



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

9th October 2017

Dear Constituent,

RE: ROYAL BRITISH LEGION'S 2017 MANIFESTO.

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of the Royal British Legion's 2017 manifesto.

I recognise the valuable contribution made by Armed Forces personnel and their families and the many sacrifices made through their service in keeping Britain safe.

I know that the Government supports the RBL's aspiration to include a veteran's marker in the 2021 census. In light of this, the Office of National Statistics and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) have established a working group to review this matter.

I am aware that the MOD continues to keep a watching brief on Gulf veterans illness, but in line with the Medical Research Council review carried out in 2003, which confirmed that no discrete diagnosis was present, there are no plans to institute further research either on causation or clinical management.

I am encouraged that an independent review of the Covenant pledges made by business and the third sector is being undertaken in 2018 which will identify and document positive examples of how a range of organisations are delivering on their Covenant commitments. These examples of best practice will then be shared, along with appropriate guidelines, to support organisations in drafting and implementing Covenant pledges.

With regard veterans' healthcare, including the treatment of Non-Freezing Cold Injuries, the MOD continues to work with the Department of Health, NHS England, and the Devolved Administrations to ensure that the specific healthcare needs of injured personnel continue to be met when they leave the Services.

I know that the MOD works closely with Local Authorities to make provision for separated or divorced spouses or civil partners as they transit out of the Armed Forces community, and Ministers will consider whether additional measures are necessary. I am aware that a number of Local Authorities have amended their housing policy to waive the requirement for a local connection to recently divorced and separated spouses, on their first move out of Service family accommodation.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again, and



rest assured that, going forward, I will continue to follow this important issue very closely.

With best wishes,

Tom

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**