

Welcome to Scotland

A guide for Service
personnel and their
families moving to Scotland



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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Foreword



On behalf of the Scottish Government, it is my pleasure to welcome you and your family to Scotland.

The Scottish Government is firmly committed to supporting our Armed Forces Community. We have a long military tradition here in Scotland and hold our Armed Forces and their families in high esteem.

In 2016 we published 'Renewing Our Commitments' setting out our strategic direction for supporting the Armed Forces Community.

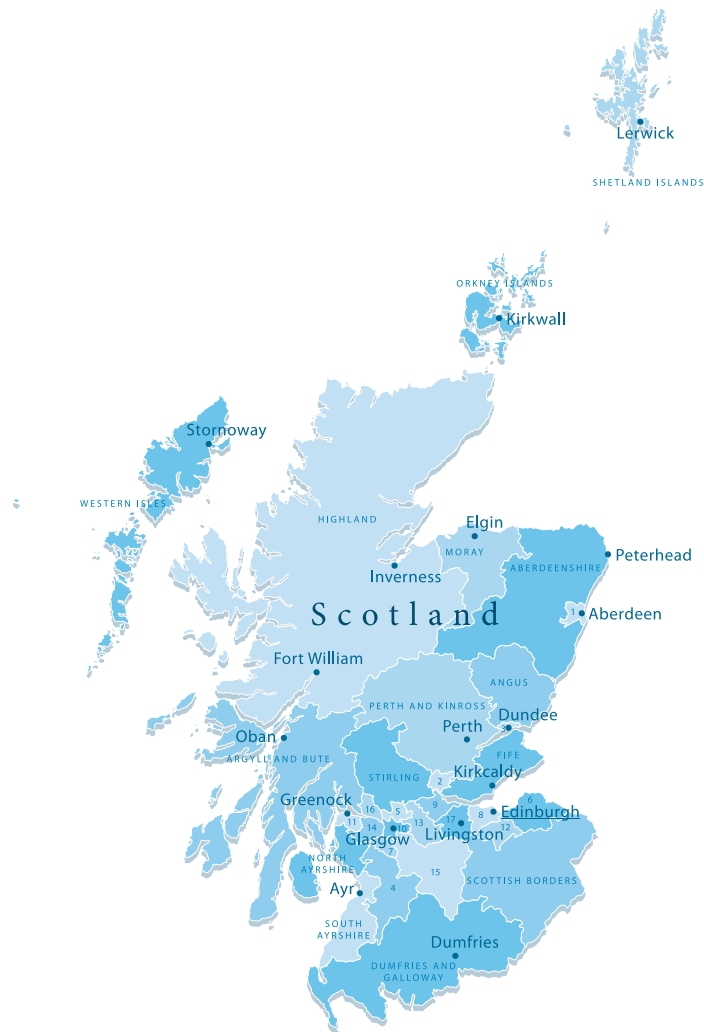
This booklet has been designed to help you with what you need to know about your move. We are a close-knit society and are committed to ensuring that members of the Armed Forces and their family members are fully supported when accessing our services. We have a proud track record of working in close partnership with local authorities, the wider public sector and charities to help us ensure you are able to access the best possible care and support. Ultimately, we hope that you will consider Scotland as your long-term home.

I hope you find this booklet useful and that you and your family enjoy the great benefits that our beautiful country has to offer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Graeme Dey', written in a cursive style.

Graeme Dey MSP
Minister for Parliamentary Business and Veterans

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.

When you move to Scotland one thing you'll be guaranteed is a friendly welcome. You can also help make your move go as smoothly as possible by taking the time to research what matters to you most. To ensure that you are fully supported on your move to Scotland please let your local council know that you are members of the Armed Forces Community; you will find local council details in the useful information section.

Scotland has a military tradition that is centuries old and has become home to many Armed Forces personnel, veterans and families. We were voted the most beautiful country in the world by a renowned travel guide in 2017 and, with our soaring mountains, gleaming lochs, thick woodland, 300 castles engulfed in history and miles of golden beaches, Scotland's landscapes really will take your breath away.

We are the home of golf and are well known for the beautiful courses scattered throughout the country, as well as our world-famous Highland Games and many other events. You will never be short of something to do or see in Scotland and you can find more information, including free sites and attractions to visit, at www.visitscotland.com

Housing

In Scotland, in addition to Service Family Accommodation and Single Living Accommodation (provided through the Ministry of Defence), there are a number of housing options available depending on where you would like to live.

Buying a home

If you wish to buy a home but cannot afford the total cost, there are a number of schemes that might be able to help 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 at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forces-help-to-buy>

The Scottish Government operates 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. Support is also offered through the Help to Buy (Scotland) Scheme to purchase a new build property from a participating builder. Funding for these schemes is provided by the Scottish Government and you can find out more about them at <https://www.mygov.scot/help-buying-home/>

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.

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' at <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/private-residential-tenancies-tenants-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 www.mygov.scot/housing-local-services/renting-property/

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 at <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/universal-credit-applicant-information/Universal%20Credit%20Online%20Question%20and%20Answer.pdf?inline=true>



Education

We want Scotland to be the best place to grow up.

Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)

Getting it Right for Every Child is Scotland's approach to promote and improve wellbeing to help children and young people thrive. This approach recognises that children and young people will have different experiences in their lives, but that every child and young person has the right to expect appropriate support from adults to allow them to grow and develop to reach their full potential. You can find more information at www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright

You can find full information regarding school education in Scotland on our Parentzone website at <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>

Also, the Association of Directors of Education in Scotland website 'Forces Children's Education' includes lots of information for Service families and practitioners and is available at <https://forceschildreducation.org.uk/>

Early Years Learning and Childcare

Funded early learning and childcare is free to parents, but funded by the Scottish Government.

If your child is 3 or 4, you can get up to 600 hours a year (the equivalent of 16 hours a week if taken in term time). This will be increasing to 1140 hours a year by August 2020. You can claim your funded early learning and childcare place by visiting your local council's website. More information is available at www.mygov.scot/childcare-costs-help/start-and-end-dates/

Depending on whether you are eligible for certain benefits, you may also be entitled to funding for early learning and childcare if your child has turned 2. You can find more on entitlement and eligibility to childcare for children aged between 2 and 3 years old at www.mygov.scot/childcare-costs-help/funded-early-learning-and-childcare/

Once your child qualifies for early learning and childcare, they will stay qualified.

School Age and Stages

There are differences in the ages children start school across the UK, and children might start school later in Scotland than they would in England.

Scotland provides free school education for all children from the age of around four and a half to five, up to age 18. 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.

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' at www.gov.scot/Publications/2004/11/20232/46414



Children start in Primary 1 and move up to the next class each year through to Primary 7. All children in Primaries 1-3 receive free school meals.

Children move up to secondary school automatically after primary school (aged 11 or 12 depending on when they started school). The secondary school curriculum has two phases – completion of the broad general education (S1-S3) and the senior phase (S4-S6).

Senior schools, in collaboration with colleges and employers, have the flexibility to offer a range of experiences to meet the needs of all learners. In addition to national qualifications, young people can also study a range of vocational qualifications, including Foundation Apprenticeships which offer knowledge and skills directly related to employment. Further information on qualifications can be viewed at www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/files_ccc/QualificationsCanCrossBoundaries.pdf

The School Year

Term Time

The school year is broken into three terms which will include public holidays and may include a mid-term break (schools will be closed for one or two weeks).

- Autumn term begins in August and usually ends in December.
- Spring term begins in January and will usually end in March/April.
- Summer term begins in April and will usually end in June/early July.

Term dates will vary depending on your local authority area. You can find term dates at www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/Schools/Latest/schoolholidays

My Child Needs Extra Support

Additional Support for Learning and Service Children

Additional support for learning in Scotland is different to Special Educational Needs in England.

In Scotland we understand that children from Service Families may need additional support to overcome barriers to learning which may arise because of the nature of their parent's work. An additional support need can be of short or long-term duration and can arise for any reason. We 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 www.enquire.org.uk/

What Will My Child Learn?

Curriculum for Excellence

All children aged 3 to 18 in Scotland learn under Curriculum for Excellence. It is a creative and flexible curriculum which provides a broad-based educational experience valuing skills, attributes and knowledge, and aims to prepare all children and young people for learning, life and work. Also, as part of the Developing the Young Workforce programme, children and young people have a variety of opportunities to learn and develop skills for the world of work.

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. Courses could 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

Colleges are responsible for assessing an individual's criteria for funding, you should therefore check with your chosen college.

Higher Education

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

- Higher National Certificate (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, subject to criteria, they may be entitled to financial support from our Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS).

You and your family are entitled to support from SAAS if you:

- were ordinarily resident in Scotland before you enlisted to the Services; or
- 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.

You can find more information on Higher Education funding for members of the Armed Forces and their families at www.saas.gov.uk/forms/armed_forces.pdf 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 is widely understood to include:

- 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
- 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 at www.cldms.org.uk/

More information on Scotland's schools, Curriculum for Excellence and the Developing Young Workforce programme can be found at <https://education.gov.scot/parentzone>

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 at www.scot.nhs.uk/about-nhs-scotland

Access to healthcare

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.

Registering with your local GP

When settled in a place of residence in Scotland your family should register with a local doctor - a General Practitioner (GP). Your GP will be able to care for your health conditions and provide treatment if you become unwell. Any prescriptions prescribed by your GP are free of charge. You can find more information at www.nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights/nhs-services/doctors/registering-with-a-gp-practice

Registering with a dentist

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 www.nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights/nhs-services/dental/receiving-nhs-dental-treatment-in-scotland

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 at <https://www.nhsinform.scot/search?q=mental+health>

There is also a free and confidential 24-hour Helpline available for you to talk about mental health, which family members or carers can use too. You can access this through Combat Stress at www.combatstress.org.uk/helpline

Support and Social Care

The Scottish Government is working in partnership with service users, carers, Local Authorities, NHS Scotland, 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 www.nhsinform.scot/search?q=support+and+social+care

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, relationships and sexual health advice at www.sexualhealthscotland.co.uk or you can also visit your local GP.

Registering for your 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 ParentClub Website at 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 www.nhs24.scot

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 www.nhsinform.scot



Employment

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 provides careers information, advice and guidance, as well as work-based training programmes aimed at building career management skills. They support a wide range of pathways into work, including Modern Apprenticeships (further information below). There are SDS Careers Centres based in each local authority area which you can visit to access support, more information on these can be found at www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk

There is also an online service, My World of Work (www.myworldofwork.co.uk), which can assist you through every stage of your working life. Anyone can access information on a wide range of subjects, including choosing a career, learning and training, applying for jobs and making a career change. You will find information on researching careers to building your CV. You can also access specific information and assistance for veterans and early service leavers through the dedicated page at www.myworldofwork.co.uk/support-armed-forces-leavers-and-veterans.

Modern apprenticeships (MAs)

Modern apprenticeships in Scotland can offer you opportunities to learn on the job, get the experience you need, and work towards a qualification. If you're between the ages of 16 and 29 you can find out if you qualify for an apprenticeship at www.apprenticeships.scot/become-an-apprentice/modern-apprenticeships/

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 at www.myjobscotland.gov.uk/

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 at <https://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits/entitlement>

You can find further information surrounding the support services available at www.mygov.scot/working-jobs/



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.

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 at www.gov.uk/find-local-council

Citizens Advice Scotland

You can find information on benefits and other issues like housing, debt and employment at www.cas.org.uk/bureaux or 0808 800 9060.

Turn to Us

Turn to Us can provide support if you are suffering financial hardship you can find further information at <https://www.turn2us.org.uk/Your-Situation/Member-of-the-Armed-Forces-Veteran>

Macmillan Cancer Support

Macmillan advisers offer benefits advice for people affected by cancer. Filter the search results to 'benefits advice services and search for your local area' at www.macmillan.org.uk/in-your-area/choose-location.html or 0808 808 00 00.

Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)

The DWP is responsible for most welfare, pensions and child maintenance policy. They deal with the administration of a range of 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 the DWP provides support that meets the needs of the Armed Forces community. See more information on the DWP and the Armed Forces at www.gov.uk/government/publications/jobcentre-plus-services-for-the-armed-forces-and-their-families

You will find further information on the Scottish Government's website at www.mygov.scot/benefits



Other useful information

Language

Scotland's official languages are English, Gaelic, and Scots. Around 87,000 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 www.visitscotland.com/about/uniquely-scottish/gaelic/

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 Assembly, 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, 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 www.cosla.gov.uk/councils

You can find out who your local MSP, MP and Councillor is by entering your postcode at www.writetothem.com/

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 at www.mygov.scot/register-to-vote-scotland/

Safety

Police Scotland works within communities to tackle crime and keep people safe.

The Scottish Government is committed to keeping Scotland safe. Crimes reported to the police have fallen by over 20% since 2008 and are at their lowest levels in over 40 years. During this time, surveys have also shown a consistent improvement in perceptions of police effectiveness throughout the country.

If you find yourself in an emergency situation at any time, dial 999 free from any phone to get help. This connects you to ambulance, fire and rescue, coastguard services and the police.

To report a crime dial 101.

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 at www.copfs.gov.uk/

Scottish Income Tax

For everyone living in Scotland, income tax rates (on non-savings and non-dividend income) are set each year by the Scottish Parliament. This means that income tax paid in Scotland is invested in Scotland, supporting vital public services and investing in Scotland's economy and communities. Income tax will continue to be collected and managed by HMRC, offering Scottish customers the same service as taxpayers across the rest of the UK.

- You can find out more about the policy for Scottish Income Tax at www.gov.scot/incometax
- You can find more information on how the Scottish Income Tax affects you, for example if you move to or from Scotland or live in more than one home at www.gov.uk/scottish-rate-income-tax

You will find more general information regarding living in Scotland at www.scotland.org/about-scotland

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 the Armed Forces community. For example:

Legion Scotland

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

Phone: 0131 550 1583

Website: www.legionscotland.org.uk

Poppy Scotland

Address: New Haig House, Edinburgh EH7 4HQ

Phone: 0131 557 2782

Website: www.poppyscotland.org.uk/

Veterans Scotland

Website: www.veteransscotland.co.uk

Helping Heroes

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

Phone: 0141 276 7199

Website: www.glasgowshelpingheroes.org/

Combat Stress

Call: 0800 138 1619

Text: 07537 404 719

Website: www.combatstress.org.uk/

Veterans Gateway

Phone: 0808 802 1212

Website: www.veteransgateway.org.uk

Armed Forces Covenant

Website: www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk

Support in Mind Scotland

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

Phone: 0131 662 4359

Website: www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk/

SSAFA Forces Help

Address: New Haig House/66 Logie Green Road, Edinburgh EH7 4HR

Phone: 0131 557 1697

Website: www.ssafa.org.uk/

Veterans First Point

Address: Argyle House, 3 Lady Lawson Street, Edinburgh EH3 9DR

Phone: 0131 220 9920

Website: www.veteransfirstpoint.org.uk

Armed Service Advice Project (ASAP)
Phone: 0808 800 1007
Website: 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/>

Family Federations

Naval Family Federations
Phone: 023 9265 4374
Website: <https://nff.org.uk/>

Army Family Federations
Phone: 01264 382324
Website: <https://aff.org.uk/>

RAF Family Federations
Phone: 01780 781650
Website: www.raf-ff.org.uk/





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