

# The power of speech

c/o 48 Carbeile Road  
 Torpoint  
 Cornwall  
 PL11 2HR  
 Wednesday, Evenings and Weekend Tel: 01752 816251  
 E-mail: [gabby@community-network.org](mailto:gabby@community-network.org)



## Veterans' Shareline - Helping wounded service men and women stay in touch

The telephone charity Community Network is launching Veterans' Shareline to help injured veterans stay in touch. Many injured ex-servicemen and women lose contact with their former colleagues when they leave the forces. This can deprive them of a vital element of support as they set about rebuilding their lives and come to terms with their disabilities; from this, feelings of isolation can develop. I am heartened to learn that your local authority has signed up to The Armed Forces Community Covenant and I am writing to inform you of our charitable project to assist injured veterans rehabilitate to civilian life within your region.

The charity will use the latest digital telephone technology to link up groups of six to eight ex-service personnel on the telephone, allowing them to chat, share experiences and continue to gain support from the camaraderie that is such an important part of service life. The telephone link-ups will take place once a week and last for up to an hour and are designed to maintain the relationships established at Hedley Court and other regional rehabilitation centres. A member of each group will act as a group facilitator and receive training in how to run a telephone friendship group from Community Network. The project is being funded by a £10,000 grant from Awards for All and all calls will be free for those taking part.

Although younger veterans invalided out of the services will be adept at using social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter, Community Network has found that many vulnerable people find these networks too impersonal to share their most private thoughts and fears. Whereas those participating in telephone friendship groups are more likely to open up and talk about sensitive issues that may be troubling them. Being able to hear the voices of friends who share similar circumstances and challenges is thought to be a significant factor in helping those taking part in the groups overcome isolation and loneliness.



Week Day (excluding Wednesday) Contact:  
 Chris Rankin M.B.E  
 Tel: 01752 812674

[chris@community-network.org](mailto:chris@community-network.org)

For over two decades, Community Network has been using telephone friendship groups to successfully tackle social isolation. This approach is now being adopted by social care organisations and local authorities. Furthermore, the charity's Seafarers' Link project for former merchant seamen and women has won two national awards for the support it gives to vulnerable people and for its innovative use of telephone technology.

Community Network is now planning a similar project to help wounded ex-servicemen and women: Veterans' Shareline. Initially we aim to establish three groups and would like to invite your local authority to assist us in publicising the new project amongst veterans using your services and their families.

Community Network shares the widely held belief that more needs to be done to improve the health and well-being of Britain's wounded ex-service personnel; and believes Veterans' Shareline can play an important role in their rehabilitation from serious injury and emotional trauma, as well as help them to re-adapt to civilian life.

If you would like further information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

**Gabrielle Cheung**  
**Project Officer**  
**Community Network**

## Can you help?

Do you feel you could be an organiser? Each group will require one member to facilitate the weekly calls.

We are looking for veterans who share the same background as the others in the group and would be prepared to take on the role of group organiser.

Group organisers will be trained in running telephone friendships groups by the UK's only telephone charity, Community Network. All training is free. Facilitators are trained volunteers operating from their own home by telephone.



## Community Network

Community Network already operates successful telephone friendship groups throughout the UK. Funding for this new project is provided by The Big Lottery Fund Awards For All.

For further information about Veterans Shareline please contact Gabby Cheung on:

☎ 01752 816251  
✉ [gabby@community-network.org](mailto:gabby@community-network.org)

or Mrs Chris Rankin MBE on:

☎ 01752 812674  
✉ [chris@community-network.org](mailto:chris@community-network.org)



**COMMUNITY**  
N E T W O R K

Community Network  
First Floor  
12-20 Baron Street  
London N1 9LL

Charity Registration No. 1000011

© Community Network 2012



LOTTERY FUNDED



**COMMUNITY**  
N E T W O R K

# VETERANS



## SHARELINE

Helping injured veterans  
stay in touch

A great way to build and  
maintain friendship support  
between injured veterans

The power of speech

The power of speech

# VETERANS



## SHARELINE

**Share experiences with fellow veterans from the comfort of your own home**

### What is Veterans Shareline?

It is a free weekly hour long telephone friendship and support group for injured armed forces veterans.

Taking part in one of these groups is a great way to have regular, meaningful discussions about shared experiences while adapting to civilian life. It will give you the comfort of hearing another voice with similar issues, rather than keeping in touch through impersonal social networking sites such as Twitter or Facebook.

It offers the opportunity to help each other to combat the feelings of isolation experienced after losing the job you were trained to do, retain an element of the armed forces camaraderie you've been used to and the platform for you to share experiences with others in the same position.

### Who can join?

Veterans Shareline is open to anyone who has retired from Her Majesty's Armed Forces and who is injured in the service of their country, whether physically or mentally. Loneliness and isolation are a fact of life for many retired ex-service personnel. An injury, however, can make the isolation all the more difficult to address, leading many to feel despondent.



### How will it work?

Telephone friendship groups are a simple way of linking people together, so that they are able to talk to each other at the same time.

Every week, at a set time, everyone in the group receives a call which links you to the others in your group, and you then have up to an hour's conversation, **FREE OF CHARGE!**

### Will joining make a difference to you?

Absolutely! Sharing difficult, life changing experiences with others who share similar circumstances, and understand, is an invaluable support when re-adjusting after a trauma.

We recognise that, as well as the likelihood of having permanent disability, you have also lost the occupation for which you have trained and a camaraderie that often proves difficult to replicate in civilian life. This offers a valuable opportunity to form new friendships with like minded people through having shared service experiences and building support networks for the future.

You can widen your social circle from the comfort of your own home just by joining a friendship group. We have evaluated many of our telephone friendship groups and have found consistently that they are effective in reducing isolation and improving mental well-being.





## COMMUNITY COVENANT GRANT – FUNDING APPLICATION CRITERIA

### INTRODUCTION

1. This guidance note provides information on the Community Covenant and how to access funds to support projects via the Community Covenant Grant. The process, guidance and associated documents will be kept under review and amended as necessary with the latest version being available on the Ministry of Defence (MOD) website (see below).

### AIMS OF THE COMMUNITY COVENANT

2. A Community Covenant is a voluntary statement of mutual support between a civilian community and its local Armed Forces Community. The Community Covenant is signed by various members of the local community including representatives of the Armed Forces and Local/Unitary Authorities. It may also be signed by charities, volunteer groups and other parties keen to support the principles of the Community Covenant. It is intended to complement, at local level, the Armed Forces Covenant, which outlines the moral obligation between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces. Please see [www.mod.uk/covenant](http://www.mod.uk/covenant), which provides guidance on how to establish a Community Covenant in your area. Community Covenants have already been established in Oxfordshire, Hampshire, Vale of Glamorgan and North Yorkshire and examples of best practice from these areas can be found on the website. Many people have become involved in supporting the Service community through Service charities, or more recently by participating in Armed Forces Day. They have shown their support through fundraising, military celebrations and open days, attending homecoming parades and repatriation ceremonies and offering commercial discounts. Even simple demonstrations of support, such as displaying the Armed Forces Day window sticker in cars and businesses, have had a positive effect and boosted the morale of our Armed Forces community. The Community Covenant scheme aims to *build* on this local level of support, and not to replace it.

3. The aims of the Community Covenant are to:

- encourage local communities to support the Armed Forces Community in their areas;
- nurture public understanding and awareness amongst the public of issues affecting the Armed Forces Community;
- recognise and remember the sacrifices faced by the Armed Forces Community;
- encourage activities which help to integrate the Armed Forces Community into local life;
- to encourage the Armed Forces Community to help and support the wider community, whether through participation in events and joint projects, or other forms of engagement

### AIMS OF THE COMMUNITY COVENANT GRANT SCHEME

4. The aim of the Community Covenant Grant Scheme is to deliver financial support to projects at the local level, which strengthen the ties or the mutual understanding between members of the Armed Forces Community and the wider community in which they live. It is administered by the Ministry of Defence on behalf of Her Majesty's Government and MOD/CTLB currently have funding for this financial year and the next three financial years to support bids. Bids may only be submitted

from areas which have already established a Community Covenant in their area, and applications are invited for sums from £100 to £250,000 (although bids for amounts greater than this may also be considered in exceptional circumstances). It is envisaged that many of the requests will be for smaller amounts of funding to support local projects. This guidance explains how those interested in making a bid for funds available can do so.

## WHAT MIGHT BE ACHIEVED THROUGH THE SCHEME

5. The Scheme will consider applications for projects that deliver tangible results and meet the overall aims of the Community Covenant. An application for funding can be submitted by any part of the community; this might include volunteer groups, charities, public bodies such as schools, and so on. Bids will be considered in the first instance by the Community Covenant Partnership<sup>1</sup> at a local level. Bids that the Partnership are happy to endorse will be submitted to the MOD to be considered by the Community Covenant Grant Panel.

6. There are many types of projects that might be supported by this fund – and some that will not be suitable. The list below aims to provide some ideas but should not be seen as restrictive; local partnerships will know what kind of project would best meet the needs of their particular population and do not intend to be overly prescriptive.

7. Examples of projects could include (but are in no way restricted to):

- local infrastructure, such as a children’s playground which might be used by children from both Service accommodation and the wider community;
- projects that increase the integration of Service personnel, veterans and their families with the wider community;
- projects that improve the health, welfare or financial literacy of Service personnel, veterans and their families;
- one-off activities, such as an activity camp involving the Armed Forces and local young people, in which the Scheme would meet the travel and subsistence costs of the Service participants;
- an exhibition at a local library/town hall etc, explaining what a local Armed Forces unit has recently been doing (eg in Afghanistan);
- an “oral history” project, where the local branch of a regimental association, locally based Armed Forces personnel or a specific group of Armed Forces personnel recorded their experiences or discussed them with local schoolchildren;
- a community outreach project bringing veterans together with their non-Service equivalents to highlight what support is available for them in their local community or to increase the level of targeted support;

8. In addition, the following should be borne in mind:

- There needs to be a clear demonstrable benefit to Armed Forces Community *and* their local community;
- The application is more likely to be successful if the non-Service element of the partnership (e.g. Local Authority, charity or community group or commercial organisation) also commit to incurring expenditure;

---

<sup>1</sup> The Community Covenant Partnership is defined, for the purpose of this document, as the parties represented by the lead signatories to the Community Covenant. In many cases bids will be considered by Civil/Military Partnership boards however where these have not been established the bid(s) must be jointly considered by, at a minimum, the Local Authority and a local Armed Forces representative(s) to the Community Covenant.

- MOD can only provide one off funding so where there is an ongoing cost – such as maintenance or staff costs, we will look for the non-Service element of the partnership to commit accordingly;
- MOD may stagger the release of funds depending on the size and nature of the bid and will communicate this clearly prior to entering into a commitment.

### **THE TYPES OF PROJECT THAT WE WILL BE UNABLE TO FUND:**

9. As a Government Department, there are some activities that it would not be appropriate for MOD to fund, this may include (but is not restricted to) the following:

- Topping up existing grants and aids where they come from another Government Department;
- Where money only benefits one person;
- Repeat or regular projects that require a source of uncommitted funding;
- Monuments or memorials;
- Research;
- Investments;
- Paying for ongoing costs of existing partnership activity;
- Fundraising activities;
- Staff costs beyond a 12 month period;
- Endowments (to provide a source of income);
- Projects or activities that the state has a legal obligation to provide;
- The provision of medical treatment

10. MOD reserves the right not to approve funding for a project where:

- it judges it does not support the overall aims of the scheme;
- it judges that funding should be provided to another project which, in its opinion, offers better return of benefits for the funds that are being requested;
- projects of a similar nature or benefit to particular Service groups that have previously been approved; or the amount of funding sought is judged to be too high;
- other reasons that arise – the MOD will provide an explanation for its decision should a project not be supported.

### **THE PROCESS**

11. Bidders will be asked to complete a business case on the template provided by us. After agreement from the Community Covenant Partnership that the proposed bid can be progressed applications will be considered by a panel led by MOD officials which also includes outside members (e.g. a representative of local government, Service charities, families federations) whilst recognising that final decisions need to be made by officials responsible to the Accounting Officer in MOD. For the financial year 2011-12 the panel will meet to consider bids in October and December 2011 and potentially March 2012. We aim to respond to completed bids within 15 days of panel assessment. For 2012 it is likely that we will hold a panel each quarter. If there is an urgent requirement for money before then please contact the team. Bids for consideration in October 2011 should be submitted by 30 September 2011. Deadlines for subsequent bidding panels will be published online at [www.mod.uk/covenant](http://www.mod.uk/covenant).

12. The panel will be given a standard score sheet with which to judge each bid, this will consider:

- Who the project benefits and how
- Whether this activity has attracted funding before
- Total project costs
- When benefits will be realised
- Overall impact of project
- Whether matched funding is being requested.

13. Bidders will need to identify an individual or individuals who will be responsible for managing the project. Wherever appropriate, funding for the project will be released from MOD to the relevant Local Authority who will manage the finances. Where this is not possible, funds can be released directly to the project bidder. MOD will be required to account for money issued to Local Authorities or project bidders; accordingly, Local Authorities and project bidders may be required to provide information on request to MOD in order to enable auditing processes to be conducted. This is set out in the terms and conditions for accepting funds (see below).

14. In allocating funds, the aim is to achieve a broad spread of grants – not only geographically, but also with regard to the section of the Armed Forces Community participating, the nature of the activity and consequent level of bid. If an application is successful you will be asked to sign our terms and conditions for accepting funding; these can be found [here](#).

## RECEIVING THE FUNDS

15. The Community Covenant Partnership will receive cash payment from the Defence Budget. The recipient will be the Local Authority or nominated person / company (to be agreed at time of accepting bid). Where sums are large, or the project is dependent on particular milestones being met, we may agree with you to phase release of funds to ensure that the project is on track to deliver.

## ONGOING RESPONSIBILITIES

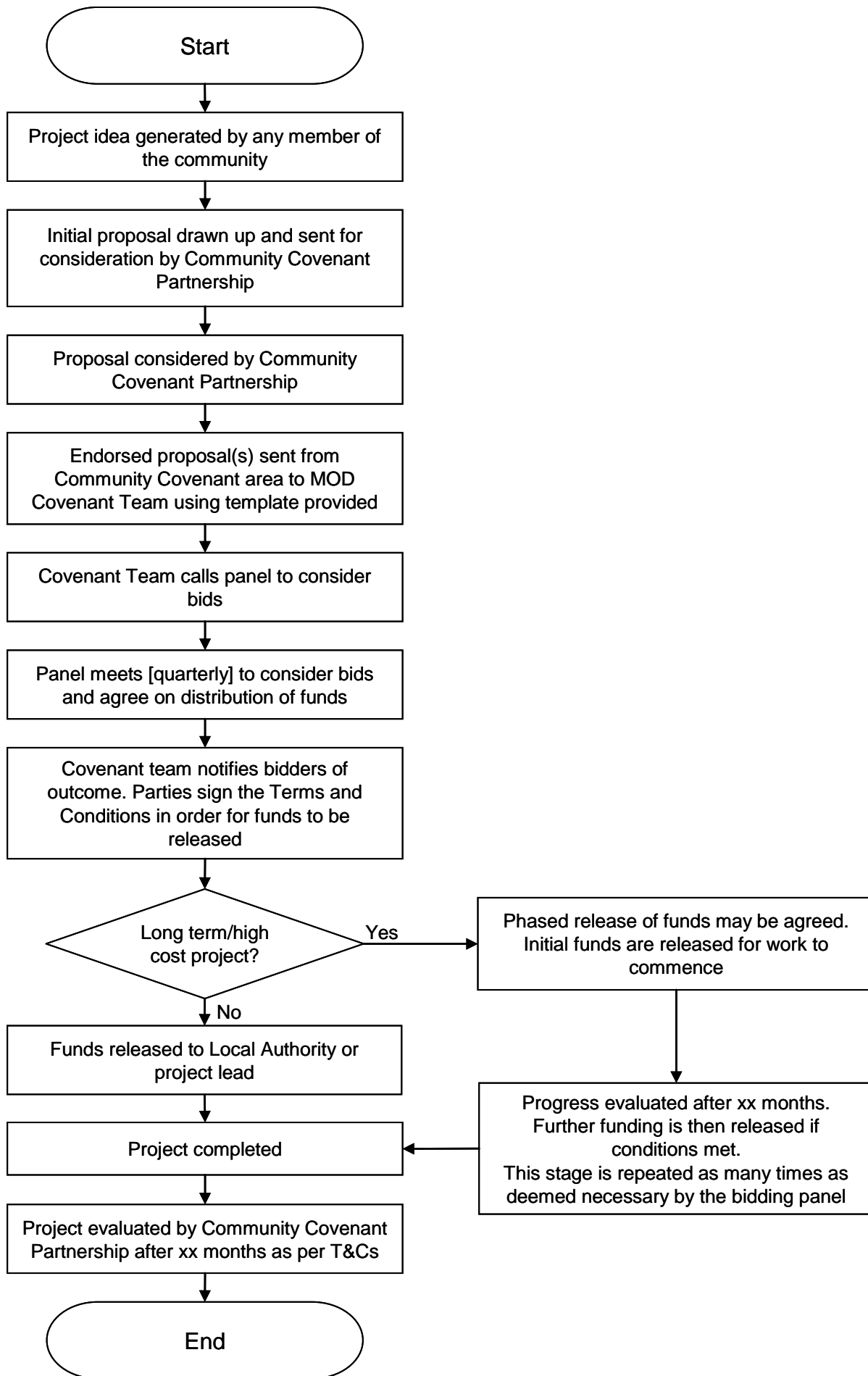
16. The **Community Covenant Partnership** will be responsible for ensuring that: the grant is used for the purpose stated in the business case; funds are managed prudently and deliver value for money; a full account of expenditure is retained for accounting purposes; and that they are satisfied the project manager has the required skills to manage the project.

17. Ultimately, the **MOD** is responsible for accounting for money released via this scheme. It is therefore necessary to put a number of steps in place, outlined in the terms and conditions, to ensure that we are able to fulfil this duty.

## REVIEW

18. MOD will regularly review how the scheme is administered and will welcome feedback on this guidance and process. We will amend the process and guidance as we gain experience and will put the most recent version of documents on the website.

FLOW DIAGRAM OF BID PROCESS





## **Terms and Conditions for Accepting Funding from the Community Covenant Grant Scheme**

1. The nominated individual(s)/parties to the bid on the application form are responsible for managing the project
2. It is the responsibility of the Community Covenant Partnership to ensure value for money
3. It is the responsibility of the Community Covenant Partnership to ensure that the proposed activity appropriately delivers the stated benefit.
4. The parties to the bid agree to commit to spend any associated ongoing costs identified in the business case
5. A full account of expenditure must be retained by the Community Covenant Partnership for audit purposes. This includes retaining receipts and invoices for three years.
6. The parties to the bid agree to report on the project after x time and y money (to be stipulated by MOD) has been spent on how much was spent and what benefit has been achieved. Please note that this will be proportionate to the amount of money granted – and could range from a couple of paragraphs in an email to us for a coffee morning to something more substantial for a playground. This is not meant to be onerous, but ensure that we appropriately account for use of tax payers' money.
7. If the bid seeks funding for a project to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults, it is the bidder's responsibility to ensure acceptable safeguarding policies and procedures are in place.
8. Depending on the type of project there may be a requirement for public liability insurance or qualified leaders – it is the bidder's responsibility to ensure that there is adequate insurance in place.
9. If funding is for a consumer durable, MOD accepts no liability for misuse or maintenance. It is not liable for consumables (such as staff costs) unless specifically stated in the business case.
10. MOD will retain relevant data to share best practice with other areas who wish to bid for funding
11. The MOD is not responsible for ensuring appropriate planning permission or associated costs.
12. MOD are not liable for overrun of project costs.
13. Unspent funds must be returned in full.
14. Where the funding is for a building, the cost and depreciation do not reside on MOD's balance sheet.
15. MOD retains the right to tell others about the project in order to promote the scheme.

16. Accepting these terms and conditions does not confer any further contractual obligation on MOD.

17. Other terms and conditions may be applied specific to the bid.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

For MOD Covenant Team

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

For ..... Local Authority

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Project Lead