

ARMED FORCES COVENANT --- FUND TRUST

Consultation on Positive Pathways: *Funding new experiences for Ex Service Personnel*

**Part of the £10M Veterans' Mental Health and
Wellbeing Fund**



In the Autumn Budget 2018; the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced £10M to support Veterans' Mental Health and Wellbeing needs.

This consultation will inform how this funding is awarded through grants. We want this funding to make an ongoing and sustained change to the lives of veterans.

We are delighted to be running a consultation into how this programme can best support veterans to improve their mental health and wellbeing by offering a range of activities. This programme has two key issues;

How do we support a good range of activities that will appeal to a wide group of veterans?

Then how do we help projects running activities to work with others to support veterans' own personal recovery journeys?

We need your help to answer these questions; and to ensure that the projects we fund are really connected to what veterans want and need.

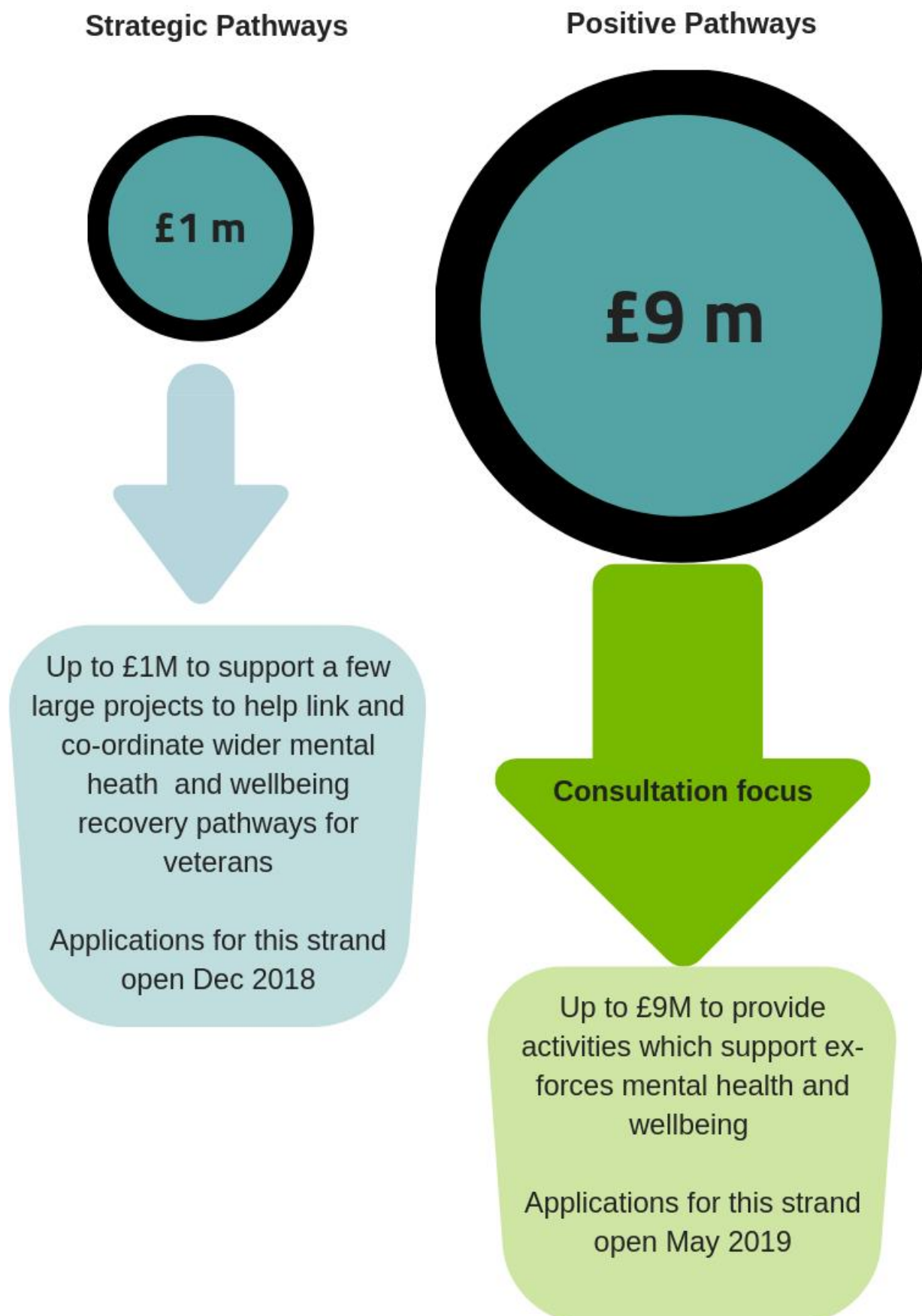
Melloney Poole

Chief Executive, Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust



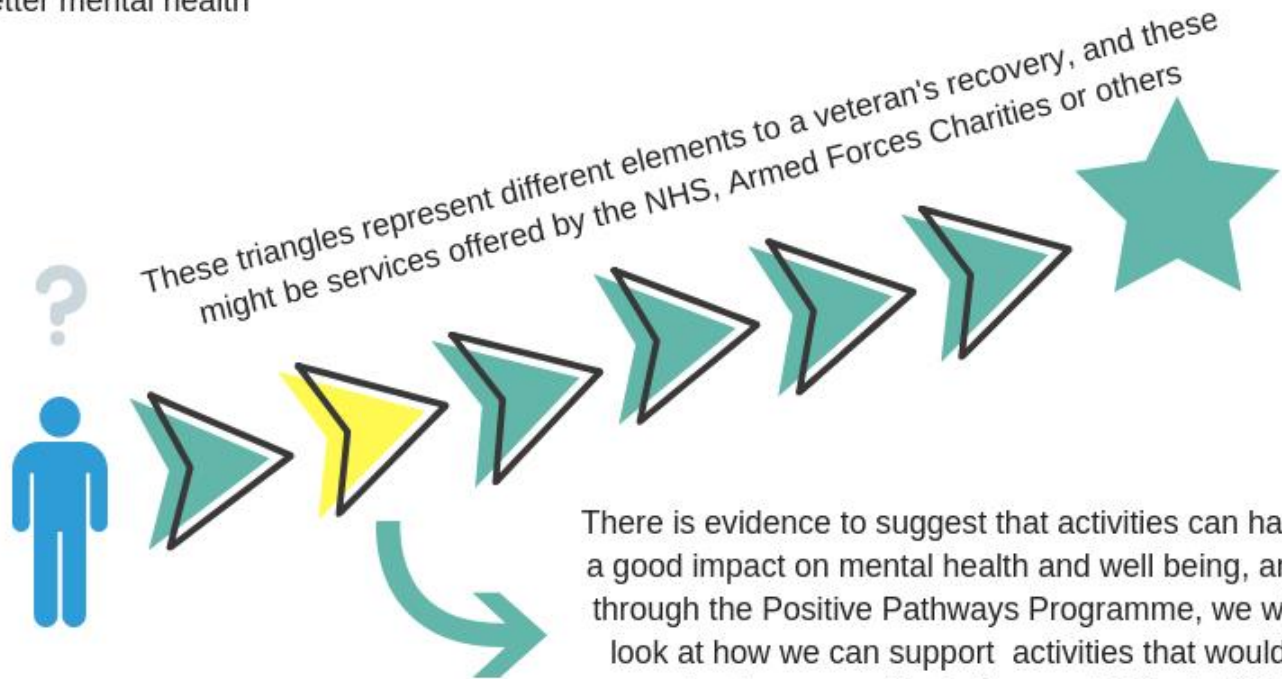
What is the Veterans' Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund

This is a £10M Fund; awarded by the Government, to improve veterans' mental health. It has two elements, the £1M Strategic Pathways Programme and the £9M Positive Pathways Programme.



Recovery Pathways

A recovery pathway is a way of describing a veteran's journey to better mental health



Positive
Pathways
Programme

This programme has up to £9M to support activities.
Tell us in the consultation about what these activities should be



Veterans learning diving skills with Depththerapy

What is the Positive Pathways Programme?



Up to £9M will be delivered as grants to organisations through this programme

Help us to shape this programme to put veterans in the driving seat of their own recoveries. The programme will fund projects that could be

Offering something different to engage in?

Offering the chance to develop new skills?

Offer a sense of achievement or daily wellbeing?

Maybe also provide the opportunity to learn new skills by participating in enjoyable activities?



We think that running the programme in this way will help us to make more grants to a wider range of organisations, and will help ensure that veterans have more choices of projects that are local to them.

This will be a positive programme; and we think we might fund four different types of projects, but we would really like to know what you think

- Sport: adventurous and other sports including adaptive and disability sports
- Art/Culture: such as music, theatre or drama projects
- Getting outside: gardening, out of doors activities such as forestry or bees
- Heritage: including conservation or archaeology



We would also like the activities supported to be part of a **pathway of recovery**.

This means that the organisations running the projects should have good awareness of mental health needs and know to provide appropriate support if people are not well. We would also like projects to be connected with other organisations that can provide more specialist services. We would like veterans to be supported to get to the right places to meet their own, personal needs.



We would like to know what you think about this; and **what pathways you think would be important.**

We are also interested to know what **support** you think veterans and the organisations running projects might need



We are asking for your views on activities to support veterans

We want to fund activities that **ex service personnel really want to do**

These activities could lead to big improvements in mental wellbeing

We expect that the grants that we make under the Strategic Pathways programme will be able to offer advice and support to smaller projects on developing stronger pathways for veterans, and on how they can explore the difference that their work is having. We call this measurement and impact.

What do we know about wellbeing activities and mental health for veterans?

We know that there is research that suggests that veterans can experience difficulty reintegrating into civilian life, and some veterans can have mental health needs.

Helping veterans cope with negative physical and mental health problems associated with service in the armed forces has become increasingly important in recent years given the demands placed on military personnel and their families. Some research has shown that taking part in outdoor activities can have a positive effect on a veteran's physical and mental health wellbeing.



Activities Outdoors– The Veterans Farm Able Project

The Farm Able Project provides activities, training and mental wellbeing in a safe environment. Local Farms provide experience days; and veterans learn new skills, including dry stonewalling, Animal Care and Husbandry, Sheep Shearing, Dairy farming, Horse Riding and traditional hedge maintenance.

The Farm Able Project is designed to support ex service personnel to reconnect with nature. It offers rehabilitation and re skilling for veterans, enhancing their mental wellbeing and providing continual professional development courses and qualifications.

The project supports veterans to help them reduce social isolation and vulnerability as well as increasing self esteem.



Activities through Art– The Soldiers Arts Academy

The Soldiers' Arts Academy is a hub for the arts which gives serving and former military personnel a route into the arts. It may be a recovery process, it may train them in the arts including performance skills and other techniques and enable them to transition into civilian life.

Working closely with actors, directors, producers, dancers, writers, poets and artists the SAA creates opportunities for participants to fulfil their artistic potential.

"I realise I had been lost for quite some time, facing the reality that I would be medically discharged made this even worse. The SAA helped me find myself again."

The biggest surprise for me were the similarities I found between the theatre and the military. Much like a troop or company, we all have a role to play and are all working towards the same goal or mission."



What will your views inform?

We would like your views on

- ♦ What types of activities will have the best impact on wellbeing
- ♦ How we can ensure that projects connect veterans with other good types of support to aid their own recovery journey
- ♦ How we can support organisations to run good projects

Your views will shape the types of grants we make, and the criteria that we will use when we open the programme in May 2019.

The programme criteria is important, as organisations who are looking for a grant will have to show us how they meet this.

We will publish the results of this consultation

What are the timeframes for this programme?

This consultation will close on **15th March 2019**.

We anticipate that this programme will open for applications in May 2019. Grants will be awarded from August 2019; but there will be several rounds of funding. Projects will be expected to complete their work by April 2021.

Consultation questionnaire

How to take part

You can either answer the questions [online](https://www.covenantfund.org.uk) on our website www.covenantfund.org.uk

You will be asked slightly different questions depending on whether you tell us that you are a veteran or family member of a veteran, or whether you are giving us the views of your organisation.



Activities through sport– Deptherapy

Deptherapy runs adapted diving for UK Armed Service personnel and Veterans who have suffered life changing physical and/or mental challenges through specially designed scuba programmes.

Deptherapy Education provides world leading training for dive professionals in adaptive teaching so that those with high levels of disability may still be qualified as scuba divers.

The programmes can support veterans to reach Divemaster and Instructor levels; which can help in providing employment opportunities, but the organisation delivers an important role of not just helping veterans become scuba divers but also to support veterans in developing long term goals that would promote both ambition and achievement.



Activities through Heritage and Conservation– Waterloo Uncovered

Waterloo Uncovered is a UK charity that combines a world class archaeology project on the battlefield of Waterloo; with a support program for veterans and the military community.

The military community is at the heart of Waterloo Uncovered's DNA, and military participants bring their unique perspective, skills, and experience to help the archaeology. In return, they get to learn new skills, have new experiences and support in the issues they are facing (recovery, transition, welfare, and more).

One participant shared her feelings about the project

I used to be so shy — and look at me now. In the future, I would like to help people to get over their mental or physical injury."

From her experiences on site, she picked up a new life motto, as well: *"Today can be a bad day, but tomorrow might be a good day!"*

About us

The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust manages the grant programmes funded by the Covenant Fund.

We also run wider funding programmes that support the Armed Forces Community.

You can find out more about our work at www.covenantfund.org.uk



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The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust Limited (CRN 11185188) acting as the trustee of the Armed Forces Covenant Fund (CC 1177627)

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