



Ministry
of Defence



COVENANT FUND REPORT ON THE THIRD YEAR OF FUNDING

A.1 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Covenant Fund was required by the Covenant Reference Group (CRG) to distribute £10M to four priorities by the end of March 2018. These were:

- A) to fund projects that strengthen the delivery of Community Covenant commitments by Local Authorities ;
- B) to fund projects 2017/2018 that make life better for those families of serving personnel in stress, and who need some specific or localised support;
- C) to fund projects 2017/2018 that support the integration of military and civilian communities and/or local delivery of services to the Armed Forces Community; and
- D) to fund in initiatives to improve and enhance the impact of the Covenant Fund

1.2. The Covenant Fund National Panel (National Panel) has now awarded the following grants under these priorities:

1.2.1 Twenty-one (21) grants supporting Local Authorities to deliver their commitments under the Armed Forces Covenant. The total amount awarded was £3,068,055; (This is in addition to twenty-two grants, amounting to £3,493,296 under this priority in 2016/17)

1.2.2 Fourteen (14) large grants supporting families in stress. The total amount awarded was £2,537,728 (in addition to eleven grants, amounting to £1,814,098 in 2016/17); and

1.2.3 One hundred and thirty six (136) small local grants supporting integration and/or delivery of services. The total amount awarded was £2,134,955

1.2.4 In addition, the National Panel awarded four grants amounting to £2,050,984 to four organisations to deliver its impact programme.

1.2.5 All the grants awarded are shown in the table annexed to this report and are publicly available on the Covenant Fund website.

A.2 NUMERICAL OVERVIEW

2. Local Grants

2.1 From the beginning of the financial year 2017/18, the Local Grants programme was delivered as a 'rolling programme', continually open for applications rather than having funding rounds and deadlines. The National Panel considered applications on four occasions during the year, and in total considered 297 applications requesting in total £4,899,268. Of these, the National Panel decided to award 136 grants totalling £2,134,955.

2.1 Overall numbers of applications were up from the previous year (253 applications received 2016/17cf 297 received 2017/18) and ineligible applications were in single figures, demonstrating an improved process and guidance. Awards were made only to those fully meeting the aims of the funding programme.

2.3 Grants were awarded across all the Regional or Devolved Administrations areas (RDAs).

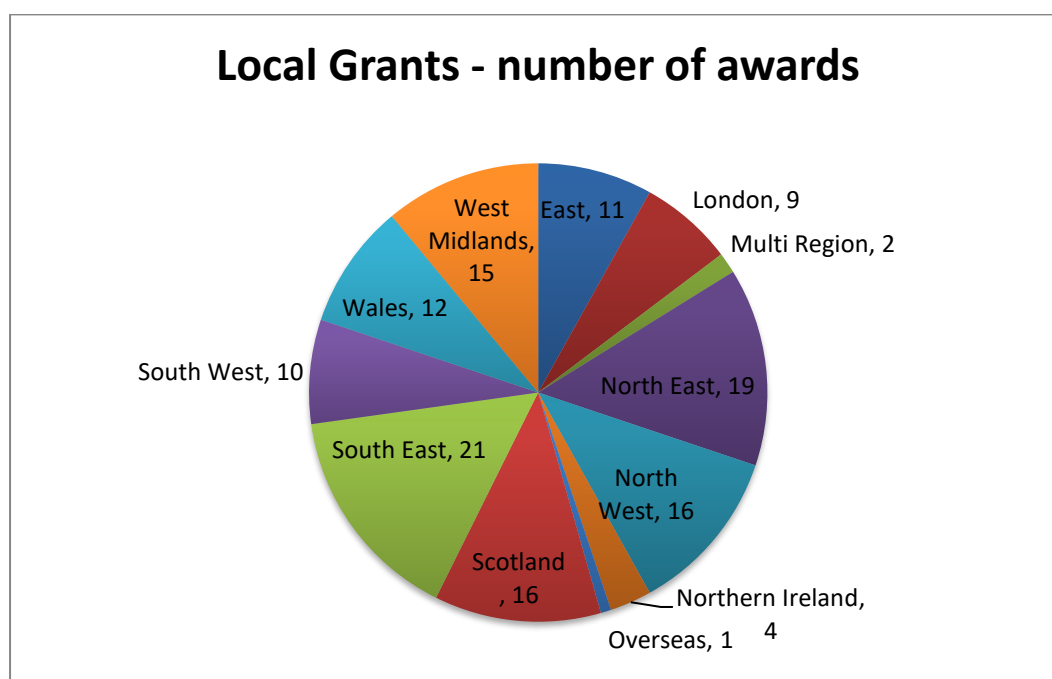


FIGURE 1

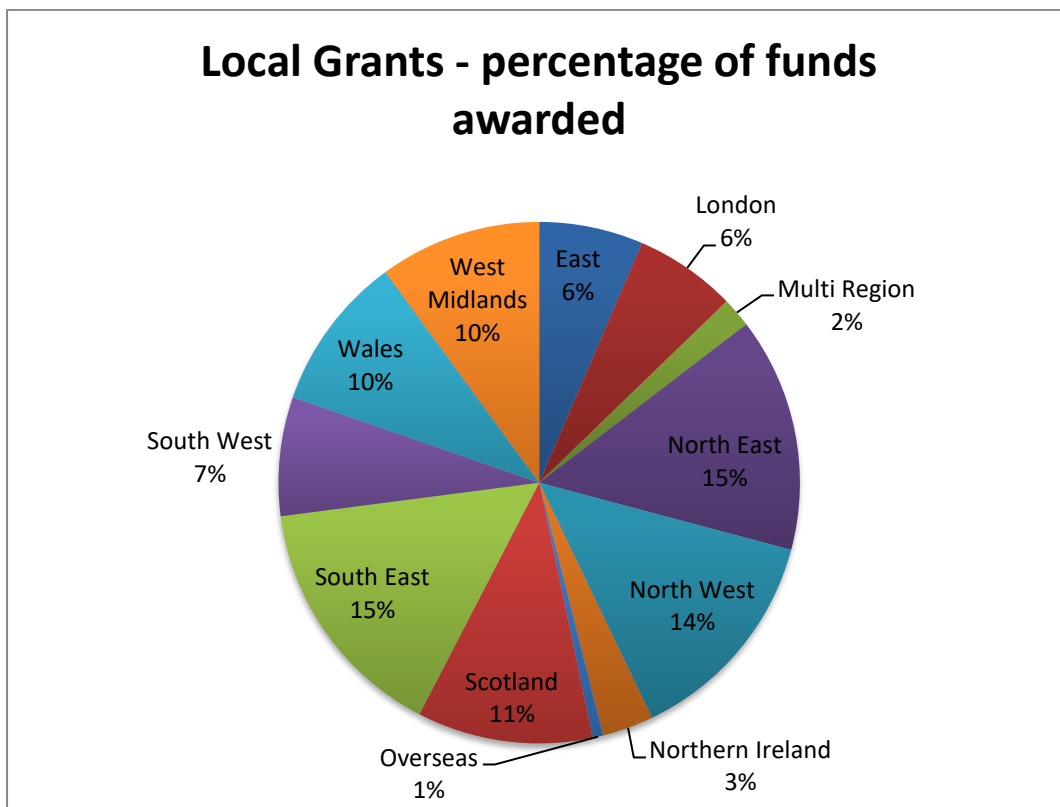


FIGURE 2

3. Families in Stress

3.1 The intention behind this priority was to make a difference to understanding how the needs of the families of serving personnel are met when that family is in crisis for any particular stressful reason. Applicant organisations were expected to demonstrate expertise and experience, their understanding of specific need, and an include with their application an endorsement from armed forces welfare partners in respect of complementarity of services.

3.2 In September 2017, the National Panel considered fifty-four (54) Expressions of Interest requesting in total £8,754,138 and invited twenty-three (23) organisations to apply to Stage Two. Twenty-one (21) organisations submitted Stage Two applications requesting in total £3,878,383.

3.3 At the meeting held on 15 February 2018, the National Panel funded fourteen (14) projects totalling £2,537,728.

4. Local Authorities

4.1 The aims and criteria for this priority were informed by consultation with the LGA and the Devolved Administrations and designed in order for local authorities to respond to the report 'Our Community, Our Covenant' which was published by the Forces in Mind Trust in the summer of 2016. This identified examples of good

practice as well as indicating some areas of challenge facing delivery of the Armed Forces Covenant for local government and this funding was an opportunity for applicants to address the issues and aspirations that emerged from the report. In 2017/18 the Covenant Fund responded to feedback and offered an additional opportunity for applicants to bid for funds to pilot or enhance provision of 'drop-ins' or 'one-stop-shops' for veterans, as an effective way of delivering services to individuals who may be hardest for local authorities to support.

4.2 The Covenant Fund received twenty-six (26) eligible applications requesting a total of £3,671,224. Twenty (20) grants were awarded totalling £2,768,055. This was a single stage application process and the majority of grants were for programmes of work taking place over two years, with one, for capacity building work in Northern Ireland, delivering over a 5 year period.

5 Covenant Fund Impact Programme

5.1 Awards made under this priority are to inform, enhance and improve the work of the Covenant Fund as an in perpetuity grant maker and to provide direct support to some of our grant holders and their beneficiaries. £200,000 was awarded to The Royal British Legion to commission an evaluation and enhance the marketing of the Veterans' Gateway. A total of £628,029 has been granted to Northumbria University in 2017/18 for the Map of Need project which will inform the public and voluntary sectors about needs and services across the UK for the armed forces community, as well as providing an evidential base for the Covenant Fund to shape future priorities. Anglia Ruskin University was granted £136,796 for an Outcome Measurement Framework, to establish an impact tool for use across all Covenant Fund grants in due course. A grant of £1,086,159 was awarded to the Services Sound and Vision Corporation to deliver a Digital Development Programme to smaller organisations working in the sector over the next three years – to improve digital literacy, capability and confidence.

6. Information available on funded projects

6.1 The Covenant Fund Executive has a considerable range of data that can be requested. For example, data has been collected to show what type of community integration project has been funded (e.g. education, commemorative, etc.) and what type of organisation has received the grant (local charity, national charity, statutory body, armed forces unit) will be created by funded projects, etc. Information can also be provided on the numbers of applications received in each round.

6.2 Summaries of each funded grant can be provided on a case by case basis. Individual grant recipients are all required to produce end of grant reports describing their project in full, including pictures, news reports and other evidence of social media engagement which will start to build up a national picture of what the Covenant Fund cumulatively can achieve in terms of supporting the delivery and recognition of the Armed Forces Covenant.

8. Budget

8.1 The final breakdown of the annual spend for FY 2017/18 is as follows:

Families in Stress	£2,537,728
Impact programme	£2,050,984
Local Grants 2017/18	£2,134,955
Strengthening Local Government Impact of the Covenant	£3,068,055
Covenant Fund administration costs and start up costs (exc. AVF contribution)	£ 179,700
Underspend	£ 28,578
TOTAL	£10,000,000

Further details of all open programmes and the timelines for applying are on the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust website on gov.uk and from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust which can be contacted on enquiries@covenantfund.org.uk

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