

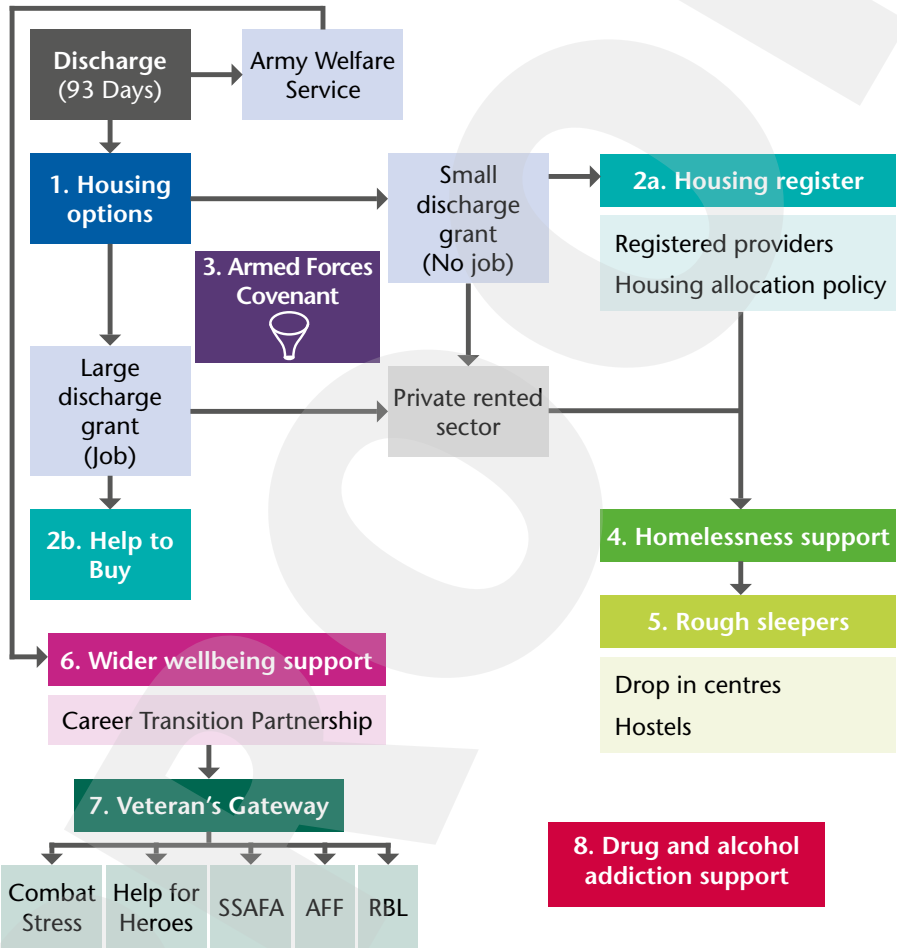
Leaving or left the Armed Forces?

How to get the help you need

If you are leaving the armed forces or have previously served there are a range of issues you will need to consider.

The Army Welfare Service and the MoD commissioned Career Transition Partnership will help you through the discharge process and can help you with issues such as registering with a local GP, finding appropriate schools for your children and with wider wellbeing needs.

Some of the issues you may like to consider are set out below:



One of the most critical issues to consider is housing. Wiltshire Council offer a housing options and advice service and if you have received your discharge notice it is important you make contact with them as soon as possible so that you can consider your options.

If you left the armed forces some time ago the housing options and advice service are also able to help with any housing issues that you face. The rest of this leaflet sets out the support that may be available for each of the areas outlined above.

1. Housing options advice

Wiltshire Council provide advice through the housing options team and work with Army Welfare Officers to share information and advice, including offering a drop in session once a month at Tedworth House.

As soon as you receive your discharge notice please make contact with Wiltshire Council Housing Options. We offer drop in surgeries which operate in all of our hubs (Chippenham, Trowbridge and Salisbury) from 8.30am until 5.30pm each week day. Alternatively, you can contact us by phone on **0300 456 0100** or by email at homeless@wiltshire.gov.uk

We also have a housing wizard for individuals to navigate through their own options online and download information and advice. This can be found at www.homes4wiltshire.gov.uk then click on the "Housing Options" icon.

2a. Making a Housing Register application – Homes4Wiltshire

The Housing Register is the list of people in housing need seeking affordable housing in Wiltshire Council's area.

Affordable housing is social rented, affordable rented (80% market rent) and low cost home ownership, properties belonging to the council and other housing providers eg housing associations, development companies.

Choice Based Lettings (CBL) schemes like Homes4Wiltshire operate by means of 'bids' or expressions of interest in properties advertised in a weekly advertising cycle on the Homes4Wiltshire website – see below.

Housing applications are made online at the Homes4Wiltshire website, and applicants provide supporting documents to the Homes4Wiltshire team to show the housing applicant –

- and her/his family members are "eligible" for housing ie permitted by the government to apply for affordable housing
- has a housing need and cannot meet her/his housing need from own financial resources

Most housing applicants need a connection to the Council's area by employment, residence or close family members' residence to qualify. Many current and former armed forces personnel and reserve forces (particularly those who have a serious injury, medical condition or disability

as a result of their service), or their bereaved spouses or civil partners, are entitled to register without needing a connection to the Council's area. Please see the council's Allocation Policy on the Homes4Wiltshire website for further information.

Bidding successfully on Homes4Wiltshire normally depends on connections to parishes ie bidders with connections to particular parishes by employment, residence or close family's residence. If you are exempt from requiring a connection to the Council's area, you are treated as having a connection to all parishes. Please note that bidders may only bid on rented properties of the exact size to meet their families' requirements.

If you have no housing need, you will be placed on the Open Market Register, the council's list of people restricted to bidding on low demand rented properties and low cost home ownership. Full information about making applications and how to send documents may be found online at www.homes4wiltshire.co.uk

Homes4Wiltshire will "band" your application according to your housing need. Most successful bidders are in Bands 3 and 4 because parish connections are more important than band

when bidding. Demand for rented homes varies depending upon where you are seeking accommodation. If you have the means, it may be worth exploring Low Cost Home Ownership options (see 2b).

If you need further information, please visit www.homes4wiltshire.co.uk or call Homes4Wiltshire on **0300 456 0104**

2b. Help to Buy

If you have a large discharge grant and a job lined up then it may make sense to consider Help to Buy initiatives. The £200m Forces Help to Buy scheme runs for three years and enables servicemen and servicewomen to borrow up to 50% of their salary, interest free, to buy their first home or move to another property on assignment or as their family's needs change.

Other Low Cost Home Ownership opportunities (shared ownership) are available through Help to Buy South at www.helptobuysouth.co.uk. Discount market sale properties are properties sold at a discount from the market value (eg 20% off) through Homes4Wiltshire to local people who cannot meet their housing need on the open market. For further information visit www.homes4wiltshire.co.uk

See more at: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/army-basing-housing

3. Armed Forces Covenant

The Covenant itself does not set out specific requirements for Councils to follow when dealing with housing issues for HM Forces personnel, but it does ask that;

- Publicly provided accommodation should be of good quality, affordable and suitably located
- Priority should be given for government sponsored affordable housing schemes for a period following discharge
- Those injured in service should have preferential access to appropriate housing schemes and access to adaptations as required
- Members of the Armed Forces Community should have the same access to social housing and other housing schemes as any other citizen and not be disadvantaged by their requirement for mobility whilst in service.

These requirements are a part of the housing allocation policy and advice services in Wiltshire.

4. Homelessness support

If you are a former member of HM Forces and are experiencing homelessness, or are threatened with homelessness, it is important

that you seek advice from the Housing Options Team urgently as their role is to prevent homelessness. The team will assess whether the Council has a statutory duty to provide you with accommodation by considering whether you are;

- eligible for assistance
- homeless or threatened with homelessness
- in priority need
- unintentionally homeless

Part of the assessment of your circumstances will be to consider your service in the Armed Forces and whether this is relevant to your circumstances now. For example, when considering whether you are in priority need, the officer will consider whether you are 'vulnerable' as a result of time spent in service. Each case is considered on its own merits in this respect.

If the team find that a statutory duty is owed to you as a result of your circumstances, you will be made an offer of emergency accommodation. This may be one of the following;

- Hostel
- Private sector lease property

You may also be offered the Rent Deposit Scheme (Wilts Let) to assist you to secure private rented accommodation, or invited to

make an application for Supported Housing through the housing options team. The Council does not have to provide social housing to fulfil a housing duty to you and can do so through finding you a private rented property that meets your needs.

If the team make the decision that there is no statutory duty, you will be issued with a decision letter setting out very clearly why they have reached this decision. This letter will also set out the process of appealing this decision. In this situation it is advisable to seek advice from organisations such as Shelter or Citizens Advice Bureau, or from a solicitor.

Advice and assistance will be given to enable you to secure accommodation for yourself, along with other useful information including local housing allowance rates and advice on what to look for and consider when choosing private rented options.

also a number of drop in centres across Wiltshire that are run by others which include:-

Open Doors, St. John's Parish Rooms, Devizes, Monday lunch, Wednesday breakfast and Friday evening meal.

Doorway, Salvation Army Hall, Foghamshire, Chippenham
Monday 9.30am – 12.30pm –
Thursday 12.30 – 3.30pm

Breakthrough, Salvation Army Centre, Church Street, Trowbridge, BA14 8AR

Day Centre each Monday and Tuesday from 10am – 1pm.

Alabare Place, Riverside House, 2 Watt Road, Salisbury Monday, Friday and Sunday between 11am and 3pm, and on Wednesday between 10am and 1pm.

Supported accommodation may also be available and referrals for these places can be made via the Wiltshire Council Housing Options team.

5. Rough sleepers

The Council's rough sleeper outreach help is provided by Wiltshire Council and other providers. They will attempt to engage with you if you are sleeping rough and will connect you to services and assistance where possible – many of which are specific for veterans. There are

6. Wider wellbeing support

Career Transition Partnership (CTP)

The Career Transition Partnership (CTP) is a partnership between the Ministry of Defence and Right Management Ltd, who are global career development and outplacement specialists and part of the ManpowerGroup.

The CTP provides resettlement services for those leaving the Royal Navy, Army, Royal Air Force and Marines. Regardless of time served, all members of the Armed Forces can benefit from CTP support when leaving Service.

CTP offer guides covering every aspect of the return to civilian life, including on Health and Education and the importance of registering with a GP.

Visit: www.ctp.org.uk/resettlement-guides/alth+%26+education-396675

There is also a full service leavers guide recently published by the Ministry of Defence: www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/611184/Service_Leavers_Guide_April_17.pdf

7. Veteran's Gateway

The recently launched Veterans' Gateway provides a single point of contact for veterans seeking advice and support. It can signpost to other appropriate and specialist services. You can get in contact via www.veteransgateway.org.uk or **0808 802 1212**.

Some of the most prominent service providers include:

Combat Stress

Combat Stress provide support for those who have served their country and are experiencing mental health problems.

Within Wiltshire, Combat Stress work closely with Turning Point to support Veterans who have mental ill-health and also require help to deal with substance misuse and provide a specialist recovery pathway for Veterans experiencing substance misuse who may also have mental health problems.

You can get in contact directly 24-hour helpline: **0800 138 1619**
Text: **07537 404 719**
standard charges may apply for texts
Email: helpline@combatstress.org.uk

Help for Heroes

Help for Heroes supports those with injuries and illnesses sustained while serving in the British Armed Forces. No matter when someone served, they give them the support they need to lead active, independent and fulfilling lives. Their specialist team focuses on the five key areas of an individual's life: medical, mind, body, spirit and family. They provide support to the whole family to help them all cope with the challenges they face. Long-term recovery is more than repairing damaged bodies and minds; it's about rebuilding lives.

Tedworth House is based in Tidworth, Wiltshire – you can get in touch on **01980 844200** or getsupport@helpforheroes.org.uk

Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmen's Families Association (SSAFA)

Specialise in casework and identifying the need of veterans, serving military personnel and their families. They ensure they are claiming the benefits they are entitled to and then almonise for them to get them back on their feet. They specialise in gaining funding from other Service, employment and niche charities for their clients.

Tel: **0800 731 4880**

Army Families Federation (AFF)

AFF communicates, questions and influences policy at all levels, to improve the lives of the serving and resettling British Armed Forces community across the world. They offer support, information and guidance to individuals and Army communities on issues that impact on the quality of their lives.

To get in contact, visit:

www.aff.org.uk/army_family_life/index.htm

or call **01264 382326**

Royal British Legion (RBL)

RBL provide a Benefits, Debt and Money advice service for those who have served their country; as well as small grants and care homes for ex-service people.

To get in contact, visit: www.britishlegion.org.uk or call **0808 802 8080**.

8. Drug and alcohol addiction support

If you are struggling with alcohol or drug addiction Turning Point are experts in delivering innovative integrated care in communities, and work closely with other veterans' charities and agencies such as Combat Stress where appropriate.

Wiltshire Turning Point,
Chippenham and Salisbury

Tel: **07885 406308**

Wiltshire Turning Point,
Trowbridge and Salisbury

Tel: **07545 915225**