ARMED FORCES
COVENANT

Diocese of Oxford

We commit to uphold the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the contribution that Service personnel, both regular and reservist, veterans and military families make to our organisation, our community and to the country.

Signed on behalf of:

Ministry of Defence	Diocese of Oxford	Christ Church Cathedral
Signed:	Signed:	Signed:
Name: Major General Peter Rowell MBE	Name: The Right Reverend Steven Croft	Name: The Very Reverend Professor Sarah Foot FRHistS FSA
Position: Chief Executive and Commandant, Defence Academy	Position: Lord Bishop of Oxford	Position: Dean of Christ Church
Date: 12th May 2026	Date: 12th May 2026	Date: 12th May 2026

Ministry of Defence

DIOCESE of OXFORD
A Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world

CHRIST CHURCH
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

The Armed Forces Covenant

An Enduring Covenant Between

The People of the United Kingdom
His Majesty's Government

– and –

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

And their Families

The first duty of Government is the defence of the realm. Our Armed Forces fulfil that responsibility on behalf of the Government, sacrificing some civilian freedoms, facing danger and, sometimes, suffering serious injury or death as a result of their duty. Families also play a vital role in supporting the operational effectiveness of our Armed Forces. In return, the whole nation has a moral obligation to the members of the Naval Service, the Army and the Royal Air Force, together with their families. They deserve our respect and support, and fair treatment.

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

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

Section 1: Principles of The Armed Forces Covenant

1.1 We, the **Diocese of Oxford**, will endeavour to uphold the key principles of the Armed Forces Covenant in our civic engagement and pastoral practice:

- *no member of the Armed Forces Community should face disadvantages arising from their service in the provision of public and commercial services compared to any other citizen*
- *in some circumstances special provision may be justified, especially for those who have given the most, such as the injured or bereaved.*

Section 2: Demonstrating our Commitment

2.1 We recognise the contribution that Service personnel, reservists, veterans, the cadet movement and military families make to our organisation, our community and to the country. We will seek to uphold the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant by:

Promoting the Armed Forces:

- *Promoting the fact that we are an Armed Forces-friendly organisation.*
- *Appointing an Armed Forces Champion in order to promote this Covenant.*

Employment support to members of the Armed Forces Community:

- *Seeking to support the employment of Veterans (young and old) in our recruitment practices by advertising vacancies widely, including through the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) website and the Church of England vacancies website, called Pathway.*
- *Encouraging and warmly welcoming applications from those Veterans who have service-related injuries, providing they meet the essential criteria for the job.*
- *Seeking to support our employees who choose to be members of the Reserve forces, seeking as far as possible to accommodate their training and deployment.*
- *Seeking to support our employees who choose to be Cadet Force Adult Volunteers and accommodate as far as possible their training needs.*
- *Looking favourably upon employee requests for leave and flexible working by spouses with partners on deployment, and compassionate leave for any spouse/partner.*
- *Affirming the important work of Regular and Reserve military chaplaincy and facilitating the transition to and from civilian and military ministry by recognising the transferability of skills and experiences of those engaged in military chaplaincy.*
- *Supporting all who engage as Officiating Chaplains to the Military, by accommodating as far as reasonably possible their duties with the military.*

Education:

- *Making Church schools in our Diocese aware of the particular needs of children from Service families including support for children in the admissions process.*

Civic responsibilities:

- *Committing to prayer for the people and work of the Armed Forces.*
- *Recognising the sacrifices made by others by marking Remembrance Sunday and similar commemorative and ceremonial occasions.*
- *Supporting Armed Forces charities and supporting staff who volunteer in such charities.*
- *Ensuring that wherever possible our Church buildings and facilities are accessible to the Armed Forces Community, especially Veterans with disabilities.*

2.2 We will seek publicise these commitments on our website, setting out how we will seek to honour them and inviting feedback from the Armed Forces Community on how we are doing.