

# Welcome to Scotland

A guide for Service personnel  
and their families in Scotland  
(updated 2023)



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba

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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at  
The Scottish Government  
St Andrew's House  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

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# Foreword



I am delighted, on behalf of the Scottish Government, to have this opportunity to welcome you and your family to Scotland. Our Armed Forces community is a true asset and we are committed to ensuring that we deliver the best possible level of care and support to service families during your time here.

Having recently been re-appointed to the role of Minister for Veterans, which I previously held from 2018-2021, I look forward to building on the excellent work of my predecessor Keith Brown. Like Keith I am passionate about championing your interests and delivering the aims of the Armed Forces Covenant.

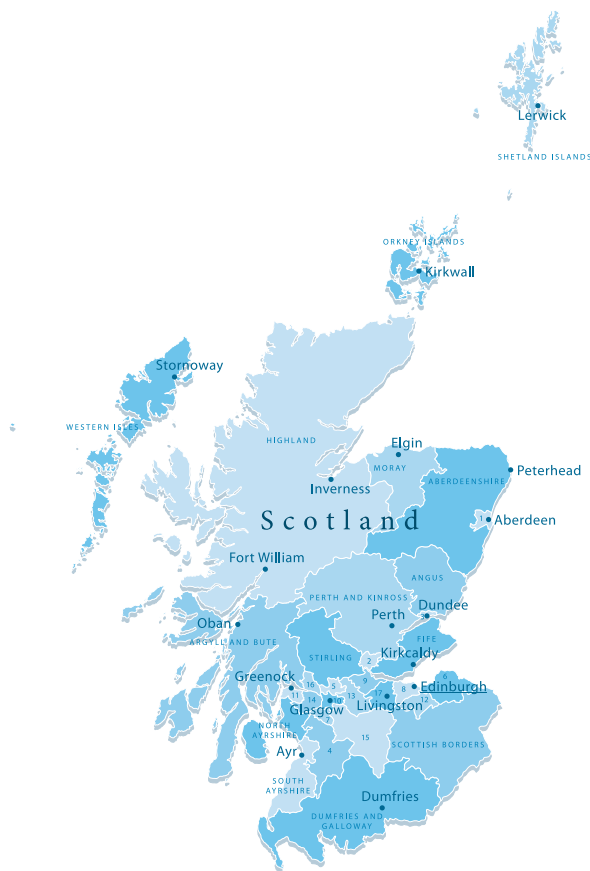
Here in Scotland we recognise the importance of ensuring close integration between the Armed Forces and local communities. This booklet has been designed specifically to help support you with your move and provides practical information on key topics such as housing, education, healthcare and employment.

I hope you will find it helpful and that you and your family enjoy the many benefits that our beautiful country has to offer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Graeme Dey'.

**Graeme Dey**  
Minister for Veterans

# Welcome to Scotland



Scotland is a progressive nation built on dynamism, creativity and the fabulous warmth of its people. We have a population of around 5.4 million mostly concentrated in the central belt. Our major cities include Edinburgh, the capital, with its iconic hill-top castle, and Glasgow, famed for its vibrant cultural scene.

## Language

Scotland's official languages are English, Gaelic, and Scots. Around 60,000 people speak Gaelic and more than a million people speak Scots. There are six standalone Gaelic schools including in Glasgow and Edinburgh, and Gaelic is taught in over 50 other schools across Scotland. More information on Gaelic and Scots culture can be found at the [Visit Scotland Website](#).

## Government

The Scottish Parliament deals with devolved issues. Devolution is a system of government which allows decisions to be made at a more local level. In the UK there are several examples of devolved government including the Scottish Parliament, the Welsh Parliament, and the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The Scottish Parliament, informally referred to as "Holyrood", is a democratically elected body comprising 129 Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs). Members are elected for five-year terms under the mixed-member proportional representation system.

The Scottish Government is led by the First Minister and is responsible for implementing laws and policy in Scotland which are not explicitly reserved to the United Kingdom Government (such as defence and foreign policy). These devolved matters include health and social care, education, justice and policing, rural affairs, economic development and transport.

Local government is organised through 32 unitary authorities designated as councils which consist of councillors elected every five years by registered voters in each of the council areas. You can find the contact details for your local authority at [COSLA](#)

# Housing



In Scotland, in addition to Service Family Accommodation, Single Living Accommodation and the Future Accommodation Model (FAM) which is being piloted at HMNB Clyde (all of which are provided through the Ministry of Defence), there are a number of housing options available depending on where you would like to live.

More information about the FAM can be found [here](#).

## Housing Options Scotland

The Scottish Government supports Housing Options Scotland to provide its Military Matters Project. This service provides support to veterans, currently serving personnel, their families and dependants to find the right home in the right place throughout the country. For more information visit the [Housing Options Scotland website](#).

## Joint Service Housing Advice Office (JSHAO)

JSHAO is the MOD's tri-service focal point to provide service personnel and their dependants with civilian housing information for those wishing to move to civilian accommodation at any time in their career, and for those during resettlement to assist with the transition to civilian life. More information on the JSHAO can be found [here](#).

## Buying a Home

If you wish to buy a home but cannot afford the total cost, there may be help available to you.

The Forces Help to Buy Scheme enables Service personnel to borrow up to 50% of their salary (to a maximum of £25,000) to buy their first home, or to move to another property on assignment or as their families' needs change. More information can be found [here](#).

The Scottish Government operates the Low Cost Initiative for First-Time Buyers (LIFT) shared equity schemes, which can help you to buy a home that is for sale on the open market, or to buy a new build home from a housing association or local council. Priority access is given to members of the armed forces, veterans who have left the armed forces within the past two years and widows, widowers and other partners of service personnel for up to two years after their partner has lost their life while serving, which means you do not need to be a first-time buyer to be eligible.

There are a number of Scottish Government schemes set up to help you buy a new home if you can't afford one. The scheme that's right for you depends on what type of home you want to buy and how much of the total cost you're able to cover. You can find out more about them [here](#).

## Land and Buildings Transaction Tax

If you purchase property over a certain value in Scotland, you will pay Land and Buildings Transaction Tax (LBTT). The tax is payable at different rates on each portion of the purchase price within specified tax bands. There are some LBTT reliefs in place, including a relief for first-time buyers.

Personnel who already own a property anywhere else in the world should also be aware of the LBTT Additional Dwelling Supplement (ADS). The ADS is payable on the total purchase price of an additional dwelling if the consideration paid for the property is £40,000 or more. It applies where:

- one or more buyers purchase a dwelling in Scotland, and
- at the end of the effective date of that transaction the buyer, or buyers, own more than one dwelling, and
- they are not replacing their only or main residence following the purchase of the additional dwelling.

The ADS can subsequently be reclaimed where a previous main residence is disposed of; however, there are particular timelines and rules in place which must be met for the ADS to be repaid.

LBTT is administered by Revenue Scotland; you will find more information and detailed examples on their [website](#).

## Renting a Property

You may wish to rent a property from a private landlord or apply for housing from a social landlord, either a local council or housing association.

If you want to rent a home privately there are steps you should follow. For example, before you move into a property, you should sign a tenancy agreement which sets out the terms of your tenancy. You'll usually pay the first month's rent and the deposit on the day you move into the property – your deposit must then be lodged in a tenancy deposit scheme. This means that when you leave the property your deposit will be returned in full if the property is left in good condition and all rent and bills have been paid. When there is a dispute about the return of a deposit each of the three approved tenancy deposit schemes in Scotland provide access to a free dispute resolution process.



All landlords and letting agents operating in Scotland must be registered. This ensures that the landlord or letting agent is a fit and proper person to let property. It is always important to check if they are registered before considering renting a property.

To find out if a landlord is registered you can search the landlord register [here](#)

To find out if a letting agent is registered you can search the letting agent register [here](#).

For more information about renting a home from a private landlord please visit this [website](#).

In the social sector you can apply for housing if you are over 16. Housing is allocated based on individual housing need. You will usually have to join a waiting list and you are not guaranteed to get a property. Your length of time on the waiting list will depend on the area you wish to live in, the type and size of house you require, the availability of housing in the area, as well as any priority you may have. You can find a list of social housing landlords [here](#).

### MOD Tenancy Support Scheme

Tenancy Support scheme allows civilian and Service personnel to apply for an advance of pay/salary to help meet the cost of a deposit for a rental property. More information on this scheme is available [here](#).

Many organisations provide homes for mid-market rent. These homes are aimed at helping people on low to modest incomes to access affordable, private rented accommodation. There are several ways of finding where these homes are, but the best is probably to look at what housing associations operate in your area or to check your local council's website.

Comprehensive information for tenants about private renting in Scotland can be found in the '[Private residential tenancies: tenant's guide](#)'.

Housing associations and many local councils provide homes for social rent. When you apply for a social rented home, your housing needs will be checked and your application will be held on a housing list. Social landlords decide who is offered housing based on an applicant's housing need and in line with the landlord's allocation policy. You can find information about how to apply for social housing from local councils. Alternatively, you can apply directly to a housing association – the Scottish Housing Regulator maintains the public register of all Registered Social Landlords in Scotland.

For more information about renting a home in Scotland visit this [website](#).

## Council Tax

You will usually have to pay council tax, payable to your local council, if you're 18 or over and own or rent a home. If you rent, check your rental agreement to see who is responsible for council tax payments.

Your council tax band determines how much council tax you pay. You can find out the council tax band of your home by looking the property online via the [Scottish Assessors website](#).

Armed forces personnel and their families may benefit from a 50% council tax discount where their home is left empty because their professional duties require them to live elsewhere.

For more information on council tax and to learn about council tax in your local authority you can visit this [website](#).

## Contribution in lieu of council tax (CILT)

All families living in Supported Family Accommodation (SFA) or soldiers in Single Living Accommodation (SLA) pay CILT instead of council tax. CILT is collected by the MOD and then paid to councils dependent on how many SFA/SLA are in their area. More information can be found via Families Federations websites.

## Universal Credit

The Scottish Government offers people living in Scotland, and in receipt of the UK Government Universal Credit (UC), the choice to have the housing costs in their UC award paid direct to their landlord.

An information leaflet for people applying for, or in receipt of UC, is on the [Scottish Government website](#).

# Education



Scotland's schools are welcoming places where we want all children to achieve their potential. Education in Scotland is organised differently to the rest of the UK. This section will help you understand you and your children's entitlements in Scotland's schools.

You can find further information regarding school education in Scotland on our [Parentzone website](#).

"Forces Children's Education" includes lots of information about the Scottish education system and the geography, and education resources available, along with a guide on understanding the Scottish education system. More information can be found [here](#) and the guide can be access [here](#).

## Early Years Learning and Childcare

The Scottish Government and Local Authorities fund early learning and childcare. This means that it is free of charge for eligible children.

Currently, if your child is three or four years old, you can get up to 1,140 hours of funded early learning and childcare a year.

Some two-year-olds can also get the same amount of funded early learning and childcare depending on whether you meet certain eligibility criteria, which you can find [here](#). Once your child qualifies for early learning and childcare, they will stay eligible.

You can get funded hours for different types of registered early learning and childcare, such as a nursery (local authority or privately run), childminder or playgroup. Contact your local authority to find out more about the sessions and providers available to you and to find out how to apply.

You can find out more information [here](#).

## MOD Wraparound Childcare (WAC)

The MOD Wraparound Childcare (WAC) Allowance can support eligible Service families with children aged 4-11 years old who are in school or being home schooled in the UK. If eligible, Service personnel can claim up to 20 hours per week of funding for each child that is attending before and after school care during term time.

WAC is known as School Age Childcare in Scotland. Parent(s) can choose their own Care Inspectorate, (or equivalent), registered childcare provider.

Further information and the eligibility criteria can be found [here](#).

## School Age and Stages

There are differences in the ages children start school across the UK. A summary of the age ranges in Scottish Education can be found on the [third page](#).

Scotland provides free school education for all children from the age of around four-and-a-half years old, up to the age of eighteen. Secondary schools will often have active partnerships with regional colleges, to enable school pupils access to a wider range of courses.

Depending on when their birthday falls, some children can start before they are four-and-a-half. Scotland has different enrolment and school entry dates than other parts of the UK.

Children start in Primary 1 and move up to the next class each year through to Primary 7. All children in Primaries 1-5 receive free school meals.

Children move up to secondary school automatically after primary school (aged 11 or 12 depending on when they started school).

Your local council is responsible for providing school education in the area you live. You can find full information on applying for all school places and placing requests in '[Choosing a school – a guide for parents](#)'.

## Term Time

Term dates will vary depending on your local authority area. You can find term dates [here](#).

## What Will My Child Learn?

Schools in Scotland plan their curriculum guided by Curriculum for Excellence: Scotland's 3-18 Curriculum. This seeks to educate the "whole child" so that they can achieve their potential through being successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens.

The secondary school curriculum has two phases - the broad general education in years one to three and the senior phase in years four to six. The Senior Phase allows for children to make choices about the courses they study.

Children and young people have a variety of opportunities to learn and develop skills, giving them the best chance of success in further learning, life and work.

Schools, in collaboration with colleges and employers, have the flexibility to offer a range of experiences to meet the needs of all learners. Young people can also study a range of qualifications and awards, including Nationals, Highers, Advanced Highers, Foundation Apprenticeships and Skills for Work courses.

Further information on the qualifications and how they compare with qualifications across the rest of the UK can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

A parent-friendly guide to Curriculum for Excellence has been produced by the National Parent Forum for Scotland (NPFS) and can be found [here](#).

## Support for Service Children

In the first instance, discuss your child's needs with the school, including any formal support plans (like a ECPC) previously in place. They will be best placed to provide information and support for your child. If you do not know which school your child will attend, you can check catchments based on your posting [here](#).

Additional Support for Learning (ASL) in Scotland is different to Special Educational Needs & Disability in England (SEND), but your child will still receive support if they need it.

Additional Support Needs (ASN) are broadly defined, including those which might impact on children from Armed Forces families, such as transitions, interrupted learning and dealing with separation and loss. They can be of short- or long-term duration and occur for a variety of reasons. ASN in Scotland includes needs defined as SEND in England.

We also have a Scottish advice service for additional support for learning, where you will find useful information about when your child might be entitled to extra support. This can be found at [Moving to Scotland – Enquire](#)

The **Education Advisory Team (EAT)** also provide support and assistance to families moving schools for a child with additional needs. More information can be found [here](#).

## Careers Advice in School

Skills Development Scotland is Scotland's Career Service. They support young people from the P7/S1 transition stage right through their school journey, including at key decision times such as options choices. They offer one-to-one discussions, group work sessions and drop-ins.

This unique national school support is available to all young people in Scotland, with more intensive support offered to young people with additional support or learning needs, military children and those who are care experienced. More information can be found [here](#).

## Independent Schools

As well as local authority education, parents may consider enrolling their child in an independent school. All independent schools in Scotland are registered, with their details available [online](#).

The independent sector includes boarding schools, where children and young people stay at the school, either full-time or perhaps only for part of the week. Where a school provides boarding, it is registered with, and inspected by, the Care Inspectorate. You can find out more about the Care Inspectorate [online](#).

Boarding schools in Scotland differ, and may offer the Curriculum for Excellence or another curriculum. However, all independent schools are inspected by Education Scotland in the same way that local authority schools are. If you are considering enrolling your child at an independent boarding school, you are encouraged to make contact with the schools you are interested in, seeking a copy of the school's prospectus in order that you can be better informed about what each school offers.

The Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS) is a useful source for more general information on independent schools. SCIS is a charitable body which represents most of Scotland's independent schools. You can visit this [website](#) for more information.

## Parental and learner involvement

As a parent, you are entitled to be involved in the life and work of the school and to be engaged in your child's learning. When your child joins a school in Scotland, you automatically become a member of the school's "parent forum". As a member of the school's parent forum you can also join the school's Parent Council which is a way for parents to have a formal role in influencing the life and work of the school.

Schools also have arrangements in place to gather learners' views throughout their education, via pupil councils or other methods.

## Further Education

Further education includes courses that are below the Higher National Certificate (HNC) level. These courses are taught in either secondary school or colleges and include:

- Academic courses below HNC level.
- Courses that do not lead to formal qualifications e.g. independent living skills.
- Courses on basic skills such as reading, writing and numeracy skills.
- Work-related courses, such as Scottish Vocational Qualifications.

To understand qualifications, recognise the levels of learning and to plan your learning journey, further information can be found using the [Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework \(SCQF\)](#).

Colleges are responsible for assessing an individual's criteria for funding. You should therefore enquire within your chosen college to check eligibility for funding support. Further information can also be found on the Student Information Scotland [website](#).

## Higher Education

Higher Education in Scotland includes courses of study which are at a HNC level or above. Individuals can take these courses at college or university and there is no age limit. Higher education courses range from:

- HNC
- Higher National Diploma (HND)
- Certificate of Higher Education (Cert HE)
- Diploma of Higher Education (Dip HE)
- Undergraduate Ordinary Degree
- Undergraduate Honours Degree



If individuals are students in Higher Education, they may be entitled to financial support from our Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS).

You and your family are entitled to support from SAAS if the serving parent or spouse was ordinarily resident in Scotland before enlistment or you otherwise meet the ordinary residency criteria.

If you are not entitled to support from SAAS you will still be able to access support from your home UK funding body, if you meet the appropriate eligibility criteria.

You can find more information on Higher Education funding for members of the Armed Forces and their families [here](#) or by calling SAAS direct on 0300 555 0505.

### Community Learning and Development (CLD) and Adult Learning

CLD supports primarily disadvantaged or vulnerable groups and individuals of all ages to engage in learning, with a focus on bringing about change in their lives and communities. Community Learning and Development includes:

- youth work, family learning and other early intervention work with children, young people and families,
- community-based adult learning, including adult literacies and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL),
- learning for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in the community, for example, people with disabilities, care leavers or offenders,
- community development (building the capacity of communities to meet their own needs, engaging with, and influencing decision-makers),
- volunteer development, and
- learning support and guidance in the community.

If you want to find out more about community learning and development activities, contact your local authority. More information on CLD can also be found [here](#).

# Healthcare



Healthcare in Scotland is provided by Scotland's public health service, NHSScotland.

NHSScotland consists of 14 regional NHS Boards who are responsible for the protection and improvement of their population's health and for the delivery of frontline healthcare services. You can find more information on NHSScotland [here](#).

### Access to Healthcare

When settled in a place of residence in Scotland you and your family should register with a local doctor – a GP (General Practitioner). Your GP will be able to care for your health conditions and to provide treatment if you become unwell. Any prescriptions prescribed by your GP are free of charge. You can find more information [here](#).

Members of the UK Armed Forces and family members should have any previous NHS waiting times taken into account when moving to a new location, including to Scotland. The expectation is that treatment in your new location will be met within the waiting time standards and Treatment Time Guarantee, and according to clinical need.

You will need to register and inform your new General Practice that you need to be re-referred rather than a new referral. It is important you find out where you are on the list before your move.

### Registering with a Dentist

You and your family can get care, advice and treatment from NHSScotland to keep your mouth, teeth and gums healthy. Scotland also provides free dental checks. You can find a dentist near you using the links at [Dental treatment - NHS Scotland | NHS inform](#)

### NHS Eye Care

Scotland is the only country in the UK to provide free universal NHS-funded eye examinations. These are available to anyone ordinarily resident in the UK and to eligible overseas visitors. In some cases, the NHS will also give an optical voucher towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses. [Your entitlement to NHS ophthalmic services | NHS inform](#)

## Connecting Communities

The Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) is a third sector organisation which helps connect people with local sources of support that will enable them to manage their own health conditions more effectively. See their [website](#).

## Mental Health

NHSScotland provides mental health services that offer a range of treatments and self-help advice for those experiencing mild, moderate or more complex mental health problems.

The first point of call for accessing NHS care is usually your GP. You can discuss any issue with your GP who can also arrange referral to more specialist services if that is necessary. You can find more details regarding support and services [here](#).

## Breathing Space

Breathing Space offers free and confidential advice for people experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety, whatever the cause. They can be contacted on 0800 83 85 87, 6pm to 2am Monday to Thursday and 6pm Friday through the weekend to 6am Monday. Calls to Breathing Space are free from landlines and from mobile networks. You can also access breathing space through their [website](#) which provides a wide range of information and advice about coping with low mood, depression and anxiety.

## V1P

Across Scotland, [the Veterans First Point \(V1P\) Centres](#) provide a one stop shop - easy access support service for veterans and their families in Scotland. Support is focused on practical issues (financial, employment, housing), as well as on mental health and wellbeing (social drop-ins, wellbeing programmes, therapy).

V1P Centres are run by the NHS and staffed by veteran peer support workers and therapists who understand military life and veterans. Centres can be found in Lothian, Fife, Tayside, Lanarkshire, Ayrshire and the Borders. To find out more or to access support call **0131 220 9920** or email [V1P.Scotland@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:V1P.Scotland@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk)

## Combat Stress

Combat Stress provides a range of community, outpatient and residential mental health services to veterans with complex mental health problems.

The helpline is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and provides free, confidential advice for veterans and carers. The website also contains a broad range of Self Help Resources.

**Contact Details:** Website: [www.combatstress.org](http://www.combatstress.org)

**Helpline** Phone 0800 1381619 **Text** 07537 173683

**Email:** [helpline@combatstress.org.uk](mailto:helpline@combatstress.org.uk)

## Support and Social Care

The Scottish Government is working in partnership with service users, carers, Local Authorities, NHSScotland, Integration Authorities, the Care Inspectorate, and the voluntary and independent sectors, to integrate health and social care services across Scotland. You can find all information in relation to Scotland's social care at [NHS Inform](#).

## NHS Champions

Each NHS Board has a Armed Forces and Veterans' Champion, who has volunteered to support veterans in their area who may have health-related concerns or issues.

Find your local NHS Champion [here](#).

## Sexual Health/Family Planning Clinics

NHSScotland provides free sexual health services in Scotland. You can access professional and non-judgmental care on all family planning conception information, relationships and sexual health advice at [Sexual Health Scotland](#) or you can also visit your local GP.

## Parent Club Scotland

Parent Club offers up-to-date guidance from the Scottish Government on your child's health and education. It's full of hints and tips from other parents and carers who've been there before. It also has advice to help you look after your own wellbeing and to point you in the direction of the support available.

## Scotland's Baby Box

Every baby born and living in Scotland is entitled to a Baby Box. This is an opt-in scheme, and expectant parents register to receive their box via their midwife, at approximately 20 weeks.

Further information on Scotland's Baby Box can be found via the Scottish Government's Parent Club Website at [www.parentclub.scot/baby-box](http://www.parentclub.scot/baby-box), or via your health professional.

## In an Emergency

NHS 24 is Scotland's telephone service providing health advice 24 hours a day. The telephone service allows people who feel unwell or those caring for them to obtain health advice if it is not possible to wait until they can visit their GP when the practice is next open. You can call them on 111 if you are ill or need any health services. Alternatively you can also access their website at [NHS 24](#)

The advice line is not intended as a substitute for obtaining an emergency ambulance service. For all life-threatening emergencies you should still call 999.

You will find more information on all health-related topics including dental care, smoking, alcohol, food and nutrition and mental wellbeing on NHS inform's website at [NHS Inform](#).

# Employment and Training



There are a number of ways to find work in Scotland and below is a list of the support services that we provide to help you in securing employment.

### Skills Development Scotland (SDS)

SDS is Scotland's career service. Their career information, advice and guidance service helps people of all ages to understand the world of work and develop lifelong career management skills. They can help you with career choices, job search, CVs and applications, apprenticeships, funding information and redundancy advice. Their qualified career guidance and advice experts deliver confidential and impartial career services through a network of high street career centres as well as offering career information, advice and guidance over the phone on their dedicated freephone helpline (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm - 0800 917 8000) and online at Scotland's career [website](#).

You can find details of your closest SDS career centre [here](#).

You can also access specific and dedicated information and assistance for Armed Forces veterans and leavers [here](#).

### No One Left Behind

No One Left Behind supports those transitioning out of military services and their families, to deliver a local place-based approach to facilitate easier alignment of employability support with existing local level support services. Employability support is aligned with other support services including housing, health, justice and advice services to ensure that individuals can access the holistic packages of support that they need to move towards, into and to sustain employment. Individuals are assigned a key worker who will identify support needs and ensure they receive the right support at the right time.

No One Left Behind is delivered locally through Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs) who have responsibility for, and ensure provision meets with local labour market and demographic needs.

You can find more information and contact details for your Local Authority [here](#).



## Fair Start Scotland

Fair Start Scotland, our national employment support service, offers 12-to-18 months of tailored, person-centred pre-employment support, along with up to 12 months of in-work support available for individuals and their employers. Support includes access to workshops and guidance utilising the transferrable skills that people leave military services with.

You can find information and contact details on your local Fair Start Scotland Service Provider [here](#).

## Going Forward into Employment

Going Forward into Employment (GFIE) is a scheme which provides civil service employment to specified groups with exemptions, by allowing suitably qualified people to be offered posts without having to compete in the usual way.

The Scottish Government is proud to participate in the GFIE programme that supports military veterans who have left service within the last five years or who have left service within the last 10 years seriously injured, as well as spouses or partners of either those veterans or currently serving personnel.

Roles are initially offered on a temporary basis for up to 23 months and may potentially be converted to permanent after 12 months, subject to the individual passing an assessment for a permanent role.

Scottish Government GFIE roles will be posted to Forces Families Jobs. For more information on the GFIE scheme please email [help@forcesfamiliesjobs.co.uk](mailto:help@forcesfamiliesjobs.co.uk)

## Women Returners Programme

The Women Returners Programme was created to assist women in Scotland who've been out of work for 6+ months to successfully enter the workforce, the programme is set up to help restart the career journey for this important part of the workforce. The service aims to provide one-to-one bespoke support, advice and access to professional opportunities.

The programme is funded by the Scottish Government and in 2020 the programme's criteria was extended to include female veterans and spouses/partners of serving personnel. The purpose of the programme is aimed at helping many women back into work and to work with employers to provide valuable advice, peer support and access to training and work experience, which will open up opportunities for women in sectors where they are under-represented. Please visit [Women Returners - Consulting | Coaching | Network](#) for further information.

## Working in Your Local Area

You can apply to work for your local council across a wide range of job roles and services. Visit My Job Scotland to view, search and apply for jobs in your area [here](#).

Jobcentre Plus helps people to find and progress in work, including those who are unemployed and claiming benefits. Visit your nearest Jobcentre Plus for help with finding a job and information on any benefits you and your family might be entitled to, or visit the [website](#).

You can find further information surrounding the support services available [here](#).

## Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are work-based learning opportunities or jobs with industry-recognised qualifications. Apprenticeship jobs provide people with the chance to work, learn and earn to get the skills employers want.

There are three types of Scottish Apprenticeships, **Foundation, Modern and Graduate**:

- **Foundation Apprenticeships** are work-based learning opportunities for senior-phase secondary school pupils. Lasting one or two years, pupils can begin their Foundation Apprenticeship in S5 or S6. Young people spend time out of school at college or with a local employer enabling them to complete the Foundation Apprenticeship alongside their other subjects like National 5s and Highers. Completion leads to a qualification at the same level of learning as a Higher. Foundation Apprenticeships are recognised as entry qualifications by all Scottish colleges and universities.
- **Modern Apprenticeships** are jobs for people over 16 who have left school. This type of apprenticeship enables you to get paid, whilst learning on the job. You get the experience you need whilst working towards an accredited qualification which is recognised by industry, with the support of a training provider who works with the business.
- **Graduate Apprenticeships** are jobs for those who are over 16 and provide work-based learning opportunities up to master's degree level for new and existing employees. The apprenticeships combine academic knowledge with skills development to enable participants to become more effective and productive in the workplace. There are 14 Graduate Apprenticeship subjects available, all in growing sectors with great career prospects.

## Forces Families Jobs

Forces Families Jobs is an employment and training platform for Service spouses, partners and family members. It offers employers free access to a pool of talented employees of service spouses and family members whose current resource is very much untapped. You can find more information or register at the [Forces Families Jobs website](#).

## Volunteering

There are thousands of charities across Scotland who are looking for volunteers to get involved and make a difference. If you would like help to volunteer or to find organisations in your area please get in touch with your local Third Sector Interface (TSI) / Volunteer Centre who will be happy to offer you advice about volunteering. They are in each area of Scotland: one for each local authority. Find your local TSI details [here](#) or search for volunteering opportunities here: [Volunteer Scotland Search | Help Make a Difference through Volunteering](#)

# Benefits and Social Care



We have lots of help available for accessing benefits and social care in Scotland. More information about some of the support services is below.

### Social Security Scotland

Social Security Scotland is an agency of the Scottish Government. They are responsible for the delivery of some low income, disability and carer benefits. Social Security Scotland currently delivers 13 benefits including Adult Disability Payment; Scottish Child Payment; Best Start Grants; and Winter Heating Payment. You can find out more about what benefits are delivered by Social Security Scotland [here](#).

### Local Delivery Service

Social Security Scotland offer a Local Delivery Service across every local authority area in Scotland. Staff are available to answer queries about Social Security Scotland benefits, help complete paper, telephone or online applications forms, and offer other support. You can request a telephone conversation, an online video call, or a face-to-face appointment at a location that would be convenient. You can find out more information about the support provided [here](#).

### Your Local Council

Many local councils have welfare rights advisers who can help you with problems surrounding benefits or your eligibility. You can find your local council by typing in your postcode [here](#).

### Citizens Advice Scotland

You can find information on benefits and other issues like housing, debt and employment [here](#) or 0808 800 9060. You can also request a meeting with a representative of Citizen's Advice Scotland.

### Armed Services Advice Project (ASAP)

ASAP also provides dedicated information, advice and support to members of the Armed Forces Community in Scotland. The service is provided by the Scottish Citizens Advice Bureau Service, more information can be found [here](#).

## Turn to Us

Turn to Us provides support if you are suffering financial hardship. You can find information [here](#).

## Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)

DWP is responsible for most welfare, pensions and child maintenance policy. They deal with the administration of some working age, disability and ill-health benefits.

As part of the Armed Forces Covenant, the DWP has initiatives that help current and former members of the Armed Forces and their families access Jobcentre Plus services. This includes having an Armed Forces champion in every Jobcentre Plus district who ensures that DWP provide support that meets the needs of the Armed Forces Community. See more information on the DWP and the Armed Forces [here](#).

You will find further information on the [Scottish Government's website](#).

# Other Useful Information



## Elections and Scottish Parliament

You can find out who your local MSP, MP and Councillor is by entering your postcode [here](#).

Serving personnel, along with their spouses or partners, can take part in elections and referendums. You can find out more information about how you can register to vote in Scotland [here](#).

## Local Authority Champions

All Local Authorities within Scotland have nominated an Armed Forces and Veterans Champion who acts as an advocate on behalf of the Armed Forces Community within that area. The Champions are in place to support the Armed Forces Community to identify any issues which need to be addressed and resolved. As well as this numerous other organisations, including NHS Boards and other statutory bodies have also nominated Armed Forces and Veterans Champions.

You can find more information on who your Local Authority Champion is on [Veterans Assist Scotland website](#).



## GIRFEC

The Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) approach is the Scottish Government's commitment to provide all children, young people and their families with the right support at the right time – so that every child and young person in Scotland can reach their full potential. Through GIRFEC, everyone can work together to build the scaffold of support children and young people need to grow up loved, safe and respected. We want all children and young people to live in an equal society which enables them to flourish, to be treated with kindness, dignity and respect, and to have their rights upheld at all times. It provides a consistent framework and shared language for promoting, supporting and safeguarding the wellbeing of children and young people, for the many services and agencies that work with children and families to take a co-ordinated, holistic approach which puts the rights of the child at the centre.

One of the core components of GIRFEC is a named person or equivalent role, who is a clear point of contact for children, young people and parents to go to for initial support and advice. A named person can also connect families to a wider network of support and services so that they get the right help, at the right time, from the right people. However, there is no obligation on children and families to accept the offer of advice or support from a named person. A named person is usually a health visitor until children start school, and a head or senior teacher thereafter.

Another core component of GIRFEC is a single, shared approach to planning for children and young people's wellbeing. A personalised child's plan is developed when those working with the child, young person and family identify that a child or young person needs a range of extra support planned, delivered and co-ordinated. The child's plan should reflect the child or young person's voice and explain what should be improved for the child or young person, the actions to be taken and why the plan has been created.

When children, young people and families require the help and support of a child's plan, a lead professional will be needed. The lead professional is an agreed, identified person within the network of practitioners who is working alongside the child or young person and family. In most cases, the professional who has the greatest responsibility in coordinating and reviewing of the child's plan will undertake this role.

## GIRFEC Case Study – Education

Lucy joined the school after moving into the area with her family. There was little information passed on from her previous school, so her teacher began to get to know more about what she had been learning, how she liked to learn and what progress she had been making.

Lucy was a bright, friendly and chatty girl who really seemed to enjoy learning at school. She particularly enjoyed learning outdoors and with her peers but was reluctant to write or to read aloud, often finding ways to avoid these tasks.

Her teacher quickly noticed this and discussed it with an experienced pupil support teacher in the school and the headteacher. The teacher also chatted to Lucy to learn more about how she felt about her learning and progress. Lucy's parents were also included in conversations about her learning and progress, with the teacher sharing her concerns about Lucy's reluctance to be involved in some aspects of learning at school. Her parents were able to share more information on her learning journey to date and some concerns they had about her progress.

Through careful class observation by the teacher, the expertise of other school colleagues and crucially, through sensitive conversations with Lucy and her family, it was agreed that further discussions and assessments related to her learning styles and progress could be undertaken. This allowed the teacher to build up a really clear picture of gaps in Lucy's learning and to put personalised learning plans in place for her. The plans were overseen by the headteacher who was also Lucy's named person.

Lucy was involved in the design of her learning plans to ensure she understood what was going to happen to help her become a more confident and successful learner. Planning was flexible and fluid, and supports were responsive to need. Regular check-ins were arranged with her teacher to ensure Lucy could discuss how much and how well she was progressing, as well as any ways in which she felt she could be better supported. Lucy's parents were also updated on her progress.

As a result of the highly regarded GIRFEC approach in Scotland, a partnership approach to identifying and addressing barriers to learning successfully met the needs of the child in an inclusive and participative way.

## GIRFEC Case Study – Health

The Jones family had just moved to Glasgow from overseas. The family had one child, a two-year-old girl called Penny. They had registered with the local GP practice and were awaiting a visit from a Health Visitor.

Penny's mum was anxious as Penny was not yet talking and she was worried as Penny was going to be starting nursery in a few months.

The Health Visitor contacted the family via phone to introduce herself and to arrange a suitable time to visit the family at home. At the visit, she listened to Penny's mum's concerns and observed Penny at play. She noted that Penny could babble but had no words. She reassured Penny's mum and discussed some strategies she could use and suggested a referral to a speech and language specialist service. She also suggested that it may be useful to contact the senior nursery staff to discuss her concerns. Mum agreed that she would be happy for her to do so.

Following the visit, on returning to the office, the Health Visitor contacted the speech and language service regarding a formal referral to the service. She also organised a visit with the nursery head for Penny, her mum and herself to meet the nursery staff and discuss any anxieties Penny's mum had. At this visit it was suggested that the nursery head liaised with the speech therapist regarding how the nursery staff could best support Penny when she was in nursery and it was agreed by everyone that a personalised plan was written to ensure this was followed by all nursery staff.

A few weeks later Penny's mum received an appointment to attend the speech and language department and commenced treatment from them. The family attended a number of group sessions over a period of a few weeks and Penny's speech began to develop.

Penny started nursery being able to speak a few words and there was a clear plan in place so that nursery staff could support the family with her speech development.

The Health Visitor continued to provide support for Penny and her family.

As a result of the highly regarded GIRFEC approach in Scotland, a partnership approach to identifying and addressing the barriers to child development and wellbeing successfully met the needs of the child in an inclusive and participative way.

## Scots Law

Scots law is the legal system in Scotland, and although elements in the Scottish legal system are similar to those in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, there are important differences between Scots law, English law and Northern Irish law. You can find out more about Scots law on the [Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service \(Scotland's prosecution service\) website](#).

In Scotland, the criminal law can be different to that of the rest of the UK. For example, the Scottish Parliament passed legislation in 2019 that made all forms of physical punishment of a child unlawful. More information can be found [here](#).

The civil law, including family law, may also be different in Scotland to the position elsewhere in the UK.

## Taxes in Scotland

Similar to a majority of countries around the world, tax plays an important role in Scotland because it helps to pay for the public services we use.

There are three different types of tax in Scotland:

- Local taxes, which are managed and collected by your local authority area. An example of a local tax you might pay is Council Tax.
- Devolved taxes, which are taxes either fully or partially controlled by the Scottish Government. These are either collected by Revenue Scotland or Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). Examples of devolved taxes you might pay are Scottish Income Tax and Land and Buildings Transaction Tax.
- Reserved taxes, these are controlled by the UK Government and collected by HMRC. Examples of reserved taxes you might pay are National Insurance and VAT.

Each year, the Scottish Government announces its plans for tax and spending in the Scottish Budget. Devolved taxes make up a large part of the Scottish Government's revenue for this, with more than 40% of what Scotland spends coming from these taxes. More information on the purpose and principles of tax and how the Scottish Government makes decisions on devolved taxes is set out in the Framework for Tax.

Income Tax, which is a tax on money you earn, is the largest of the taxes the Scottish Government controls. Scotland has its own rates and bands which are different from the rest of the UK, which you will pay as a resident of Scotland. Your tax code will begin with the letter 'S' if you pay the Scottish rate. HMRC is responsible for the collection of Income Tax in Scotland.

The revenue raised from taxation in Scotland supports the most comprehensive range of free to access public services available in the UK, including free prescriptions and tuition fees, subject to eligibility.

The Scottish Income Tax Mitigation scheme is applicable for those posted in Scotland to ensure MoD staff will pay the same amount of tax regardless of where they live. It applies only to personnel based in Scotland who are liable to pay more Income Tax in Scotland than they would had they been based elsewhere in the UK. It is a policy created by the UK Government and Ministry of Defence, and is therefore not a policy that is devolved to the Scottish Parliament. You can find out more information on this scheme [here](#).

Find out more about devolved taxes [here](#), local taxes [here](#), and reserved taxes [here](#).

# Supporting You



The Scottish Government greatly values and supports our Armed Forces personnel, veterans and families and recognises the contribution they make to their communities. We have a great network of organisations in Scotland, which can help and support serving personnel and their families. For example:

### **Forces Children Scotland**

Forces Children Scotland help children and young people from serving, reservist and veteran families across Scotland grow in confidence, develop new skills and gain valuable experiences by co-producing projects and services to support mental health and wellbeing, education and learning and putting their unique experiences on the radar of civilian audiences.

Support in these areas can be found at [Forces Children Scotland](#).

### **Family Federations**

There are three Family Federations representing each of the three services, Navy, Army and RAF. Each of the Family Federations is independent from the services and works to improve the quality of life for Service families around the world - on any aspect that is affected by the military lifestyle.

They also provide a signposting service to help you find the right person to speak to, as well as providing useful information for Service families.

More information on the individual Family Federations can be found via:

#### **Naval Family Federation**

Phone: 023 9265 4374

Website: <https://nff.org.uk/>

#### **Army Family Federation**

Phone: 01264 554004

Website: <https://aff.org.uk/>

#### **RAF Family Federation**

Phone: 01780 781650

Website: [www.raf-ff.org.uk/](http://www.raf-ff.org.uk/)

#### **Veterans Scotland**

Address: New Haig House, Logie Green Rd, Edinburgh EH7 4HR

Phone: 0131 550 1569

Website: <http://www.veteransscotland.co.uk/>

**Legion Scotland**

Address: New Haig House, Logie Green Road, Edinburgh EH7 4HQ

Phone: 0131 550 1583

Website: [www.legionscotland.org.uk](http://www.legionscotland.org.uk)

**PoppyScotland**

Address: New Haig House, Edinburgh EH7 4HQ

Phone: 0131 557 2782

Website: [www.poppyscotland.org.uk/](http://www.poppyscotland.org.uk/)

**Glasgow Helping Heroes**

Address: 840-860 Govan Road, Glasgow G51 3UU

Phone: 0141 276 7199

Website: [www.glasgowshelpingheroes.org/](http://www.glasgowshelpingheroes.org/)

**Armed Forces Covenant**

Website: [www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk](http://www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk)

**Support in Mind Scotland**

Address: 6 Newington Business Centre,  
Dalkeith Road Mews, Edinburgh EH16 5GA

Phone: 0300 323 1545

Website: [Mental Health & Money Advice service - Health and Well-being \(nhsinform.scot\)](http://nhsinform.scot)

**SSAFA The Armed Forces Charity**

Phone: 0131 557 1697

Website: [www.ssafa.org.uk/](http://www.ssafa.org.uk/)

**Armed Service Advice Project (ASAP)**

Phone: 0808 800 1007

Website: [www.adviceasap.org.uk/](http://www.adviceasap.org.uk/)

**Shelter Scotland**

Address: Scotiabank House, 6 South Charlotte Street, Edinburgh EH2 4AW

Phone: 0808 800 4444

Website: <https://scotland.shelter.org.uk/>







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**[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)**

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