



THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT FUND TRUST

Branding Style Guide for external contacts 2023



Table of Contents

Branding Style Guide

01	Purpose of this guide	09	Font guidelines
02	How to speak about the Trust	10	Our colour palette
03	Our story	11	Our logos
04	Our audience	12	Imagery
05	Our style	13	Social media
06	Key nuances	14	Readability of content
07	Punctuation	15	Writing for our website
08	Typography	16	Publications

Purpose of this guide

Note: this guide has been written to support **external contacts** to correctly adhere to our house style.

This style guide will help you write clearly and concisely for the Trust's audience. We recommend you use it for all Trust-related content, whether for printed material or online use.

If you need any help with your writing, or correctly using our house style, please contact the Communications Team on who'll be happy to help.



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How to speak about the Trust

In one sentence

The Trust awards grants that support the Armed Forces community.

In three memorable points

1. The Trust delivers high impact programmes that support the Armed Forces community. We are both a charity and a public body.
2. The Trust administers the £10 million Covenant Fund each year, as well as other government funds that support the Armed Forces community.
3. The Trust awards grants through robust funding programmes that meet or exceed government grant making standards.

A brief history as an introduction

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust supports the Armed Forces Covenant by delivering funding programmes that support Armed Forces communities across the UK. We look after the Armed Forces Covenant Fund, worth £10M each year, and we work with HM Government to run other funding programmes that have a positive impact on Armed Forces communities.

All our grants are awarded through specific programmes, each with an aim which describes the change that we would like the funded projects to achieve. We develop our funding programmes based on evidence of challenges that people within the Armed Forces community face, and where we think that funding from us would be able to make a significant difference to the problem.

We've run some significant programmes exploring serious mental ill-health in veterans, and how we might support families and their carers. We have funded programmes that support good mental health and tackle loneliness, and programmes to provide better support for Armed Forces families.

Our Story

The Covenant Fund was launched in 2015, taking direction from the cross-government Covenant Reference Group.

For the first three years, the Covenant Fund was based within the MOD. In April 2018, following a decision that it should become independent, it moved to the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (the Trust).

As well as delivering high quality, transparent grant making, we undertake Impact work, looking at the effectiveness of our funding programmes.

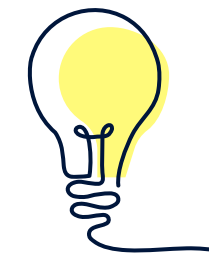
The Trust continues to grow, build and strengthen its identity and adapt and improve its delivery to ensure we successfully reach those in the Armed Forces community who are most in need.

OUR MISSION



To fund projects that support the delivery of the Nation's Covenant promise to our Armed Forces, veterans and their families

OUR VISION



A thriving Armed Forces community that is valued and supported within our society

OUR VALUES

FAIR

We ensure our funding is transparent and evidenced based. Organisations who apply for a grant, or have a grant through us, are treated fairly.

COLLABORATIVE

We work with others to ensure our grants have the biggest possible impact; and we encourage organisations we fund to do this too. We use our resources to be an intelligent funder and are not afraid to try new approaches if it will make a positive difference.

INCLUSIVE

We want to make a difference to all Armed Forces communities that are experiencing needs; and we recognise that there can be barriers to accessing support.

Our Audience



Generally, we have three key audiences.

Primary audience

Grant Applicants and grant holders

Secondary audience

Stakeholders: government, MOD, the Office for Veterans' Affairs and others

Tertiary audience

Project beneficiaries and general Forces community

Each of these audiences can have different needs and user experiences. Understanding the specific audience you are trying to reach will make your content more effective.

Our style

Above all, the Trust's style is professional, but human, always using plain English and being easily accessible for our main audience – grant applicants and grant holders. Where technical language is required, we make effort to ensure this content is easily readable.

The Trust is:

- informative not patronising
- professional but inclusive
- factual not boring.

In addition, the Trust aims to use language, terminology and a tone that is recognisable to our audience, which is military focused.

<http://www.plainenglish.co.uk/how-to-write-in-plain-english.html>

Key Nuances

Capitals Vs Lower case

Navy, Army, RAF.

Defence.

Veteran.

Armed Forces. But, Armed Forces community.

military

Service when used to describe the Navy, Army or RAF or someone's affiliation to the Armed Forces such as Serviceperson, Service spouse, Service child, or when referring to someone's time in the Forces i.e. their Service. When referring to general services offered, use lower case.

Regular and Reserve when referring to someone's Service.

Write chain of command, not Chain of Command.

Avoid the use of large amounts of capped text, which can be difficult to read.

Write serving in lower case, for example, serving soldier.

When referring to the Trustees of the Trust, we use a capital letter.

government, as in government department, government standards. Unless referring specifically to HM Government.

When writing the name of a funding programme, always use the name in full to avoid confusion, unless there is an agreed shortened version. Cap each word excluding the word 'programme'. However, when talking about the overarching Fund (such as the Covenant Fund), we capitalise the word 'Fund'.

Key Nuances

More than one way of expressing a word or idea? Here's our preferred style...

The Armed Forces Covenant, then the Covenant thereafter.

Ex-Service or Ex-Services, but Ex-serving. Former serving is also acceptable.

Devolved Administrations, not devolved regions or authorities.

Domestic abuse, not domestic violence.

And/or, avoid using this if possible. Choose one.

Wellbeing, one word.

Healthcare, one word.

Per cent, two words.

UK-based, UK-wide, hyphenated.

LGBT+, not LGBTQ+. Projects can use whichever term they prefer.

Childcare (one word)

Childminder

early years

early years foundation stage (EYFS)

Headteacher

key stage 4

national curriculum.

Etc can usually be avoided.

I.e. - used to clarify a sentence - is not always well understood. Try (re)writing sentences to avoid the need to use it.

E.g. can sometimes be read aloud as 'egg' by screen reading software. Instead use 'for example' or 'such as' or 'like' or 'including' - whichever works best in the specific context.

Key Nuances

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Always write in full the first time unless very well known (MOD, MP, UK), followed by the abbreviation or acronym in brackets. Some frequently used examples are:

MOD, not MoD or M.O.D. - in this case there is no need to write Ministry of Defence in the first instance

Covenant Reference Group (CRG)

The Impact Hub is sometimes known as the Outcomes Measurement Framework (OMF). However, anyone within the Trust should only refer to it as the Impact Hub.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), not P.T.S.D

Service Family Accommodation (SFA)

Local Authority (LA), only cap if you then plan to abbreviate, otherwise use lower case

Key Nuances

Other key preferences of the Trust

We don't use an **oxford comma**, that is a comma after the penultimate item in a list, unless the sentence reads better to include one

Writing about a funding programme? To aid meaning within a document we can place the name of the programme in **italics**.

Parliament begins upper case, unless you are talking about 'parliaments' in general.
Government departments, such as the Department for Work and Pensions, should be capped. So should ministers' and officials' full job titles, like the Secretary of State for Defence.

Geographical locations: north, south, east and west begin lower case. However, standard regions of Britain such as the North West or East Anglia, are capped.

In UK-wide publications, specify which country you are referring to where relevant. For example: If you mention the South West, you may need to clarify whether you are referring to England or Wales.

We avoid the use of **(brackets)** where possible, instead use dashes or re-arrange your sentence

Job titles: specified job roles begin upper case, like the Trust's Chief Executive, the Trust's Director of Policy, the Trust's Communications Officer. We also refer to our Trustees in uppercase.

However, if generally referring to 'officers', 'corporals' and so on, use lower case.

Key Nuances

Bullet Points

Use bullets to present your information in manageable chunks. Keep lists short and use an introductory sentence, if you begin to use long sentences, consider rewriting into paragraphs.

There are two types of bulleted list.

- 1** A list of complete sentences. The introductory sentence ends with a full stop, each bullet point starts with a capital and ends with a full stop. For example:

Chief Executive Anna Wright made three points in her speech.

- **Veterans need better support.**
- **Veterans want to be involved in decision making.**
- **The Trust is doing all it can to help.**

- 2** A list which is part of a continuous sentence. The introductory sentence ends with a colon, each bullet point begins with a lower-case letter, the final point ends with a full stop. For example:

At the Trust, we:

- **are transparent in our grant making**
- **make information accessible**
- **encourage joined-up working amongst our applicants.**

Punctuation

Quotation marks and inverted commas

Use double inverted commas (") to indicate quotations. For quotations within quotations, use single inverted commas (').

The titles of reports, published papers and books can also be placed in single inverted commas in plain text or can be written in italics.

Introduce a quote with a colon.

- The Trust's Chief Executive said: "This is an exciting new fund for veterans."
- The Trust's Chief Executive describes some of the Trust's projects: "The most successful ones tend to be those that..."

Semicolons

A semicolon is useful for joining two closely connected ideas in a sentence. It can replace 'and' or 'but'. If using words like 'however' or 'therefore', a semicolon must be used before the word. You can also use semicolons to break up a list and aid meaning, but we prefer a bulleted list where possible. Semicolons cannot be used to replace a comma.

Punctuation

Ages

Write between 5 and 18 years or 5-18 years. Do not write between 5-18 years.

Time and Date

The order is day, month, year. For example: 1 July 2018. The number in the date is not written as an ordinal, so 1, not 1st.

The time should generally be written as 9.00am or 3.30pm; however, use of the 24-hour clock – 0900 or 1530 - is fine if writing for a more formal, mainly military audience.

Numbering

Write numbers nine or lower in full; 10 and above are written numerically.

However, when using two numbers in the same phrase e.g. children aged 5-10 years, use numbers for both. **Above all, be consistent.**

Write first, second and third etc. as words, not 1st, 2nd, 3rd. Use figures for 10th upwards.

When starting a sentence with a number, spell out the number.

Numbers with more than three digits have a comma, e.g. 1,000 or 100,000.

Typography

Primary Typeface

Aa

ARIAL

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk
Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu
Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 0

For use in standard written documents such as emails, guidance documents, letters and other publications.

Secondary Typeface

Aa

CENTURY GOTHIC

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk
Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu
Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 0

For use in 'design' documents, such as this one. Can also be used in graphics, videos and publications as needed.

Other fonts are ok to use in design elements where the overall style is in-keeping with our branding

Font guidelines

Specifically for written content

- Use Ariel point size 11 for all copy; main headings should be point size 14, minor headings point 12 and subheadings point 11 but in bold typeface.
- Use left alignment for all text and headings.
- Use italics sparingly, not for large quotes.
- Use underlining only to show a link in a document.
- Use single line spacing.
- Use a single space after a full stop.
- No full stop is used after an email or web address, even at the end of a sentence.
- For phone numbers, our preferred spacing is:

Nicci Shayler 0151 944 6870

Mobile 07728 039458

Note that no colon is needed prior to the telephone number. This also applies to email addresses.

Our Colour Palette

Primary Colour Palette



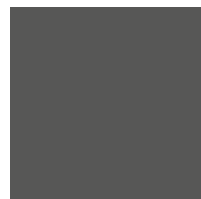
NAVY BLUE
#00163B
Pantone 289c
R0, G22, B59
C100, M75, Y0, K76



ARMY RED
#DA291c
Pantone 485c
R218, G41, B28
C0, M95, Y100, K0



AIR FORCE BLUE
#5483ab
Pantone 646c
R84, G130, B171
C74, M30, Y3, K12



COVENANT GREY
#575756
Pantone 425c
R87, G87, B88
C0, M0, Y0, K80

RGB = for web/online use

CMYK = for print

Secondary Colour Palette



NAVY SEAS
#0d082a
Pantone 5255c
R29, G26, B51
C96, M93, Y44, K60



BRITISH ARMY FIELDS
#154635
Pantone 3435c
R21, G70, B53
C89, M44, Y77, K52



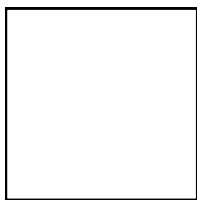
AIR FORCE SKIES
#1d508e
Pantone 7686c
R29, G80, B142
C96, M71, Y13, K2



GOLD TRUST
#b69055
Pantone 7562c
R182, G144, B85
C23, M35, Y66, K11



TRI-SERVICE PURPLE
#57263b
Pantone 7652c
R79, G33, B58
C75, M100, Y70, K20



SNOW WHITE
#ffffff
R255, G255, B255
C0, M0, Y0, K0

For design and publications, it is ok to stray from our colour palettes where it will enhance the design. However, it must still be recognisable as Trust branding. For instance this can be achieved with transparency, shading and layering.

In some instances, it may be justified to stray from the Trust colour palette but only in exceptional circumstances.

Our logos

Primary logos



Primary, full colour logo. Default logo and preferred logo to be used by external parties.



Primary logo in all black.



Primary logo in all white. Can be placed on a background of any suitable colour.



Primary logo on blue background. To be used only with the correct background colour. Internal use only.



Primary logo on navy background. To be used only with the correct background colour. Internal use only.



Primary logo on red background. To be used only with the correct background colour. Internal use only.

Each of these logos is available to download from our website in both JPEG and PNG format at <https://covenantfund.org.uk/logos-and-branding/#download> an EPS version of our logo is available upon request.

Our logos

Secondary logos

The Trust pays due regard to the government's identity guidelines, as per Government Standard 011: Communication. We have developed a secondary logo, which acknowledges government-backed work. This secondary logo is to be used by relevant grant holders where possible.



Each of these logos is available to download from our website in both JPEG and PNG format at <https://covenantfund.org.uk/logos-and-branding/#download> an EPS version of our logo is available upon request.

Our logos

Using our logos correctly



The exclusion zone is the minimum area around the logo that must remain clear of typography or any other graphic device. The measurement for the exclusion zone is calculated by using the height and width of the 'O' from all variations of the logo



Don't change the colours of our logo from the set brand colours.



Don't use our logos on inappropriate backgrounds.



Don't change the typeface on our logo.

If there is anything you are unsure about, please get in touch with the team and we'll be happy to help.

Our logos

Other logos

Sometimes it is necessary to include other logos alongside our own.

This might include the MOD logo, the Cabinet Office logo, the NHS logo, the Covenant logo or others.

We do not supply these logos.

Any government centred logos can be accessed via the Defence Brand Portal

<https://www.defencebrandportal.mod.uk/Users/Login>

The Trust's logo should always take precedence over any other logos included.

Imagery

Getting our tone and styling right

There are some key themes that underpin the styling and imagery of the Trust. When using images, you should try to ensure they easily align with one of the following themes.

Armed Forces/Tri-Service community



Grant funding



Veterans



Families



Collaboration



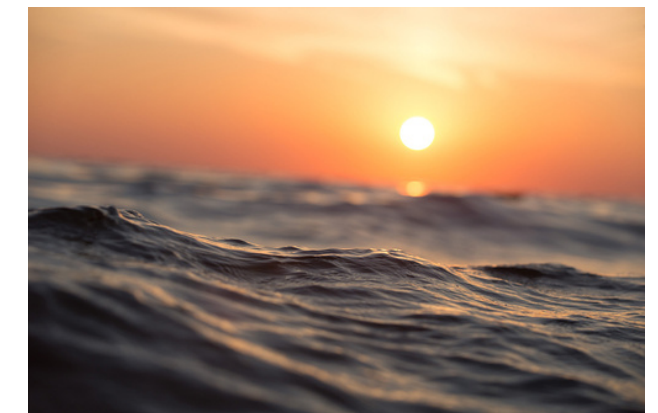
Local communities



Support



Mental health & wellbeing



Imagery

Getting our tone and styling right

A quick run through of getting it right when it comes to photography.



Subject

What makes a great image?
PIE:
People
Interesting content
Emotion



Composition

How you set up your shot is important. Try to aim for:
Good lighting
Good angle
Good subject



Quality

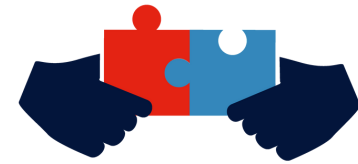
Try to aim for images to be around 1MB in size. This means they can be used in print as well as online.

Imagery

Symbols of our brand



Tri-Service



Collaboration



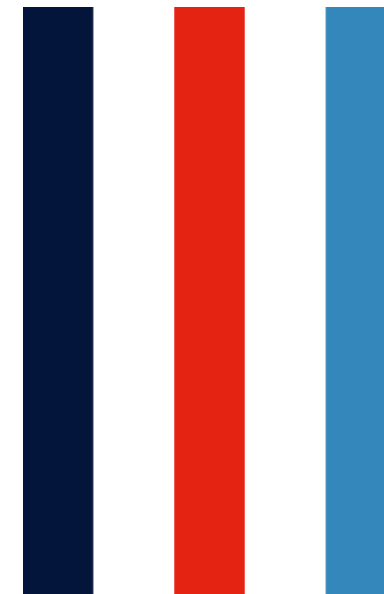
Grant funding



Support



Community Network



Tri-Service stripes



Social Media

And Trust channels



@CovenantTrust



@CovenantTrust



Info@covenantfund.org.uk



www.covenantfund.org.uk

Readability of content

A short guide to how the Trust ensures its content is readable and accessible

Keep sentences short

Be punchy and try to keep your sentences to no more than 15-20 words on average.

Use active voice

Active sentences such as “The Trust hosted a successful surgery” are more engaging and less cumbersome to read compared to passive sentences such as “A successful surgery was hosted by the Trust.”

Use 'you' and 'we'

This personalises your writing and is more engaging for the reader. Similarly, refer to our organisation as ‘we’. However, say the Trust is, the Trust wants, the Trust believes...

Limit jargon

Terms such as OVA, CRG, VPPP etc. are fine to use, but be careful not to alienate the reader.

Writing for our website

All writing for the web should follow our house style, using plain English

- You will find it easier to write.
- Readers will find it faster and easier to read what you have written.
- Your message will be more easily and effectively understood.

Our seven key rules for writing successfully for the web

1. Make your writing brief and to the point.
2. Use easy-to-understand words.
3. Use active, not passive voice.
4. Front-load your copy, putting the most important information first.
5. Break up your text using sub-headed sections.
6. Use bulleted lists where appropriate.
7. Include a call to action as well as links to more information where necessary.

Publications

The Trust has its own brand package, contained within this document. This should be used for reference when producing any publications or visual content including reports, posters, leaflets or any other type of publication.

We want all our publications to share a strong identity and build our brand. When producing any materials or online visuals, the Comms Team will be happy to discuss your requirements and explain anything in this document in more detail.

Colour use should always be based around the Trust's main colour palette – available as part of the branding package. However, there will be times where other colours are fine to use. This should be discussed with the Comms Team.

A useful checklist for publication of a document

1. Has your publication been written in plain English?
2. Does it include all amendments from earlier versions?
3. Is the publication harmonised with other Trust publications?
4. Does it conform to our house style?
5. Have you checked for any spelling, spacing, grammar or punctuation errors?
6. Is any imagery suitably high res for print? (at least 300dpi)
7. Are all acronyms and abbreviations properly explained?