who feel isolated and alone, enabling them to access existing community services and veteran's organisations. However, where there are no services to access, it will work to set up veteran's hubs. They are also able to support mental health issues, alcohol, and substance misuse. [For further information visit their website.](#) You can also contact them by telephone: 01792 816600 or 07970 435817 or [through email.](#)

The Association of ex-Service Drop-In Centres (ASDIC)

ASDIC represents and links veterans' Drop-Ins across the country. Sometimes

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called Hubs or Centres, Drop-Ins offer a variety of welfare and mental health support, together with comradeship and a sense of wellbeing, to the ex-military community and their families, and ASDIC helps them to enhance the service they can provide and make them more accessible.

[Visit the ASDIC for more information on support in Wales.](#)

[Find out further information on your local Breakfast clubs.](#)

COVID-19 will have led to changes in delivery of some services so it is important to check with specific organisers regarding local provision.

Regimental Associations

Regimental Associations provide welfare and support for members of the regiment. [Find out more about your local Regimental Associations.](#)

ABF The Soldier's Charity

ABF The Soldiers' Charity is the Army's national charity, for soldiers, former soldiers and their families for life. They are one of the largest funders in the sector. [Find out about how they award grants to individuals and families, and provide essential funding to leading charities and organisations that support the Army family.](#)

Local Councils in Wales

Anglesey

Telephone: 01248 752109

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Blaenau Gwent

Telephone: 01495 311556

Bridgend

Telephone: 01656 643643

Caerphilly

Telephone: 01443 815588

Cardiff City Council

Telephone: 029 2087 2087

Carmarthenshire

Telephone: 01267 234567

Ceredigion

Telephone: 01545 570881

Conwy

Telephone: 01492 574000

Denbighshire

Telephone: 01824 706101

Flintshire

Telephone: 01352 752121

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Gwynedd

Telephone: 01766 771000

Merthyr Tydfil

Telephone: 01685 725000

Monmouthshire

Telephone: 01633 644644

Neath Port Talbot

Telephone: 01639 686868

Newport City Council

Telephone: 01633 656656

Pembrokeshire

Telephone: 01437 764551

Powys

Telephone: 01597 826000

Rhondda Cynon Taff

Telephone: 01443 424005

Swansea City Council

Telephone: 01792 636003

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Torfaen

Telephone: 01495 762200

Vale of Glamorgan

Telephone: 01446 700111

Wrexham

Telephone: 01978 8292273

Armed Forces Liaison Officers (AFLO) contact details

For further information relating to North Wales **please contact Stephen Townley**.

For further information relating to Gwent please contact **armedforces@caerphilly.gov.uk**.

For further information relating to South West Wales please contact **F.Pickwell@npt.gov.uk**.

For further information relating to South East Wales please contact either **Abi Warburton** or **Jamie Ireland**.

For further information relating to West Wales **please contact Hayley Edwards**.

For further information relating to Powys **please contact Andy Jones**.

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