



Working with our Tenants

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Photograph attached – Yes

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ARMED FORCES HELP WEBPAGE LAUNCHED BY DGHP

Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership (DGHP) has launched a brand new web facility to help ex-Armed Forces personnel when they leave the services.

A host of information has been created on DGHP's site and it is hoped it will become the main point of reference for anyone looking to set up home in this region after leaving the Armed Forces.

Archie Dryburgh, Dumfries and Galloway Council's Armed Forces Champion, said: "I must congratulate DGHP on the work carried out to bring the Armed Forces Help page together. I am sure it will be of great assistance to ex-service families looking to find out more information about Dumfries and Galloway.

"I, personally, feel the page is very informative and it is easy to find the information, which can always be expanded in the future.

"I have been working for a long time with local agencies, including local charities, service charities, Dumfries and Galloway Council and DGHP, to try and improve services for ex-service personnel. I think this webpage is a massive step forward in that process."

Jackie Oram, a combat medic with B Company 6 SCOTS, said: "Having this webpage will be a great help to lots of people coming out of the Armed Forces, whether it be the Army, RAF or the Navy.

"I know of people who have left the forces and have had nowhere to go and have had to go homeless or move in with relatives, so this information, along with what DGHP are doing will be help greatly," added Jackie, who has been in the TA for almost three years and is from Thornhill.

18-year-old Johnny Richardson, who joined the 6 SCOTS last March, added: "Although this may just seem like a website, it will give hope to many people.

It is somewhere to start and lets you know that other people are thinking of you and trying to help.”

Fred Murray, Chair of DGHP's Customer Services Committee, added: “It became clear from speaking to Councillor Dryburgh and many ex-service families recently that there really was no, one place they could go to find out information when they left the Armed Forces.

“Many of them felt it was really difficult to find information about, not only housing, but general things like how to organise your council tax, where to find doctors and dentists and also information about employment and benefits.

“Following the recent change to our allocations policy, where we now ring fence a percentage of our annual lets especially for Armed Forces personnel, we felt it would be right to develop a page where information could be collected for the whole region.

“The aim was to have one port of call for people looking to set up home in Dumfries and Galloway after they leave the services and this is what we hope we have achieved.”

The web page can be found by visiting DGHP's website at www.dghp.org.uk under New Customers and then Armed Forces Help.

The direct link is <http://www.dghp.org.uk/new-customers/armed-forces-policy/armed-forces-help>

Photograph shows: At the back: Armed Forces Champion Councillor Archie Dryburgh and Fred Murray, Chairman of DGHP's Customer Services Committee along with, in the front and seated, Johnny Richardson, of B Company 6 SCOTS, and Jackie Oram, also of B Company 6 SCOTS having a look at the information on the Armed Forces Help webpage.

NOTES TO EDITORS: DGHP has just recently re-homed its' first ex-service family following the policy change. Andrew and Lizye Featherstone have just spent their first Christmas in their own home in Dumfries.

The couple were the first to benefit from a change to DGHP's allocations policy – believed to be the first in Scotland, and the UK.

This change gives ex-Armed Forces personnel a direct route into housing when they leave the service as DGHP has now ring-fenced a percentage of its annual lets for them.

NOTES TO NEWSDESK: For more information please contact Lee Kerr, Communications Officer, on 01387 242513 (office), 07712 666 932 (mobile) or email lee.kerr@dghp.org.uk