

Celebrating Armed Forces weekend



This weekend marks Armed Forces Day and Reservists Day and as proud members of the Armed Forces Covenant, we reaffirm our support to all those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces.

Last year, we achieved the Employer Recognition Scheme Silver Award which builds on the Covenant and rewards employers who support defence and inspire others to do the same. Â

Accord has a range of services to support former members of the Armed Forces, including accommodation and employment support, as well as a number of colleagues who are former members and reservists.

You can hear first-hand about the difference these services make from veteran Donald, who shares his incredible story about how his life has changed through FryAccord. You can read his story below.

You can find more information about the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) on the Government website [here](#).

Show your support by using the hashtag #saluteourforcesâ

â€œI joined the Armed Forces back in 1988 as a junior leader before being sent to West Germany as a tank driver. After around a year, we got mobilised to the First Gulf War. I finished off my army days as a boxing instructor in Harrogate.

"There are things you experience during those days, both mentally and emotionally, that we all faced together and from that you build a family â€" a real comradeship that stays with you for life. Itâ€™s how we work.

"After leaving the Armed Forces, although I stayed in contact with my regiment, you have to deal with those problems alone whilst also trying to transition back into normal life. I realise now I had a lot of mental health problems I didnâ€™t know I had. Things spiralled out of control and I ended up spending time in and out of prison.

"I was referred to FryAccord in January 2019 after recently coming out of prison and living in a hostel in Birmingham.

"Since moving here, I can genuinely say the service I have received has changed my life. Itâ€™s given me the opportunity and confidence to take that step to move on with my life again.

"I have the support I need right on my doorstep, and the staff really do care about what I have to say. Thereâ€™s times where I do have dark days, and I do feel like relapsing, but I speak to the team here and they reassure me â€” itâ€™s like having that same family support network I had in the Armed Forces.

"It was alien at first to have that level of support. I didnâ€™t think there was anybody out there who knew how I felt and could help but I now feel in control of my life and can take positive steps to move forward, knowing that whenever I need it, they have my back.

"Armed Forces Day is a great opportunity to support those who are in or have served in the Armed Forces. I will be spending the day at an event in Walsall to raise vital funds for other veterans who really need it â€” the ultimate aim. I encourage everyone to show support for this important day."

FryAccordâ€™s veterans service in Birmingham provides 12 bed spaces within a supported accommodation scheme which is provided specifically for ex-armed forces personnel.

Based in Birmingham, the scheme encourages peer support from fellow veterans and is close to a range of community based support services and social networks for veterans.

This supported accommodation service is provided for homeless veterans to stabilise their lives, allow greater independence to live a more settled life with increased life choices.

Each customer receives the same opportunities, support and chances to resettle and improve their lives with everyone being assigned a keyworker, who helps them to identify what support they need and empower them to obtain the skills to achieve their goals.

For more information about FryAccord, visit <https://fryha.org.uk/>
