

News story: £19 million package to mark armistice centenary

An extra £10 million will go to the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust to support veterans with mental health needs that are not being addressed through current services. The Trust already receives £10 million a year, so for this centenary year, as the Chancellor announced at the recent Budget, this will be doubled. The Covenant Fund Trust makes grants to a wide range of hugely deserving organisations who support the armed forces community.

To ensure that young people are given the opportunity to learn about the sacrifices made by previous generations, the Chancellor is also making an additional £1 million available to support First World War battlefields tours for school students. This will build on the success of the existing First World War Centenary Battlefield Tours Programme which gives one teacher and two students from every state-funded secondary school in England a free accredited battlefield tour to the Western Front.

And to make sure local communities can continue to remember the sacrifices of generations past, the Chancellor is also providing up to £8 million to help with the cost of repairs and refurbishments to village halls and Miners' Welfare and Armed Forces Organisations facilities.

Many of the 16,000 village halls across the UK were built as memorials to local people who lost their lives in the first world war, and also serve as vital social hubs. Armed Forces Organisations, such as the Royal British Legion, provide a focus in the community for veterans, and can support improvements to health and wellbeing.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond said:

We owe the men and women who have served their country a huge debt of gratitude, and I am determined to do everything I can to help remember their sacrifice.

Through this funding, we are ensuring that young people can learn from previous generations and keep the memory of their service alive. By preserving our history, we can also provide vital social hubs for local communities. And by caring for today's veterans we can show that their selfless service, and their sacrifices, will always be remembered, and are hugely valued by a grateful nation.