



ANNUAL REPORT 2018

WE ARE
EAST MIDLANDS
RESERVE FORCES AND
CADETS ASSOCIATION

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CONTENTS



East Midlands Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (RFCA) supports both Reserve Forces and Cadet organisations throughout the region. The RFCA also manages both the reserve and cadet estate.



2-3 Chief Executive Introduction	14 Financial Overview
4-7 Chairman's Report	15-16 Estates
8-11 Employer Engagement	17-19 Communications Update
12-13 Cadets & Youth	20-28 News Stories



Group Captain (Rtd) Nick Sharpe, Chief Executive of East Midlands RFCA.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE INTRODUCTION

As I write the introduction to this year's annual report, the RAF enters its centenary year. Nottinghamshire's RAF Syerston has only been active for 78 of those years, but it is in many ways a microcosm of significant parts of the RAF's history.

In 1941 it hosted two Polish Bomber Squadrons, reflecting the multinational, integrated nature of Bomber Command. In 1943, Wing Commander Guy Gibson, who had just completed a tour as Officer Commanding 106 Squadron at Syerston, was offered the opportunity to lead the Dambusters raid. Flight Lieutenant Bill Reid operating from Syerston in 1943 was awarded the Victoria Cross for his immense courage in pressing ahead with a mission despite the results of a night fighter attack that left his aircraft severely disabled, him badly wounded, his wireless operator fatally wounded and killed his navigator.

Following the war Syerston became, for a time, a flying training station, investing in the future of the RAF and

is now the centre of gliding excellence for the RAF's Air Cadets. Of note as well, it is also the proposed site for an innovative joint initiative between the RAF Air Cadets and Aviation Skills Partnership, which will involve the construction of an aviation college, the facilities of which will be made available to the Air Cadets. Thus, RAF Syerston will continue its part in RAF history and will continue to provide a focus for young people in the East Midlands eager for a career in aviation.

East Midlands RFCA has also been engaged in significant work involving cadets this year, with the completion of new cadet centres in Hinckley and Alvaston. The former houses cadets from both the Army Cadet Force and Air Cadets, while the latter provides a home to more than 100 air cadets who form 126 (City of Derby) Squadron.

The tautness of funding for our estates work continues to provide challenges and the RFCAs, in conjunction with the single Services, continue to consider means of providing suitable accommodation for cadet detachments, while striving to drive costs down.



(Top) Hinckley Joint Cadet Centre
(Bottom) 126 (City of Derby) Sqn HQ

This year has also provided some significant maintenance challenges, with the traditional winter boiler failures being matched by a persistent leak at our Mansfield Army Reserve Centre, which proved particularly difficult to trace and cure.

Nonetheless, East Midlands RFCA's managed properties are, in the main, in very good condition, which reflects the dedication and technical prowess of the estates team. I urge all those occupying our properties to report all faults as soon as possible; while the current financial regime precludes the immediate correction of many small faults, an understanding of what needs to be done allows us to at least bid for funding.

Finally, on the subject of our estate, I am pleased to announce the formation of an Estates Committee, manned by our volunteers, which will help this RFCA to take a more holistic view of its estate.

Our support to cadets and maintenance of the volunteer estate remains key to our business outputs, but our third output, that of engagement continues to grow in importance and required effort.

Our volunteers are crucial to the success of this endeavour and I am very grateful to them for the efforts they make to support our Regional Employer Engagement Director, Colonel John Wilson, in his work. I would particularly like to thank our Board, who assemble every quarter to direct our efforts, but who are also invariably inundated with emails from me in the interim.

Without stealing the Chairman's thunder, I would also like to thank our Lord-Lieutenants for their significant and valued support, particularly Lady Gretton and Sir Laurence Howard who retire this year. Their dedication and interest are plainly evident to all who meet them and valued by all, be they cadets, reserves or RFCA Chief Executives.

For those who are wondering why I began this introduction with reference to RAF Syerston, which is not managed by the RFCA, I would simply note that a majority of the aircrew of Bomber Command in the Second World War were Volunteer Reserves. In mid-March, I spent a couple of hours with their modern volunteer equivalent, the RAF Regiment Reserves of 2503 Squadron, who were exercising at RAF Syerston.

The temperature was sub-zero and the snow was being carried horizontally by 20-knot winds. Despite the most adverse March weather imaginable, each

and every member of the squadron was smiling, keen and enthusiastic to explain to the RFCAs' External Scrutiny Team why they were standing in the middle of a Nottinghamshire field on a day when most people wouldn't consider leaving their house, and preparing for a night exercise that would see them get little sleep, before packing up their camp – and returning to their day jobs. That is why it is so important that we in the RFCA never lose sight of our ultimate aim – to ensure that the reserves (and the cadets) of our region can get out and do their job.

Thank you



Lady Gretton and Sir Laurence Howard.



Colonel (Rtd) Murray Colville
Chairman of East Midlands RFCA.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

I ended my 2017 report by highlighting the critical support given by our RFCA volunteers to both the reserves and to the cadets. Central to that support is the considerable commitment made to our efforts by the Lord-Lieutenants of the region.

The Lord-Lieutenant is the monarch's personal representative in each county of the United Kingdom to which they are appointed and until 1871 was responsible for organising their county's militia. Nonetheless, The Territorial and Reserve Forces Act of 1907, which established the RFCAs' predecessors, the County Associations, appointed the county's Lord-Lieutenant as the president of that county's association.

I am pleased to say that the inextricable link between the Lieutenancy and the RFCAs has remained strong ever since. Our six Lord-Lieutenants have made significant contributions to our work in support of reserves and cadets in a variety of ways over many years. It is thus

with considerable regret that I must record this year the retirement of our President, Jennifer, Lady Gretton DCVO JP, Lord-Lieutenant of Leicestershire, and also one of our Vice-Presidents, Sir Laurence Howard KCVO OBE, Lord-Lieutenant of Rutland.

Lady Gretton has been actively involved in all areas of the RFCA's work and in particular has ensured the success of Leicestershire's veterans meetings and been central to the continued close liaison between the civic authorities and the Armed Forces.

Her contribution is exemplified by the annual Leicestershire Armed Forces Dinner and by the broad range of activities arranged within Leicestershire to celebrate Armed Forces Day. Perhaps another significant demonstration of Lady Gretton's commitment to the RFCA's work is her agreement to chair what will be her final East Midlands RFCA AGM in the very week of her retirement!

Sir Laurence has also demonstrated the most astonishing levels of commitment to this RFCA and throughout his tenure has been extremely active in his support of reserve and cadet activity. Moreover, Sir Laurence has been a thoroughly engaged Honorary Air Commodore to No 504 Squadron RAuxAF, visiting them on exercise and taking a keen interest in their day-to-day activities.



Dr Sarah Furness.

The respect in which he is held by his adopted squadron was demonstrated on 25 March, when No 504 Squadron, proudly marched past their Honorary Air Commodore in Oakham town centre. The link between the Lieutenancy and the military may have historic roots, but thanks to the commitment, interest and dedication of today's Lord-Lieutenants that link has a very contemporary resonance in the 21st century.

Although we must rather reluctantly bid farewell to two such firm supporters of the RFCAs' ethos, it is my pleasure to welcome Dr Sarah Furness, the recently appointed Lord-Lieutenant for Rutland, as Sir Laurence's successor. Although, at the time of writing, Lady Gretton's successor has yet to be named, I anticipate that by the time, you read this report that will have occurred and we will be able to welcome another Lord-Lieutenant to the RFCA fold.

Sir Laurence's involvement with No 504 Squadron illustrates our region's close ties with the Royal Air Force (RAF), which this year, celebrates its centenary.



The International Bomber Command Centre in Lincolnshire.

The County of Rutland was for many years an RAF county and Lincolnshire is still, Bomber County, to many. During the Second World War there were 27 bomber airfields in Lincolnshire and a significant proportion of the 57,861 aircrew who lost their lives flying with Bomber Command

operated from those airfields. It is surely appropriate that this centenary year saw the formal opening in Bomber County of the International Bomber Command Centre (IBCC), which both commemorates those who lost their lives in the bomber offensive and seeks to explain it.

It is a great shame that the inspiration behind the IBCC, Tony Worth, the former Lord-Lieutenant for Lincolnshire, passed away in November of last year; he would be very proud of the commemoration his county has made of a very significant part of the RAF's proud history.

Within the context of the demands of Future Reserves 2020 (FR20), it might interest you to know that the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act of 1907, which saw the formation of the County Associations, included plans for a Territorial Force strength of some 314,000 men. Although that total was never reached, the strength stood at some 245,000 in September 1913.

The rather more modest recruiting targets of FR20 reflect a somewhat different strategic and economic situation, although relatively recent events in Crimea, Ukraine, Syria (and Salisbury) suggest that strategic risks and tension will always be present and changing.

There have been challenges in meeting the recruitment levels required of FR20, some driven by the previous neglect of the Reserve Forces over a period of time, some by more recent 'own goals', such as problems with the recruitment organisation's computer support.

The Council of RFCAs' External Scrutiny Team¹ has been active throughout the year, engaging at headquarters and unit level to identify problem areas and, as importantly, areas of success. In March, over a particularly inclement 'spring' weekend the team visited units of the RAF Reserve and Army Reserve in Lincolnshire at Prince William of Gloucester Barracks, Sobraon Barracks, Beckingham Training Area, RAF Syerston and RAF Waddington. Issues with the sometimes-tortuous recruitment process were highlighted, but so were many positive stories of increased support and opportunity realised.

¹ The Defence Reform Act 2014 tasked the Council of Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations with establishing an independent External Scrutiny Team (EST) to report annually to Parliament on the condition of the reserve forces and delivery of the Future Reserves 2020 programme.

While much of the reserve story in the East Midlands over the past 12 months has centred on consolidation of existing units and translation of recruitment into military capability, there have been two small but significant changes to the Army Reserves regional deployment.

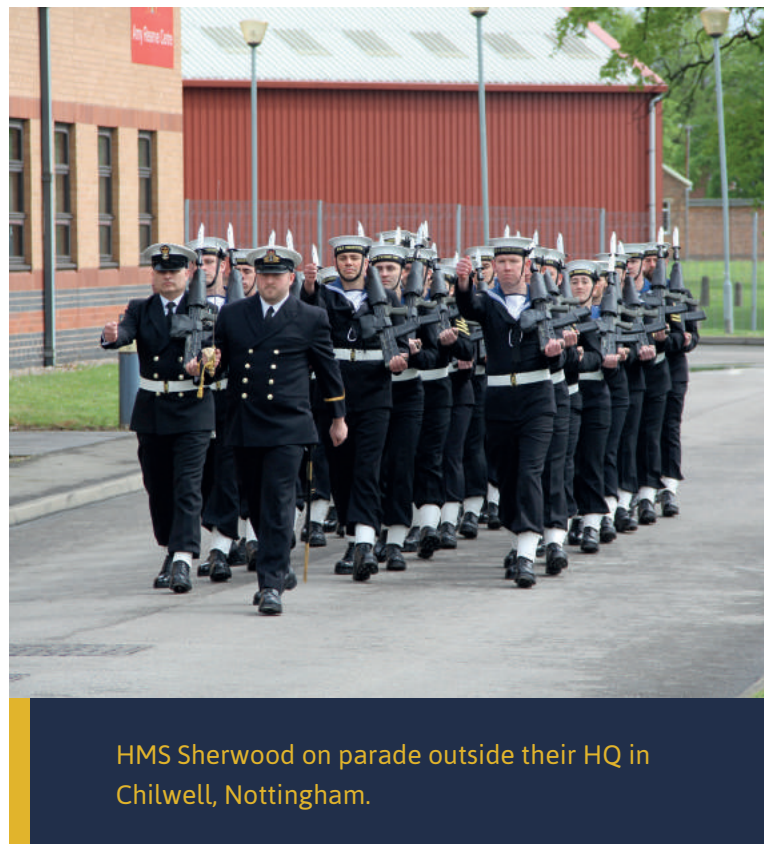
FR 20 saw the demise of the long-established South Nottinghamshire Hussars, which had a long and proud record of service, particularly in the Western Desert during the Second World War. The unit was placed in 'suspended animation' as most of the Army's artillery strength was concentrated in units centred on Salisbury Plain. The South Notts Hussars were renowned for their never-say-die spirit and I am pleased to say that, as a result of the efforts of a number of individuals, but particularly my predecessor as Chairman, Colonel Tim Richmond, the South Notts Hussars have returned to Bulwell. C Troop (South Nottinghamshire Hussars) of 210 (Staffordshire) Battery of the 104th Regiment Royal Artillery was established at Bulwell earlier this year with the challenge to recruit to a meaningful strength.

Refinements to FR20 reduced the number of Army Reserve Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineer units, such that the Army Reserve Centre (ARC) at Corby was no longer required by them. Sensing an opportunity, in a town that has a long history of recruitment to the Army, 2 Company, 3 Royal Anglian has established a platoon at the site. Both of these new sub-units have been supported by our RFCA; in particular, we have used regionally generated funds (RGI) to assist in the conversion of what was essentially a REME garage in Corby to an ARC that can function for the infantry. I should add that, while the 1907 Act, to which I referred earlier, talked of manpower, the reserves of 2018 are a much more inclusive organisation and the opening of close combat roles to women, means that we must ensure that ARCs, previously focused on accommodating 'manpower' are suitable for everyone.

Our engagement with 7th (Infantry) Brigade continues to be exceptionally positive and I am very grateful to Brigadier Charlie Collins and his team for the support that they give us and for the active manner in which they work with us.

In particular, Colonel Stuart Williams has been an active supporter of our activities, despite the many demands placed upon his time; he is now joined by a new Deputy Commander (Reserves), Colonel Adam Fraser-Hitchen, to whom I offer a warm welcome. This year will be a

significant one for Nottingham, as the city will lose much of its regular presence, as Headquarters 7th (Infantry) Brigade relocates to Kendrew Barracks in Rutland. East Midlands RFCA will retain its Nottingham headquarters to continue to place itself at the centre of reserve activity in the region's major cities. It was a great



HMS Sherwood on parade outside their HQ in Chilwell, Nottingham.

pleasure to hear that HMS Sherwood, the region's only Maritime Reserve unit had been awarded the Freedom of the City of Nottingham and that by the time you read this report will have exercised the right for the first time on 2 June.

HMS Sherwood continues to provide an active and very welcome naval presence within the East Midlands, with an influence that extends well beyond Nottinghamshire.

The unit is also a fine example of the ease with which reserve units of different Services can be co-located, sharing its Nottingham headquarters with 350 Field Squadron of the Royal Engineers.

The cadets of all three Services, including the Combined Cadet Force, continue to provide inspirational training and life experiences to the youth of this region.

The new Cadet Force Commission reflects the immensely important role that those who hold senior positions



LNR Adult Volunteer on summer camp.

within the Cadet Forces play and it was pleasing to hear of the ceremony organised by Headquarters 7th (Infantry) Brigade at Belvoir Castle on 2 June, for the officers of Cadet Forces across their area of responsibility.

In closing I am conscious as always of the immense contribution made by all of East Midlands RFCA's volunteers, who come from all walks of life and reflect the many diverse elements of the society from which the reserves and cadets originate.

I am very grateful to you all and without your commitment and your experience this RFCA simply could not function. I would also like to thank the professional staff of this RFCA, whether they work in our Nottingham headquarters or in the counties, providing professional support to the Cadet Forces. In an era of rising demand and falling budgets they undertake a finely balanced task, but I believe that on the whole, between us, volunteers and professionals, we are getting it about right.

Nonetheless, we cannot afford to be complacent and must continue to challenge the way in which we do business, to improve our support of the really important people: the reserves and cadets.

Thank you







EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Employer Engagement is important in helping to achieve Defence objectives. It is the principal activity required to develop and sustain strong, positive, mutually-beneficial relationships between employers and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to support the Defence community: regulars; reserves; civilians and their families; before, during and after their service.




The RFCA's employer engagement activities are aligned with the MOD's strategic priority which is the recruitment and retention of regulars and reserves. Our activities also support the full spectrum of Defence personnel including Service leavers, veterans, wounded injured and sick, families and cadet organisations.

OBJECTIVES

The MOD Employer Engagement programme has continued in support of its efforts to deliver 35,000 effective and capable reservists. The aim has been to secure and sustain access to and availability of the skilled, capable people needed to deliver Defence outputs. Other key objectives have included:

-  Recruitment and retention of reservists.
-  Resettlement and employment of regular service personnel at the end of their service.
-  Encouraging employers to employ spouses/civil partners of service personnel.
-  Recruitment and support of Cadet Force adult volunteers.

To assist in achieving those objectives, Employer Engagement has involved three principle activities:

-  Raising awareness of Armed Forces personnel.
-  Establishing new relationships with employers.
-  Sustaining current relationships.

East Midlands RFCA has supported over 2,350 reservists and has engaged with over 4,300 employer contacts, providing information, guidance and advice on all matters relating to Defence personnel including the employment of reservists and Service leavers.


A key contributor to the Association's ability to meet the Employer Engagement objectives is our **Regional Employer Engagement Group (REEG)**, chaired by Dr Peter Barrett. This group of influential business people, from a wide variety of public and private sector business areas, provides invaluable advice on our engagement strategy; helping employers to understand the potential benefits of employing Defence personnel and equally importantly, helping the military to understand the needs of employers.


ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY


The strategy is to have a primary focus on a select number of employers, identified through an intelligence based process. For 2018-19 the list includes 72 employers in the East Midlands, from both public and private sector organisations, who are considered to be important to assist Defence in meeting permitted objectives.

The potential benefits to employers

Our employer contacts are advised on the ways in which supporting Defence can help businesses become stronger and more successful.




 By employing military personnel, ex-regulars and reservists, organisations can acquire a portfolio of skills and behaviours that are beneficial in a modern working environment.

 The skills and attributes that military personnel can offer include nationally recognised business and technical qualifications, as well as desirable 'softer' transferable skills such as leadership, team-working, problem-solving and experience in working in challenging environments.

 Businesses can enhance their reputation and corporate social responsibility by supporting Defence and signing the Armed Forces Covenant, which may be formally recognised through the MOD's Employer Recognition Scheme.

Defence's contribution to the partnership

For those organisations that have supported Defence by employing ex-regulars, providing additional paid leave to reservists, supplying services or products to serving personnel and ensuring the Armed Forces and their families are treated fairly, Defence has:

-  Provided the necessary information, guidance and practical help needed to ensure that the business is fully aware of the impact and benefits military personnel can offer.
-  Provided employers with appropriate advanced notice of the reservist training commitments and mobilisation to enable them to make arrangements to cover their absence.
-  Provided financial assistance when an employer's reservist has been mobilised; to help with salary costs, recruitment fees and retraining costs.
-  Recognised those employers that have actively supported Defence via the **Armed Forces Covenant**, through the **Employer Recognition Scheme**.

The employers' information leaflet '**Partnering with Defence**' includes brief details of the Defence-employer proposition and the tangible benefits for employers. Copies are available from the Regional Employer Engagement Director by calling 0115 924 8627.

To find out more about how employers can work with Defence, visit:

www.gov.uk/mod/employer-relations



Employers were shown military equipment in Denmark.

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

During last year, the Employer Engagement team successfully organised a number of events designed to engage employers at different levels.



Employers during Executive Leader 2017.

East Midlands' employers went abroad with their reserve units to Norway, Denmark, Croatia, and Cyprus. A number of successful domestic events were also completed including unit open days, Army and RAF leadership and development training, the London Heritage day, Her Majesty's Birthday Parade, a visit to the Mission Training and Mobilisation Centre, a unit/employer charity golf event and the Air Combat Power event at RAF Coningsby.



THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT

The Armed Forces Covenant is the basis of Defence's relationship with society. It is a promise by the nation to ensure that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly. The Covenant is a national responsibility involving government, local authorities, businesses and organisations.

The Covenant provides a framework for initial discussions with businesses and organisations, outlining options to support Defence across a range of important areas of activity, including recruitment and retention of reservists and Cadet Force adult volunteers; employment of Service leavers; resettlement of wounded, injured and sick; and spousal/partner employment.

Businesses sign the Covenant to confirm publicly that they recognise the value that Defence personnel contribute to our country. The Covenant encourages them to develop a relationship with members of the Armed Forces community who work in their business or access their products or services.

The Covenant is designed to be modular and bespoke; the specific nature of pledged support will depend upon the size and nature of the organisation. Pledge options reflect meaningful actions with which individual employers are comfortable and able to deliver.

Almost 2,500 organisations around the UK have signed the Covenant and 239 are in the East Midlands. Employers who wish to make a pledge should contact the Regional Employer Engagement Director.



John Carter, Travis Perkins Chief Executive Officer, and Mark Lancaster TD MP with Travis Perkins employees.



Whitehouse Construction, a Derbyshire-based employer, receiving a Silver ERS Award.

DEFENCE EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME (ERS)

The Defence ERS recognises and rewards UK employers for their support to Defence personnel. The scheme encompasses Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to the Armed Forces community, and align their support with the Armed Forces Covenant.



Employer Recognition Scheme Bronze

Once they have signed the Armed Forces Covenant, employers who sign up to the scheme through the government website and state their intent to support Defence personnel will receive a Bronze Award. They will be listed on the Employer Recognition Scheme database and they may choose to have their details on the website to show their intended support for Defence.



Employer Recognition Scheme Silver

Employers who **demonstrate** support for Defence personnel may be nominated for a Silver Award via the Employer Recognition Scheme website. Recipients will be presented with the Silver Award at a special regional event; they will be listed on the ERS database and their details may be included on the website as supportive employers.



Employer Recognition Scheme Gold

Employers who **advocate** support for Defence personnel may be nominated for a Gold Award via the ERS website. Recipients will be presented with the Gold Award at a special prestigious national event; they will be listed on the ERS database and their details may be included on the website as supportive employers.

In 2017, Awards received by East Midlands employers were **76 x Bronze** and **21 x Silver**.

Last year, Silver and Gold Awards from 2014 were reviewed and 33 employers had the Silver Award renewed. The sole East Midlands Gold winner from 2014; Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust also successfully retained their Award.

We congratulate all of those that have received and renewed Awards during 2017 and are looking forward to the results of the 2018 Silver and Gold nominations.

To see a list of all employers who have received Awards or to **register for a Bronze Award**, search 'Defence Employer Recognition Scheme' online to find out more.

For more information contact:

John Wilson OBE DL, Regional Employer Engagement Director

Email: em-empsp@rfca.mod.uk

Tel: 0115 924 8627

CADETS & YOUTH

The cadets continue to thrive across the East Midlands and although there are challenges, the level of support from the single Services is still strong as demonstrated by the building (and more importantly the funding) of new cadet facilities, such as new Joint Army Cadet Force (ACF) / Air Training Corps (ATC) Cadet Centre at Hinckley, Leicestershire which was formally opened in March 2018 by Air Commodore Dawn McCafferty and Brigadier Matthew Lowe, the heads of the Royal Air Force Air Cadets (RAFAC) and ACF; whilst in May 2018 the new home of 126 (City of Derby) Sqn RAFAC was opened by Air Commodore Dawn McCafferty.



Brigadier Lowe and Air Commodore McCafferty opening Hinckley Joint Cadet Centre.

The Sea Cadets with their very different funding model to the ACF and ATC may not have seen a plethora of 'new builds' but have still managed to open a new unit in Broughton Astley, Leicestershire. Whilst TS Orion, the Nottingham based Sea Cadet unit, are progressing well with their fundraising for their ambitious plans for a new £1m centre on the banks of the Trent.

The Government's Cadet Expansion Programme (CEP) continues to meet its targets and is on track to reach its goal of 500 cadets units in schools by 2020, currently there are seventeen CEP contingents set up in state funded schools in the East Midlands, and more are in the pipeline.

One of the challenges facing the Cadet Forces is budgetary. Each single Service funds its cadet



Nottingham Sea Cadets on water and land.

differently, however nationally the total cadet budget is over £180m pounds, the ACF share of this is just over £88m. Last summer the ACF suffered an unexpected reduction in their operating grant (the 'travel and consolidated fund'), it is much to the credit of the senior adult volunteer leadership in the East Midlands, supported by the RFCA employed Professional Support Staff, that the effect on the cadets was minimal. In line with other areas of public finance, further cuts cannot be ruled out but the support from the single Services for the cadets remains robust.



Nottinghamshire ACF cadets pictured on summer camp.

Another challenge is the drop in cadet numbers. This is not specifically an East Midlands issue, nationally the ACF has seen a drop of 11.5% between 2013 and 2017 whilst over the same period the ATC is down 6.9%; however, the Sea Cadets have grown by 1.9%. The drop in cadet numbers in some ways reflects the changing demographic, but as the growth in Sea Cadets demonstrates, there is a demand for uniformed youth activity.

East Midlands RFCA is working actively with the ACF counties and has initiated targeted recruiting campaigns to support the national effort to improve cadet and adult volunteer numbers.

But regardless of the challenges being faced, there are over 2,100 adult volunteers who throughout the year provide a stimulating and rewarding experience for over 11,000 young people across the East Midlands.

Looking specifically at some of the achievement in the last year amongst ACF cadets in the region:



LNR Cadets after the National Swimming Championships.

Two cadets were selected from Derbyshire ACF to join the Lord Dannatt's Round Britain Challenge 2018.

Four LNR ACF cadets were national swimming champions in the ACF National Swimming Competition.

A cadet from Derbyshire ACF was selected for the Army Cadet Marksmanship Course in Canada.

An LNR cadet was awarded the Royal Humane Society's Certificate of Commendation.

Two cadets from Nottinghamshire ACF attended 21 day Outward Bound course in Australia, sponsored by a former cadet.

23 Cadets from Nottinghamshire ACF engaged with local business leaders and employers in their county by organising the 'Conversation with Cadets' event.

A cadet team from Lincolnshire ACF won the prestigious 7 Brigade Combat Cadet 2018 competition.



Employer takes part in the Conversation with Cadets event.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW 17/18

THIS FINANCIAL YEAR'S EXPENDITURE TOTALS £7.5M

East Midlands RFCA is funded by multiple Ministry of Defence and single Service sources to deliver its three mandated Defence outputs of Estates, Engagement and Cadets and Youth.

Staff costs increased in financial year 17/18 in line with annual increases.

Estates Management expenditure saw an increase of £295k due to Regionally Generated Income (RGI) funded work and maintenance.

Infrastructure costs are down by £71k due to the Defence Infrastructure Organisation taking over the payment of utility bills for all non-Air Training Corps sites.

Reserve and cadet support expenditure is down by £20k compared to last year due to a reduction in the ACF Operational grant of £80k and an increase of £60k for wounded, injured, sick service personnel adaptations.

We continue to generate an income from the commercial exploitation of our estate and this is an area of business we hope to develop in the future.

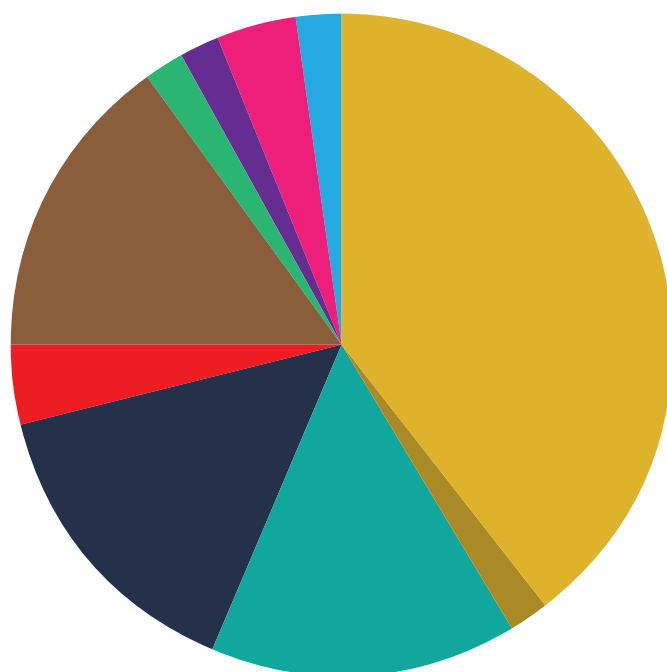
The hiring of Army Reserve Centres and Cadet Centres raised an income of £106k this year. East Midlands RFCA secured a further £192k in non-domestic rates (NDR) rebates from local authorities. Adding to this, several sites have been revalued which resulted in prior year refunds on NDR amounting to £234k.

Feed in Tariffs produced £9.7k of income during the year.

The money raised has funded various estates projects approved by our Finance Scrutiny Committee and our Board.

FUNDING SUMMARY

Grant In Aid	40%
Grants	0%
Vehicles	2%
DIO Infrastructure	15%
Defence Estates Maintenance	15%
Defence Estates Projects RDEL	4%
Defence Estates Projects CDEL	15%
SaBRE	2%
Funding Sundry	0%
RauxAF	0%
ATC Input	2%
ATC CDEL	4%
DInfra RDEL	2%



ESTATES

2017 was another year of change for the estates department, both in personnel and in the way we work. We have adopted a new way of recording and managing all of our statutory and mandatory inspections and tests; to assist in the management of this we have recruited a dedicated compliance officer, who will ensure that all of our sites remain compliant with regulations and statute. Despite a few teething issues, the system is running well and we continue to deliver a fully compliant estate.

Again we suffered with budget cuts, especially in the early part of the year, meaning that some of our reactive tasks had to be delayed. Fortunately a late injection of funding from the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) allowed us to clear most of these previously unfunded tasks before the end of the financial year.

Changes in the way our funding is managed will shortly be put in place, with the majority of the budgetary control being returned to the single Services. How this will affect the RFCA in the future remains unclear, but it is hoped that this will release more funding into both major and minor projects.

ARMY RESERVE

We continue to carry out improvements to the Army Reserve Centres (ARC) in our region with limited budgets. Fortunately we have been able to use both direct funding from DIO and regionally generated income (RGI) to focus improvements on the little things that make life better for the reservist.

A large investment has been made into the ARC at St Marks Road in Corby, to change its use from a Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineer (REME) location to a home for a platoon of 2 Company 3 Royal Anglian.

Works have also been carried out at Wallis Barracks in Chesterfield to allow a detachment from 5th Military Intelligence Battalion to relocate from Triumph Road. This move took place in May 2018.

Funding was finally allocated to allow the boilers to be replaced at the ARC on Clare Street in Northampton.

After two years of temporary heating the site is now served by a modern, clean and efficient heating system.



Clare Street ARC in Northampton.

Other works across the estate include redecoration, replacing floor coverings, replacement lighting and the installation of additional projection facilities.

CADETS

Two major projects reached completion last year, both being delivered on time and on budget.



Hinckley Joint Cadet Centre.

The new Joint Cadet Centre in Hinckley was completed in September 2017 and was officially opened on 13 March 2018. This new building, utilising the existing site offers high quality accommodation, including a new indoor three lane 0.22 Rifle Range. The building is used by 198 (Hinckley) Squadron (Sqn) Air Training Corps (ATC) and Leicestershire, Northampton and Rutland Army Cadet Force's (ACF) Hinckley Detachment.



126 (City of Derby) Sqn HQ.

New accommodation for 126 (City of Derby) Sqn. ATC was completed in August 2017. This new building has the capacity to accommodate in excess of 150 cadets and can be partitioned to allow them all to be taught in well-equipped classrooms, but to parade as a whole squadron when required. The building was officially opened on 10 May 2018.



Learning First Aid skills in Derby at the centre's official opening event.

Through injected funds and the use of Regionally Generated Income we have been able to tackle a number of small projects across the estate that have a large impact on the user. This work includes: the refurbishment of the Daventry Joint Cadet Centre; installation of electric hand driers across the estate to replace paper towels, replacement kitchens, new WC facilities and the replacement of old worn out floor coverings.

It is pleasing to note that once this relatively low value work is completed the detachment or Sqn flourish and take more pride in looking after their buildings.

WOUNDED INJURED AND SICK SERVICE PERSONNEL ADAPTATIONS

We continue to support and manage the adaptations to Service personnel's homes following serious illness or injury. Clearly, each project is different, but they often involve the construction of extensions, installation of wet rooms making the living space more accessible and external alterations to allow access to gardens. Each project comes with its own problems and challenges but East Midlands RFCA continues to deliver a high quality product that is appreciated by the injured party and their families.

LOOKING FORWARD



Sobraon Barracks.

We have two major Army Reserve projects that have been granted initial funding to allow us to conduct feasibility studies: the construction of new garaging and workshops for 160 (Lincoln) Transport Sqn, Royal Logistic Corps at Sobraon Barracks and the provision of new garaging and a trade training area for 148 Field Company REME at Kingsway ARC in Derby. Both these studies will be completed later this year, when it is hoped that the funding will be found to allow construction to start in early 2019.

As in previous years, funding is tight, which will lead to an ever increasing list of uncompleted tasks. Nonetheless, East Midlands RFCA will continue to do the best we can with the funding we have to ensure that the volunteer estate in the East Midlands remains compliant and fit for use in the 21st Century.

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Marketing and communication are vital functions in any organisation, and East Midlands RFCA is no different.

The communications team ensures that all messaging is carefully shaped and targeted at specific audience groups or stakeholders. All content is designed to meet the constantly evolving requirements of both the Cadet Organisations and Reserve Forces, and is primarily shaped to promote, educate and encourage individuals to learn more about specific subjects such as volunteering or the Association generally.

Every organisation no matter how large or small relies on its reputation for survival or success, so with perceptions often driving decisions about funding or the support we provide to the volunteer community, it is important that East Midlands RFCA promotes itself.

Over the last 12 months, the communications department (made up of two people) has been working hard to engage with both internal and external stakeholders to develop positive working relationships and aid the recruiting effort in relation to new adult volunteers, cadets and reserve personnel.

SOCIAL MEDIA



East Midlands RFCA is very active on social media and believes that these platforms, used in a professional manner, are a great way to communicate a range of

messages. In order to reach as many people as possible and encourage online users to engage with our posts (by liking or sharing content) the variety and regularity of material is paramount. Messages uploaded to our channels include text, imagery and videos with posts being positively received by our audiences.

At the time of writing this report our Twitter account has more than 2,400 followers and the Facebook channel has more than 1,400 likes with some recent videos being viewed more than 3,000 times on the channel.

The East Midlands RFCA YouTube channel is also updated on a regular basis with content relating to cadets, adult volunteers, reserves, employers and estates projects. The channel currently includes 151 videos with most of the footage being recorded and edited in-house by the communications team. These videos have achieved 32,722 views overall with the channel having 111 subscribers.

MAGAZINES & E-NEWSLETTERS

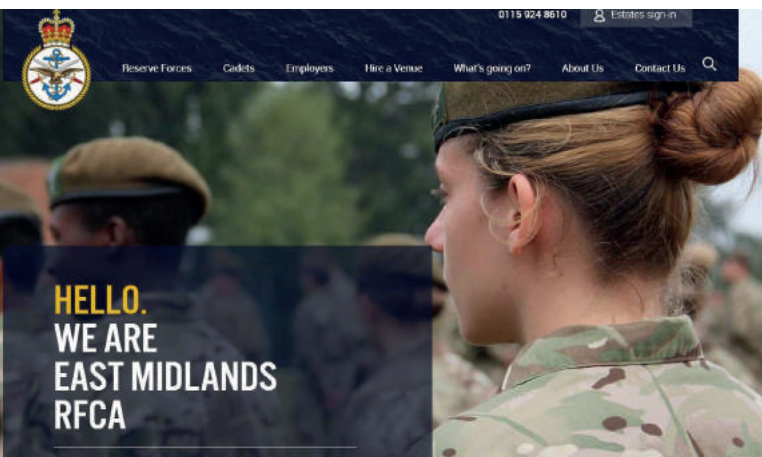


The third edition of The Cadet Magazine was produced in both print and digital versions in 2017, with the fourth edition on the horizon later this year. This tri-service publication includes articles based around Cadet Forces across the region with its focus being on achievements, qualifications and what being a volunteer can do to enhance your CV.

As this report goes to print, the ninth edition of The Reservist Magazine is imminent. This magazine is a tool to engage with the region's employer community and encourages audiences to learn more about what being a reservist is all about and how much of their military training is relevant to their civilian workplace. 6,000 copies are distributed to contacts around the East Midlands from HR Directors to local libraries and MPs.

East Midlands RFCA produces two e-newsletters with one being related to general East Midlands RFCA activities and the other being distributed to key employer contacts. Readers can sign up to receive both of these publications via the website.

WEBSITE



Having a strong online presence allows East Midlands RFCA to market both ourselves, the support we provide to the various volunteer or youth groups in the region and advertise content such as the latest news stories, events and units based in our area via the map function.

Between January and December 2017 the website (www.eastmidlandsrfa.co.uk) received 36,820 visitors compared to 29,095 in the same period in 2016.

In terms of page views, the site received 95,300 across the 12 months compared to 74,217 in the previous year.



Filming a video.

MARKETING CAMPAIGN

Whilst East Midlands RFCA often promotes the need for Army Cadet Force (ACF) adult volunteers, for the first time in five years the Association recently organised a campaign to recruit cadets to join Nottinghamshire ACF.

The project involved both paid for and free promotion across the county and focused on the fun and adventurous opportunities available for young people. After researching how current cadets thought new individuals could be reached, advertising was placed on Capital Radio in Nottingham as well as on Instagram and Facebook.

A series of press releases and other social media messaging were also issued across the campaign period to local news outlets and online audiences.

At the time of writing results of the campaign have not yet been received, but we are hopeful the campaign will have had a positive impact on recruiting.

MEDIA & NEWS STORIES

Print media (newspapers and magazines), radio and television are all channels to communicate with local communities as well as our partners and other stakeholders. Each of these mediums helps us to both raise awareness and stimulate interest in our press releases allowing us to reach potential volunteers of the future or highlight the recent investments in the cadet or reserve estate.

In the last year, East Midlands RFCA has achieved more than £212,900 of advertising value equivalent based on press releases printed, articles based around our content or features broadcast. This figure is an improvement on 2016 when we achieved £175,000.

We also reached a potential audience of more than 5.5 million people (based on print, online, broadcast readership/viewing figures).

A variety of headlines have been achieved since the last report with some of these being noted on the page opposite.

CADETS STAR IN BELGIUM VE DAY CELEBRATIONS

Matlock Mercury

MENTAL HEALTH TRUST AWARDED FOR SUPPORT TO ARMED FORCES

Louth Leader

CADETS ON TARGET IN NATIONAL COMPETITION

Derbyshire Times

SILVER AWARD FOR ARMED FORCES SUPPORT

Loughborough Echo

New town base for military cadets

Leicester Mercury

ALL BOARD! HMS SHERWOOD

Nottinghamshire in Focus

BEN 'WENT OUT OF HIS WAY' IN ID TAG QUEST

Worksop Guardian



A SELECTION OF NEWS STORIES PRODUCED BY EAST MIDLANDS RFCA



Reservists from HMS Sherwood with the Sherrif of Nottingham and Lord Mayor of Nottingham after the scroll presentation.

HMS SHERWOOD TO BE GRANTED FREEDOM OF THE CITY

HMS Sherwood, the East Midlands' only Royal Naval Reserve unit, has received the Freedom of the City of Nottingham, a rare honour presented by Nottingham City Council.

The official scroll presentation to mark the occasion took place at Nottingham City Council's Full Council in May, which was followed by a Freedom Parade in Nottingham in June this year.

The Freedom of the City is an honour reserved for military units and gives the unit being awarded the opportunity to march through Nottingham.

The official parade saw reservists from HMS Sherwood be joined on parade by local Sea Cadets, the Band of HM Royal Marines, Portsmouth (Royal Band) and veterans who have served with the Royal Navy in years gone by. Members of the public were invited to see the military parade as it made its way through Nottingham.

Lieutenant Commander Rod Grant from HMS Sherwood explained: "We are immensely proud to receive the award. To receive this fantastic accolade is extremely rare, particularly for a Royal Naval Reserve unit like HMS Sherwood.

"We marched through the city with the Band's drums beating, colours flying, and our bayonets fixed."

Cllr Brian Grocock, Nottingham City Council's Armed Forces Champion, said: "The granting of the Freedom of the City is a ceremonial honour, and the oldest and highest civic honour that can be bestowed on a military unit and it is such an honour and privilege to be part of this momentous occasion."



HMS Sherwood being inspected during ceremonial divisions.



Marine Connor Smith (far left) with colleagues on a recent exercise.

ROYAL MARINES RESERVE RESERVIST PROFILE

Name: Connor Smith

Rank: Marine

Age: 26

Military unit: Royal Marines Reserve, Nottingham Detachment

What made you want to join the Royal Marines Reserve?

"I first decided to join the Royal Marines Reserve in 2015. I wanted to travel and see the world but I also felt a need to constantly test myself in some of the most challenging and diverse environments."

Being a Royal Marine tests you both physically and mentally. How have you found the training process?

"After passing the Potential Royal Marines Course I went on to start reserve training. It was the most mentally and physically challenging 18 months of my life because I had to adhere to a highly intensive training programme, which ran alongside my civilian career.

"In April 2017, I travelled to Devon to complete the Reserve Forces Commando Course. The tests and standards expected there are the same as what is required of a recruit in their final two weeks of full-time service."

'Passing Out' as a Marine can often be a highlight of an individual's career. How did you find this experience?

"The emotions I felt upon achieving my green beret were indescribable. I struggle to put in to words the immense sense of pride I felt to be handed my beret, have my hand shook, and be welcomed to the 354 year old family that is the Royal Marine Commandos."

As a former police officer, how do you find being a Marine challenges you?

"I found a new challenge for myself in the form of a Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) contract, with 40 Commando Royal Marines. I left a career in the police to take up this two-year contract.

"In the first week of joining the unit on a FTRS contract, we were being rapidly deployed to the Caribbean. We provided help and aid for the locals of the British Virgin Islands whose communities, cities, homes and lives had been devastated by Hurricane Irma."

Being deployed to assist with Hurricane Irma must have been completely different to anything you had experienced before. Could you describe some of your activities during this period?

"We spent two months out there in total, between Barbados and Turks and Caicos. The work we did across the islands as a unit was a testament to the diversity and skills a Royal Marine Commando can offer.

"From assisting local police in the capture of escaped convicts and guarding prisons, to handing out aid or getting hands-on rebuilding homes and communities.

"We worked as a troop along with the local builders and volunteers to rebuild and reinforce a local church, which was to act as a refuge for the local community to come and take shelter through the approaching hurricane.

"The appreciation and gratitude expressed from the locals and those who used the shelter made me feel like the work we had done really had impacted and made a difference."



Sapper Lizzy Ahmed with fellow reservists after a triathlon event.

TRAINEE CHEMISTRY TEACHER EMBRACES ARMY RESERVE

A trainee chemistry teacher from Nottingham has explained why joining the Army Reserve has helped to fuel her passion for learning.

Sapper Lizzy Ahmed, aged 31, serves as a reservist with 350 Field Squadron Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and works at George Spencer Academy in Nottingham in her civilian career.

Coming from a military family, Lizzy has always had an interest in joining the Army so decided to join 350 Field Squadron as she was drawn in by the specialist trade opportunities and wanted to learn more about Search and EOD techniques.

Speaking about life in the reserves, Lizzy said: "I'd say the location of the unit you train with in the Army Reserve is important as well as the specialist trade, as you are balancing your Army life with your civilian career.

"Whilst there is nothing like EOD and search in my civilian job, the general skills you learn are definitely transferable. You learn a lot about yourself during basic training and I think a lot of the confidence and adaptability I've developed in the Army comes across in my teaching."

Spending her days in the classroom and a number of weekends 'in the field', Lizzy has a number of methods up her sleeves to engage with her students. She continued: "As a science teacher I've used a couple of my Army examples to demonstrate chemical reactions such as using self-heating food rations to explain exothermic reactions. The students love it and are really interested when they realise it is something really used by soldiers.

"Prior to teaching, I had studied a PhD in Pharmacy and spent a few years after that working in labs. I found this to be repetitive and methodical, but as this requires a great deal of concentration I have been able to tap into these traits when completing my Army-based search training."

Joining the Army Reserve in 2015, Lizzy has packed in as much training as she can manage since including completing her intermediate search and foundation combat engineer training last year, which led to her being crowned Best Sapper by her unit Officer Commanding.

As well as having a passion for learning, Lizzy is a keen sportswoman and has also embraced the Army Reserves sporting culture too.

She explained: "I was competing in triathlons before I joined the Army so when I found out how much support is on offer for participating in sports with the reserves I really jumped at the chance to get involved. I took part in my first Army triathlon earlier this year so took away some useful tips from that. I train most days as it is a fairly demanding sport going straight from swimming, on to the bike then running but I often practice simulating race days which paid off when I became the first female to cross the finish line in a competition I took part in last year."

Looking ahead to the rest of the year, Lizzy is hoping to continue her triathlon training alongside further specialist trade training and developing her teaching career.

She concluded: "It's a unique experience being part of the Army Reserve. I've met some amazing friends from all over the country and thanks to my training I am both physically and mentally stronger. I have learnt so much about soldiering, my trade and myself. I'd encourage anyone to get involved in the reserves, no matter what your interests are there are plenty of opportunities available to make the most of your spare time."



Sergeant Darren Drysdale. Picture courtesy of Tina Jenner.

REFEREEING RESERVIST RESCUES PLAYER DURING MATCH

An RAF Reservist based in Lincolnshire made the headlines in October last year after potentially saving a player's life during a Football League match.

RAF Waddington based Intelligence reservist, Sergeant Darren Drysdale came quickly to the aid of Chesterfield's Brad Barry whilst refereeing their League Two clash with Morecambe on Saturday, October 14 2017, after the right-back fell to the ground and appeared to swallow his tongue after being accidentally hit on the temple by an opponent's boot.

Referees are usually discouraged from physical contact with the players they're officiating but after quickly realising the danger Brad was in, Darren swiftly placed the player into the recovery position to ensure his tongue did not block his airway.

Afterwards Brad told Chesterfield FC's official website of the first half incident: "I'm fine. It was just a boot to the side of the head and my eyes went black and my tongue was down my throat, but when the referee moved me it came back up."

Darren, who has officiated in the Champions League and FIFA World Cup, said: "Even though you're not supposed to touch injured players, when I saw he was in distress the survival mechanism in me just kicked in and I had to move him to do what I could to stop him from swallowing his tongue."

"I spoke to the player as we were walking off for half time, to explain my actions and he thanked me."

Flight Lieutenant Steve Spreckley, from the Intelligence Reserves Wing Headquarters at RAF Waddington, said: "The knowledge and skills that our reservists acquire throughout their training and career can be called upon at any time."

"The quick thinking and application of such training that Sgt Drysdale showed is a testimony to this and he should be very proud of his actions that ultimately could have saved someone's life."



Sergeant Darren Drysdale. Picture courtesy of Tina Jenner.



Sea Cadets with Alberto Costa MP.

LOCAL MP VISITS BROUGHTON ASTLEY SEA CADETS

MP for South Leicestershire, Alberto Costa visited Broughton Astley Sea Cadets to help celebrate the unit's first Annual Awards Evening in April.

A number of cadets were promoted to Cadet First Class and Junior First Class ranks, there were also a number of individual awards given out to members of the unit who have shown exceptional effort in the last year.

The drill team were also commended for winning the district trophy and finishing sixth in the area competition.

Senior Adult Volunteer, Claire Corbett who is the Detachment Commander, explained: "We have had a fantastic year to date and the awards evening was our chance to celebrate the unbelievable achievements of the unit and its cadets, both collectively and individually."

"Since inception, we have grown at a rapid rate and it's the right time to show just how far we have come."

"It is especially pleasing to see such support from the local community, and we hope that nights like this will encourage even more young people to join us." As well as the awards ceremony some of the cadets who are working towards their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award gave presentations explaining the challenges they face.

The unit opened in July 2017, this was three months earlier than originally planned due to a severe lack of opportunities and activities for young people in Broughton Astley.

Due to the hard work and dedication of adult volunteers there are now more than 45 cadets that attend the unit twice a week and the excellent relationship with Thomas Estley Community College means there is room for it to grow.



Alberto Costa MP with an adult volunteer.



Cadet Lance Corporal Ben Kirkham.

CADET REUNITES LOST DOG TAG WITH SOLDIER'S FAMILY

A Nottinghamshire Army Cadet went out of his way this summer to track down the relatives of a former soldier and return a military ID tag he stumbled across whilst taking part in his summer training camp.

Cadet Lance Corporal Ben Kirkham, from Nottinghamshire Army Cadet Force's (ACF) Worksop Detachment, didn't give a second thought to leaving the identity tag lying on the ground where he found it. Instead, he immediately picked it up and considered how he would start his investigation to return the tag to its rightful owner.

Explaining that his search began online, Ben, aged 17, commented: "I initiated my search on Google by typing in the Army number and name shown on the tag. This immediately revealed the owner to be Sapper Don Penfold of the Royal Engineers."

Ben discovered that one of his medals had just been sold in a Bridlington shop this summer to a private collector. This was his General Service Medal with 'Near East' Clasp. He continued: "More digging revealed that the Medal and Clasp were awarded to Sapper Penfold for his service during Operation Musketeer in the final months of 1956, where he was supporting UK operations to stabilise and secure the area around the Suez Canal region."

The investigation also highlighted that Longmoor Training Camp in Hampshire, where the ID tag was found, was in the late 1950s used by the Royal Engineers and that those deploying on Operation Musketeer were trained at this location before flying overseas to complete their deployment.

Ben said: "It's entirely possible that Sapper Penfold lost the dog tag on deployment training. After spending hours and hours searching, a friend of mine actually discovered the whereabouts of his family. Unfortunately, Sapper Penfold and his wife passed away in the early 2000s, but he was survived by his sisters, children and grandchildren who live in Brighton. So I arranged a visit to the sea-side town to return the tag."

Ben travelled to Brighton on 11 November to present Sapper Penfold's family the ID tag together with a replica of the serviceman's medal framed with an explanatory note for them to keep forever.

Colonel Alan Burt, a senior adult volunteer and Commandant of Nottinghamshire ACF, said: "This is an incredible, humbling story and demonstrates how determination and selfless behaviour can have huge rewards. I am really proud of Ben for completing his mission to return the tag and know that Sapper Penfold's family were very grateful to him."



Ben with Sapper Penfold's family.



126 (City of Derby) Squadron at the Canadian War Cemetery in France.

DERBY AIR CADETS CELEBRATE RAF 100 IN FRANCE

A group of cadets and adult volunteers from 126 (City of Derby) Squadron have visited France to mark RAF 100.

During the visit, the attendees travelled to numerous sites in France including the Canadian War Cemetery and the Vimy Ridge Memorial.

The RAF is celebrating its 100th birthday this year so the Derby squadron felt it was appropriate to take the opportunity to reflect on the organisations history and achievements.

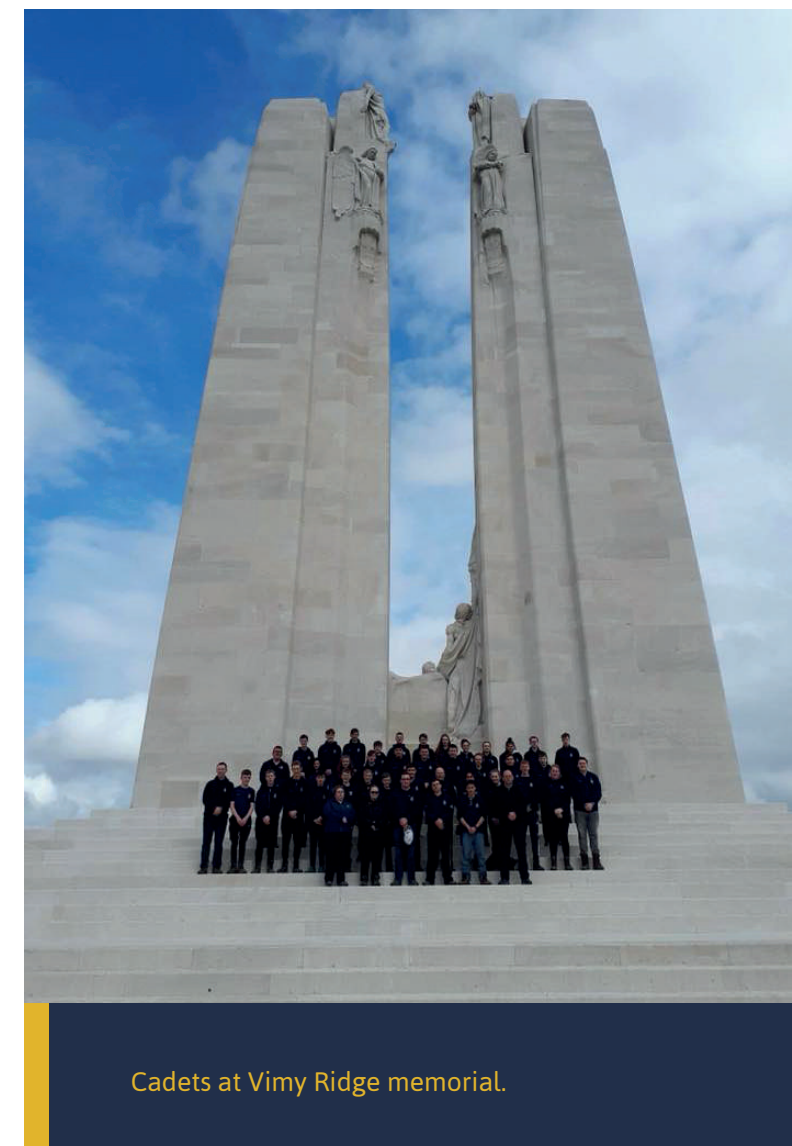
Squadron Leader Ian Marshall MBE, Senior Adult Volunteer and Officer Commanding of 126 (City of Derby) Squadron, organised the visit. He said: "The centenary itself will be marked by special events, activities and other initiatives at local, regional and national levels running from April to the end of November 2018.

"Although we arrange an overseas visit for our cadets each year, this year's visit to France was extra special as we wanted to commemorate past events that RAF was

involved in, celebrate service personnel's achievements and inspire the next generation to believe they can succeed in their chosen career path."

Both cadets and adult volunteers took part in the overseas visit and had the opportunity to meet representatives from another Canadian Cadet Force.

Ian continued: "Our visit to Vimy Ridge was a standout moment for me as we were joined by cadets from the Canadian 126 Niagara Falls Squadron who talked about the Canadian soldiers the memorial is dedicated to. This highlighted how we may be miles apart but all of our cadets are confident individuals who take pride in their Cadet Force."



Cadets at Vimy Ridge memorial.



Cadets at RAF Scampton

HEANOR CADETS VISIT THE RED ARROWS

24 Cadets from Heanor, Derbyshire got the chance to visit the famous Red Arrows last summer, as they were invited behind the wire at RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire.

The students, all aged between 12-18 years-old, from Heanor Gate Science College's Combined Cadet Force (CCF) made the special visit as part of their week-long summer camp that took place from 17-21 July.

There was lots of excitement and anticipation amongst the cadets as they were led into an aircraft hangar in which the Red Arrows are housed.

The visit saw the cadets walk around the well-known planes guided by specialist engineers who answered any questions they had about how the aircraft operate and the RAF's Aerobatic Team in general.

The cadets also viewed an electronic presentation about the display team, learning more about the speed, agility and precision of the team and how the distinctive Hawk T1s are supported by an essential team of support staff including operational personnel, engineers and of course

the skilled pilots who take part in aerobatic displays across the world.

Speaking at the event, Contingent Commander Miriam Watson, who is the Director of Vocational Learning at Heanor Gate Science College, said: "When we told the cadets that they were going to be visiting the Red Arrows at RAF Scampton the level of excitement amongst the cadets went through the roof.

"The Red Arrows are a perfect example of teamwork. There are nine pilots but over 130 personnel who work together to enable the display team to get out there and attend public events.

"So I thought it was important to let the cadets see and understand further the need for teamwork and have a chance to learn about the variety of other careers in the RAF that are critical to mission success which in this case is to display the best of British and inspire the future generation.

"The operations officer explained to the cadets the role of the RAF's Red Arrows, where they have been in the last year including their visits to China and Malaysia, and also the role of the team generally in the UK. We have seen a few videos showing the amazing formation flying, and have toured the hangar with some of the station's engineers who allowed the cadets to look inside the planes' cockpit which the cadets really enjoyed."

Cadet Sergeant Cerys Bailey was one of those to take part in the visit. She said: "This is my last annual camp as I will soon be leaving school. It was a lot of fun seeing the Red Arrows.

The thing I found most enjoyable was definitely looking inside the planes as there are so many little controls. I never thought I would get to see the Red Arrows up this close but I've been so impressed especially learning about all the training and preparation that goes into each of the displays."

The CCF's annual camp took place at RAF Wittering and included an activity packed timetable seeing cadets participate in sports and visits to other locations including the Newark Air Museum.





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