



Please see below a letter which  
[Rushmoor Borough Council](#)  
Leader David Clifford has sent to UK Prime Minister  
[Boris Johnson](#)

Dear Prime Minister

**COMMONWEALTH AND GURKHA VETERANS**

I am the Leader of Rushmoor Borough Council, which includes Aldershot – ‘Home of the British Army’. We are extremely proud and honoured to have a close association with the Aldershot Garrison and for many years we have enjoyed a very productive and close relationship with the Garrison and the units which are located there. We have worked hard to deliver the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant and the local Military Community Covenant, led by our Military Covenant Champion, as they integrate closely with the Council’s objectives to build a cohesive, resilient and integrated local community. Linked to this, we welcome the Government’s Armed Forces Bill and commit to building on the work undertaken through the covenants.

We recognise that our Armed Forces include a significant number of Commonwealth and Gurkha soldiers and veterans who are now based in Rushmoor. The Council applaud and celebrate the significant contribution they have made to the British Armed Forces and the local community and the close partnership we have developed to integrate them and their families. We hope and intend to support the extension of this long into the future.

The Council does, however, recognise the existing barriers to British Citizenship for Commonwealth and Gurkha soldiers and veterans which includes a significant cost and a detailed and challenging process for many of them. We note the intention of the Ministry of Defence to hold a public consultation exercise on the issue of settlement fees, with the aim of providing greater simplicity and flexibility.

We are keen to see the provisions reviewed, to include the abolition of the associated costs and fees, as it is an immediate issue for Armed Forces veterans and their families

in Aldershot and Farnborough. Therefore, the Council commit to engaging with the consultation exercise and we call on the Government to deliver the necessary steps to reduce the barriers to citizenship, including naturalisation for Commonwealth and Gurkha soldiers and veterans.

I would be grateful if the issues raised could be progressed as soon as possible so that we can show our support for those Commonwealth and Gurkha veterans who have served Her Majesty The Queen and this country so diligently and honourably.

Yours sincerely

Cllr David Clifford

Leader of the Council