

The Reservist

East Midlands Reserve Forces and Cadets Association Newsletter

Summer 2017



Focus on:

203 (Loughborough)
Transport Squadron

Exercising
in Kenya

Specialist search
and rescue
exercise

Racing across
the Irish Sea

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Find Out More

If you are interested in becoming a reservist or would like to find out more about the Reserve Forces please visit:

Royal Naval Reserve - www.royalnavy.mod.uk

Royal Marines Reserve - www.royalnavy.mod.uk/rmr

Army Reserve - www.army.mod.uk

RAF Reserve - www.raf.mod.uk/rafreserves

Chairman's introduction

You will see the strapline 'Reserves are Recruiting and Cadets are Growing' in many communications from the Reserve Forces and Cadets Associations. The truth is that the reserves are also growing, if not in the dual meaning probably intended by the strapline writer for the cadets.

Targets for increases in reserve strength, set back in 2011 in the Future Reserves 2020 Report, looked, at the time, challenging to say the least and there were those who said they would never be met. However, the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force have already effectively met their targets, albeit the Royal Navy has still to complete training of some of its reserve intake; the Army which always had the greatest challenge, with reserves more than 10 times the size of its sister services, is well on the way to achieving its particularly demanding manning targets.

It is difficult to miss the advertisements on television, the cinema and throughout social media which extol the benefits of reserve and regular service. Indeed the focus is increasingly on the flexibility gradually being incorporated within the military career structure.

A number of reserves from the East Midlands have found they enjoyed the military life so much that they have joined the regulars. Equally a significant number of those joining the reserves are those who have left the regulars but still yearn for the challenges and excitement that military life brings. The Armed Forces are increasingly looking to implement flexible career patterns that allow people to adjust their commitment as their careers and lives evolve. A practical example of that is illustrated in this magazine's article on Jon Aslin, who balances his working life, with increasing reserve responsibility, while maintaining an essential focus on his family life.

Another imperative illustrated within this edition of The Reservist is the need to ensure that the civil society, from which reserves are drawn, understands the commitments that reservists make and the great benefits that military service brings to the individual, civilian employers and society as a whole. Many of you will remember the many military personnel who assisted with security at the 2012 Olympic Games and you will no doubt have seen the military assisting with flood precautions during the concerns over possible flooding of the east coast of our region earlier this year. You can read two articles within this magazine which focus on the training our reserves undertake to enable them to participate in such assistance to the civilian community.

In conclusion, I am immensely pleased to note the article within the magazine in which Scott Knowles, the Chief Executive of the East Midlands Chamber of Commerce, highlights the benefit to business of employing both reserves and veterans. Scott's sentiments are undoubtedly echoed by the many organisations, from all walks of life, which have signed the Armed Forces Covenant, stating publicly their support for the Armed Forces of this country. Our article on the Covenant illustrates the growing numbers of businesses and organisations that have publicly declared such support and we, and all those who serve in the Armed Forces, are extremely grateful to them.

Murray Colville

Colonel Murray Colville TD DL, Chairman of East Midlands Reserve Forces and Cadets Association.



Colonel Murray Colville TD DL



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Mothers join Army Reserve for new challenge

Two mums who live in Lincolnshire have joined the Army Reserve to fulfil their ambitions of having a career in the military.

Private Kerry Goldsmith, aged 37, and Private Michelle Isles, aged 34, originally met when working for the Post Office and soon realised they had similar interests.

Kerry is a single mum with three children, 14-year-old twins and a four-year-old, and Michelle has two children one aged 11 years and another aged nine.

After dedicating much of their time to their families, both ladies felt that they wanted to enjoy some time for themselves, whilst at the same time making their children proud of their efforts.

Both Kerry and Michelle decided to join 160 (Lincoln) Transport Squadron, 'passing out' from their Alpha and Bravo courses, their basic soldiering skills training, in October last year and have supported each other through each stage of the process.

Kerry said: "I wanted a new challenge in my life so joining the Army Reserve with my friend Michelle has been great. It has been difficult at times, particularly getting to grips with the physical training. I've never been one to enjoy exercise, but thanks to the training and pointers I've received I've improved my fitness and feel healthier for it.

"I wanted to make my kids proud and show them I was serious about achieving something I had always dreamt of doing. So, I swapped my TV for a treadmill last year and haven't looked back since. This year, I want to complete my HGV driving courses so I will be qualified to drive what I call 'the big stuff'."

Describing the support she had received from her family, Kerry concluded: "My parents have been fantastic in helping me with



Private Kerry Goldsmith and Private Michelle Isles

childcare. It was initially an alien concept to them, me hoping to join the Army Reserve, but I now think they have seen a big difference in me personally commenting that my confidence has developed and I seem more like the 'old me'."

Michelle previously spent three-and-a-half years as a full-time member of the RAF before having her children, but decided to leave the Forces to spend more time at home.

Commenting on her military career so far, Michelle explained: "I've been around the military for much of my adult life. My ex-husband served with the RAF so the children and I travelled around with him as his career developed. I always hoped that the time would come for me to re-join the military myself, so when I got talking to another parent when my son was playing football and he told me about the Army Reserve – I knew this sounded right up my street."

Encouraging others to follow in her footsteps, Michelle said: "Kerry and I really don't have a lot of spare time, but hopefully we have demonstrated that if you really want to do something like joining the Reserve Forces, you can make it work. I feel like I have got my career back now, and I still get to spend all the time I want with my children. The great thing about the Army Reserve is that you can fit it around your life, your family and your job."

Reservist takes part in white collar boxing event

A reservist from Lincolnshire has taken part in a novice boxing competition to raise money for Cancer Research UK.

Sergeant Lee Wilson, a reservist with the RAF's Headquarters Intelligence Reserves had never boxed before but decided to try the sport to mark it off his 'bucket list'.

Training for the Ultra White Collar Boxing match began in early 2017 and took eight weeks to complete. The training then led onto a boxing event at Deans Sports and Leisure Centre in Lincoln this April.

Around 60 local people signed up for the boxing challenge, with each being paired against an opponent based on age, height, weight, skill and experience.

Speaking ahead of the event Lee, aged 46, explained: "Learning to box has been something I have always wanted to do, so I decided to cross it off my 'bucket list' before I turned 50.

"I have done a lot of bag work in the gym and have teamed up with a colleague of mine in the RAF Reserve who previously boxed professionally to give me some hints and tips about retaining energy and using my size to the best of my ability."

As a person who enjoys keeping fit, Lee can often be found running in his spare time or taking part in obstacle courses around the country such as Tough Guy, Airfield Anarchy and Total Warrior.



Sergeant Lee Wilson. Photo by Mike Ruane courtesy of ultrapix.co.uk

Lee explained that he marched out into the ring to the tune of Eminem's 'Lose Yourself': "Despite being told by my corner to take my time, I did the complete opposite and tried to knock out my opponent in round one with lots of 'windmills'!

"In round three, I was close to being stopped and received the mandatory eight count, but for the last 30 to 40 seconds I went for it and managed to secure a draw!

"Initially I thought this would be a one-time event for me, however, I have now decided that the whole thing has been such a good experience, I will definitely give it another go.

"I have raised £250 for Cancer Research so far and sold £525 worth of VIP tickets to the event, some of which goes to the charity."

Ultra White Collar Boxing allow boxers to enter two events, so Lee is planning to enter the competition again next year.

Lee is currently serving as a full-time reservist at RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire and is responsible for the administration of part-time volunteer reservist personnel.

Development

Students learn more about being a Royal Naval Reservist

Pupils from Chesterfield College, who are each studying a Uniformed Public Service Course, took part in a varied programme of activities alongside HMS Sherwood, the East Midlands' only Royal Naval Reserve (RNR) unit, at Foresters House in Chilwell, Nottingham.

The programme included the pupils, who are all aged between 16 and 19 years, listening to a presentation about how the RNR work alongside their regular counterparts on operations, and practical demonstrations of the types of skills reservists can develop during sea survival, weapon handling and First Aid training.

Petty Officer Derek Parsons, from HMS Sherwood, organised the event. He said: "Each student was enthusiastic to learn more about the RNR and the types of specialisms we can undertake. The activity day was made up of a range of demonstrations including weapon handling, First Aid and life-saving and firefighting equipment used in training and on operational warships.

The event was a success, with many of the students learning about the Reserve Forces and our role for the first time."

Speaking at the event, Adam Godber, Career Pathway Leader for Public Services at



Students learn about water survival



Petty Officer Derek Parsons briefing the students

Chesterfield College, said: "We've got students looking into careers in a range of public services such as joining the police or the military, so today's event provided a great insight into the different roles available in the RNR. Some of our students may not have attended anything like this before. We have been very impressed by the reservists' knowledge in different specialisms."

Feedback from students at the event:

Mitchell Wardell, aged 17, said: "I thought the event would be a great opportunity for me to broaden my horizons. I wanted to look into joining the reserves as I cannot guarantee a full-time career in the military. I enjoyed learning about the Navy and seeing the different stands on offer."

Christian Cowley, aged 18, said: "I've never looked into being a reservist before. I've always wanted a career in the public services, so if I don't decide to join the RAF full-time I'd consider joining the reserves."

Learning to be an Assault Pioneer

Following the opening of a new platoon in Mansfield earlier this year, reservists from 4 Mercian have completed a specialist Assault Pioneer training course in Weymouth.

A number of reservists embraced the opportunity to complete the Assault Soldier Course to become a trained Assault Pioneer learning about water supply, demolitions and raft building to name a few.

Sergeant Bryan Chadbourne helped to organise the exercise. He explained: "We worked alongside 2 Royal Irish to complete the course with everyone learning how to theoretically complete tasks and how to put them into practice.

"The lads learnt how to take water from a stream or river and turn this into a safe water supply to drink. They learnt how to build a raft and completed a raft race, as well as exploring how and why demolition work may be completed."



Reservists pictured during the training course

4 Mercian is a light infantry support unit and has previously sent more soldiers on operations than any other Army Reserve unit.

As an Assault Pioneer, infantry soldiers are responsible for constructing tools for their colleagues to cross man-made or natural obstacles; providing the unit with water; managing the construction of bridges and planning defence positions.

Bryan continued: "Being an Assault Pioneer is a unique role in the battlefield. We really act as battlefield engineers who are trained in breaching enemy obstacles, conducting demolitions and being experts in wiring that may be used in explosive materials. The course was successful and I know many of those involved are keen to continue learning more about this specialist trade area."

Engineering students take part in reserve training event

46 engineering students from 10 separate University Officers' Training Corps (UOTC) units from all over the country have taken part in a three day hands-on event to learn more about the specialist roles available in the Army Reserve.

Exercise Martello Student took place at Chetwynd Barracks, Chilwell in February and was designed to provide engineering officer cadets an opportunity to learn about 170 (Infrastructure Support) Engineer Group (170 Eng Gp) and the roles and capabilities of the unit, and how becoming a reservist could enhance their future career prospects.

During the event, the students, who were all aged between 18- 23, took part in a variety of competitive activities hosted by current reservists such as pistol shooting; foreign weapon handling; an assault course and command tasks as well as a planning exercise designed to test their leadership abilities.

One of the event organisers, Lieutenant Robert Tait, a Potential Officer Recruiter for 170 Engr Gp, said: "Exercise Martello Student was a reserve potential officer weekend designed to give an insight into 170 Engr Gp and provide further information for those looking to join us. It was a resounding success, with attendees experiencing a live firing range, a foreign weapons stand, command tasks, assault course and an infrastructure planning exercise.

"We have a variety of specialist teams and recruit for both our reserve and full-time roles nationally. We want to encourage students, such as those who took part in the course, to find out how our training could enhance their CVs, provide practical examples of how they have used their degrees in the field and that many of our soldiers balance their busy careers alongside working with us in their spare time."

One of the students taking part was Humphrey Nightingale who is currently studying Marine Engineering at Plymouth University. He said: "We had the opportunity to go on the firing range and take part in a pistol shoot, which I loved, as well as going on the obstacle course with a bit of physical training to warm up.



Students taking part in a command task

"We also had the task of completing a four hour planning exercise which was mentally challenging; I stepped up as project manager which helped me learn a lot about controlling the many different working parts of the team."

This is the fourth time that Exercise Martello Student has taken place and it is well on the way to becoming an annual event due to the positive feedback received from the students and directing staff both this year and during past events.

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Specialist search and rescue exercise

High ropes exercise

30 Reservists from a Nottingham-based Army Reserve unit have completed specialist search and rescue training in Lincolnshire.

Representatives from 350 Field Squadron (Explosive Ordnance Disposal), Royal Engineers, made use of the Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Training Centre in Waddington, to practice their specialist skills in a purpose built training environment.

During the two-day event, the reservists, who work in a range of professions in their civilian lives, carried out a variety of scenarios involving overturned railway carriages and collapsed buildings, applicable to their search role.

They later went on to complete a high ropes obstacle course in Mansfield, designed to build individuals' confidence and teamwork.

One of the reservists taking part in the event was Corporal Lyndsey Dove, aged 34, who works at Openreach BT in Leicester. She said: "There are lots of opportunities to further your knowledge and improve your skills at 350 Field Squadron. Completing the training at the Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Training Centre was great, as it provided us with a new and varied landscape for us to hone our specialist search capabilities.

"I particularly enjoyed the command and control element of the various scenarios, which we were tasked to complete, as the facilities are realistic and challenging. I also thrived on the teamwork achieved which saw some members of the squadron conquer their fears during the high ropes obstacle course."

Upon arriving at the Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Training Centre, the squadron was split into small sections, to complete a round robin of scenarios, with junior members given the opportunity to command.

Task one was to locate missing radio parts within a collapsed building. With extremely narrow openings, and numerous obstacles to bypass, the phrase 'how small is that space you want me to squeeze through' was used by many.

Task two was to send individual members into a darkened derelict building to locate items and complete a simple rope task. The passage of information via the section was deemed vitally important in order to complete the whole task successfully.

Task three was to locate, treat and evacuate casualties from three overturned railway carriages which represented a train crash. Each evacuation became more difficult in turn due to the angles in which the carriages lay.

Task four was the most challenging and saw the reservists locate, treat and evacuate a casualty from a sewer system under a collapsed multi-storey car park.

The second element of the exercise was designed to challenge individuals to overcome their fear of heights by completing a high ropes obstacle course.

Working in teams to climb to the top of a 'Jacob's Ladder', with one member blindfolded, required a great deal of teamwork and trust in one another. Balancing four various sized individuals on top of a wobbly telegraph pole and leaning out to the point of no return was challenging for all involved.

Commenting on this, Sapper Mathew Coombes said: "It's surprising how vertigo can have an effect and trick the mind into thinking you are unstable."

Captain Zak Needham co-ordinated the weekend training. He said: "I can proudly say that all members who took part in the weekend thoroughly enjoyed all aspects of the training. To be able to utilise both our military and search skills in these environments was an experience I won't forget."



Reservist taking part in search activity

Cycling 240 miles for charity

A RAF reservist from Lincolnshire is set to cycle 240 miles across Northern France to raise money for a military charity.

Flight Sergeant Sharon Wyatt, aged 45, is based at Headquarters Intelligence Reserves at RAF Waddington and has dedicated most of her adult life to being a part of the military.

Originally serving full-time in the RAF for 24 years, Sharon later joined the RAF Reserve in 2012 as she wanted to spend more time at home with her family.

In August this year, Sharon is set to ride 240 miles to raise money for SSAFA, a charity that provides support for service personnel, veterans and military families in need.

Sharon said: "My friend Lesley Woodley, who is also a Flight Sergeant in the RAF, and I thrive on taking on new challenges and pushing ourselves to raise vital funds for charities close to our hearts. Ride to the Somme is an event that commemorates the cycling soldiers that fought and fell along the Western Front. Money raised from the event will go to SSAFA who I have personally found to be a brilliant listening ear during my career. They have fantastic links into the local community and can often offer those in need the help and support they need."

Taking to the road for the first time on two wheels last year, Sharon and her friend Lesley rode 100 kilometres during an event called Ride the Night, a female only cycling event in the UK travelling from the Royal Windsor Racecourse into London and back. On this occasion Sharon and Lesley collectively raised £900 for three cancer charities.

Training is now underway for Sharon's latest challenge, with Sharon cycling and running in any free time she gets to keep her fitness at a good level before the charity ride this summer.

Sharon explained: "Being a reservist is great as it allows me to be a mum and still do the job I love. I have two sons at home so decided to leave my previous RAF career to take on a



Flight Sergeant Sharon Wyatt with her parents at the Soldiering On Awards

full-time reserve service role instead as it suited my lifestyle. My family are always incredibly supportive of my charity endeavours and understand that it is important to me to raise funds for causes that could help other members of the community."

As well as preparing for her next charity challenge, Sharon also recently nominated her parents for a Soldiering On Award as she wanted to thank them for all of the support they have offered her family over many years, especially during her full-time RAF career.

Sharon concluded: "My parents have always been fantastic. They have rearranged their own plans on many occasions when I was serving to look after my sons, and I wanted to officially thank them. They were shocked when I told them I had nominated them in the 'family values' category, but I'm pleased I did."

The Soldiering On Awards took place earlier this year and Sharon's parents won the 'Family Values' category.

To sponsor Sharon to complete the Ride to the Somme event visit http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/SharonWyatt_GotSomeInReserve

Training in Kenya

A Lincolnshire reservist has returned to the UK after travelling more than 6,800 miles to complete an exercise in Kenya.

Private Pete Harrison, aged 26, is a professional HGV Driver and serves as a reservist with 160 (Lincoln) Transport Squadron, 158 Regiment.

Travelling to Kenya for the first time this year, Pete was one of 18 personnel taking part in Askari Thunder and the only reservist from his unit on the exercise.

Explaining the purpose of the visit, Pete said: "I was on site to prepare the vehicles for the battle group taking part in Exercise Askari Thunder. My main task was to raise any faults or issues with the vehicles and then hand them over to the team of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers to fix in time for those taking part in the next exercise."

"I learnt a lot of new skills whilst I was in Kenya, many of which I can transfer back into my day job. I had the opportunity to visit a child orphanage, something I never previously dreamt I would be able to do when I originally joined the Army Reserve."

"I also had the chance to mountain bike off road during my visit, cycling through a number of different trails and seeing some amazing scenery."

Joining the Army Reserve in February last year, Pete has since completed a number of trade-based driving courses including passing his Troop Carrying Vehicle and Trailer Conversion Course which were useful on his recent visit to Kenya.

Pete, who was based at the British Army Training Unit in Kenya during the exercise, continued: "I have always had an interest in joining the military, but due to a number of other factors having a regular career just didn't seem right for me. Being a reservist means I can still enjoy a military career, as well as being at home with my family."

The exercise took place over a four-week period and also included the chance to take part in adventure training or go on safari.



Private Pete Harrison in Kenya

Exercising Abroad

Parachuting in Cyprus

One could be forgiven for thinking that if you joined an Army Reserve unit, such as, as 101 Military Working Dog Squadron (101 MWD Sqn) that you would spend your days training on the ground, however, this was not the case for Reservist Dave Stewart who learnt to parachute on a recent expedition.

Lieutenant Dave Stewart, aged 30, joined 101 MWD Sqn in late 2015 as a Veterinary Officer and has since embraced every opportunity to pass on veterinary skills and improve his military skills.

Working as Veterinary Surgeon in his civilian career, Dave enjoys making the most of his free time with the Army Reserve.

When the opportunity arose to learn to parachute, Dave jumped at the chance understanding that adventure training activities like this enable individuals to push themselves out of their comfort zone, handling mixed emotions in a potentially pressurised situation.

Dave explained: "We travelled to Dhekelia Station in Cyprus to begin the parachute training. There were 14 people on the course including me, and there were feelings of both excitement and trepidation amongst all of us."

During the week-long course, the instructors



Lieutenant Dave Stewart in Cyprus



Parachuting during the expedition

covered a variety of important topics designed to keep the reservists safe including parachute anatomy, canopy control and, crucially, what to do if everything went wrong.

After hours of concentration and lots of questions being answered, the reservists took to the sky to experience their first parachute dive, from 4,000 feet.

Dave continued: "It was like nothing I had experienced before. As the door to the plane opened, the rush of air felt like it was pushing me back inside the cabin.

"I pushed out of the aircraft and looking up, adopting the practised arch position, I could see the aeroplane disappearing above my head and I felt a jolt of the static line deploying the parachute behind me. My adrenaline gave way to breezy calmness as I dangled 3,500 feet above the airfield taking in views of the Mediterranean, it had been an amazing day."

Dave completed four jumps in total and said of the last: "It was definitely the best jump of the week and was a real high to end the course on. I'd definitely recommend learning to parachute to anyone.

"It allowed me to learn so much as well as improving my teamwork, concentration and listening skills. There are so many opportunities in the Army Reserve for personnel at all levels, even at thousands of feet above the ground."

Arctic training exercise

Royal Marines Reservists (RMR) have taken part in specialist winter warfare training 200 miles inside the Arctic Circle to test their survival skills and ability to operate in difficult conditions.

The Royal Marines are NATO's mountain and Arctic warfare specialists who take the opportunity each winter to hone their cold weather capabilities after serving more than 10 years in Afghanistan and Iraq.



Reservists in action

Each individual must be able to ski across the mountains whilst carrying a weapon and a 70lb rucksack, utilising their wide range of military training skills as they plough through the snow.

The RMR Detachment in Nottingham sent one reservist to attend the exercise in 2017.



Arctic training exercise

Major Al Edgar, Officer Commanding, explained: "It is essential that each of our reservists are trained to the same standard as our regular, full-time, counterparts and are trained to operate in a variety of different climates and environments. During the exercise in Norway, marines got to use specialist Arctic operational equipment, use specialist vehicles, learn ice breaking drills in case of falling through the surface of ice on frozen lakes, and learn to construct snow holes and shelters that are essential techniques in Arctic survival."

Skiing Success

A Loughborough reservist has skied her way to success in three separate Army competitions this year.

Private Amy Brookman, aged 25, who works as a graphic designer in her civilian life, serves as a reservist with 203 (Loughborough) Transport Squadron, 158 Regiment, and has been awarded first and second place in a number of events at the Army Ski Championships in Serre Chevalier, France, the Divisional Ski Championships in Les Contamines, France and the Royal Logistic Corps (RLC) Ski Championships in Ruhpolding, Germany.

Originally learning to ski as a child, Amy had not put on her skis since she was 16-years-old before joining the Army Reserve three-years-ago but has since earned a place in the Army's ski team.

Describing her experiences, Amy commented: "I feel very fortunate that I have a supportive civilian employer who has allowed me time out of the office to compete in a number of ski championships recently. Racing downhill or taking part in giant slalom events is really exciting and gets the adrenaline running.

"I know a number of people have referred to me as being a 'natural' when it comes to



Amy Brookman
Picking up an
award



Private Amy Brookman

skiing, but I really have put my heart and soul into achieving the best I could at each of the events I have competed in. The training I received this season was amazing and helped me to prepare for the races."

During 2017, Amy has achieved first place in six events including being the overall female winner in the RLC Ski Championships and being the overall downhill winner in the Army Ski Championships.

Amy, who lives in Markfield, concluded: "I'm proud to have achieved so much on the slopes in such a short time. I joined the Army Reserve in 2014, during which time I have surpassed any initial hopes I had when I walked into my first training evening. I know a lot of people say that you can give as much as you can in your spare time as a reservist, but I hope that I am the proof that if you put your mind to it, you can achieve anything."

"I joined the RAF Reserve to do something useful with my time"

After spending many years working for a large multinational company, a Nottingham man decided to take a step back - set up his own business and join the RAF Reserve to live out a life-long interest.

Flight Lieutenant Jon Aslin, aged 53, joined the RAF Reserve's 7006 (VR) Intelligence Squadron 12-years-ago after opting for a change in lifestyle in which he could spend more time at home and has not looked back since.

Jon explained: "When I started up my own business called Clickdocs I was working from home and felt I wanted to be part of a team again. I'd previously been an Air Cadet whilst at Nottingham High School so I had a long standing interest in the RAF generally. However, after travelling and living overseas with my previous employment, I hadn't had the time to follow up my interest in the preceding 20 years."

As the new Officer Commanding of 7630 (VR) Intelligence Squadron, Jon has yet again taken on a new challenge meaning he will be expected to balance 90 days service alongside his civilian job.

With the new role also comes a promotion, meaning Jon will shortly become a Squadron Leader. He continued: "I joined the RAF Reserve to do something useful with my time. It is now largely my job to lead, support and train others whilst regularly travelling between RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire and RAF Wyton in Cambridgeshire."



Flight Lieutenant Jon Aslin

In order to accommodate his new role, Jon has reduced his working hours to give him time to complete his reserve duties without taking time away from his family.

There will be many challenges ahead for Jon but he is looking forward to jumping in feet first: "I will be working with a small group of specialists and ex-regulars. The challenge here will be working with a new and expanding group of people, developing new ways of working in support of both the RAF and Defence in general."

Jon previously mobilised to Afghanistan in support of the Joint Helicopter Force which he found to be both an interesting and satisfying role. He concluded: "I believe that everyone has a responsibility to contribute to and maintain society. It would be great if we could all find a way to do our bit to help the community. That needn't mean becoming a reservist like me but perhaps something else that could be rewarding and sustainable.

"The RAF Reserve offers an opportunity to work alongside full-time members of the force without the need to be away from home for long periods of time. For me it's been an ambition that I'm pleased I can say I am living out."

Achievements

UK-based resilience training

As a military working dog handler individuals have to be trained to play a vital role in supporting key operational activities such as searching routes, buildings or vehicles, enhancing security and patrolling sites so when the opportunity arose to complete a resilience training exercise in three different UK-based locations, Lance Corporal Arran Manton jumped at the chance.

Arran, aged 30, is a reservist serving with 101 Military Working Dogs Squadron (101 MWD Sqn) and wanted to take part in a realistic training scenario that would help him to increase his dog handling abilities in a variety of different environments.

The training exercise included eight reservists from 101 MWD Sqn who joined their regular (full-time) colleagues, to complete the two week-long exercise.

Organising his kit and equipment in advance, Arran arrived at St George's Barracks in Rutland to be briefed on the training that lay ahead.

Arran, who in his civilian career works as a Motorcycle Technician, explained: "Initially we were not told a lot about what the exercise would entail, providing a realistic training environment from the outset. We then headed out to three different sites to take part in different training scenarios with our dogs."

The exercise saw Arran travel firstly to an airfield in Ipswich where he was able to build his site security skills and work on the basics of area protection with his dog.

Arran continued: "We operated throughout the night using the dog's senses to good effect and tested our tactical skills as handlers on the ground. We were able to select patrol routes that worked to the dog's strengths, using the dog's scenting abilities to allow us to find intruders and indicate intruders' whereabouts. It is critical as handlers that we recognise our dog's indications.

"We did not know what would occur on our patrols so we were certainly kept on our toes. This part of the exercise tested our understanding of the dynamic environment and our relationship with the dogs."

The second phase of the training took place throughout central London, including time at Twickenham Stadium, an environment that was vastly different to the first. Arran and his colleagues were now in a densely populated, tightly packed urban area that tested the soldiers' problem-solving abilities in working in unfamiliar environments such as navigating through buildings, working outdoors and taking to the water on a boat.

Arran explained: "The second exercise provided critical environmental training for the dogs themselves. We crawled under Churchill's War Rooms and hurtled down the Thames in the dark on a Police boat to board, clear and detain an intruder on-board HMS Belfast. We also searched an unused train depot in the London city area which was incredibly fast-paced but provided crucial functional training."

The final part of the exercise took place in Norfolk, where the soldiers focused on 'green skills' needed in the Army Reserve both with and without their working dogs.



Lance Corporal Arran Manton and his dog

Challenges faced by Arran in Norfolk included leading patrols with the dogs, clearing buildings and engaging enemy forces whilst protecting vehicle check points.

Arran concluded: "The development of our handling skills were evident for all to see after the training was complete. I found the entire exercise to be a positive experience and I believe it clearly highlighted the benefits of reserves training alongside our regular counterparts in completing the resilience training."

The Royal Navy & Royal Marines Children's Fund
Email: rmchildren@btconnect.com

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund has supported children whose parents work, or have worked, for the Naval Service for over a hundred years.

In the last year alone, The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund has supported over 1,500 children, but with over 40,000 servicemen currently in the Naval Service, it is keen to ensure that naval families know where to find us.

How We Help
We provide direct support to children whose parents work, or have worked, for the Naval Service, in areas including childcare, special needs education and in-home support in times of crisis.

To reach as many children as possible, we take applications ourselves and from a number of other sources including The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust and The Royal British Legion. If a child's needs fall outside our areas of specialism, we also work with charities such as Royal Wansstead Children's Foundation to provide total care packages.

Last year The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund supported over 1,500 children. Without you, this would not have been possible.

To make a donation, leave a gift in your will or simply to find out more about our work, please contact:

E: rmchildren@btconnect.com
T: 02392 639534
F: 02392 677574M, 07947 691950

Or visit our website at:
<http://www.rmchildrensfund.org.uk>

Port infrastructure capability

When one thinks about ports you may imagine a coast or shore line where ships dock and may not associate this with the Army Reserve. However ports specialists are needed, as part of the broad spectrum of infrastructure support, to assist the Army on operations and at home.

509 Specialist Team Royal Engineers (STRE) (Ports Infrastructure) are a reserve sub-unit of 170 (Infrastructure Support) Engineer Group and have the Army's only ports infrastructure capability.

A training exercise took place in Nottinghamshire in March this year to give newer members of the team the opportunity to take part in a scenario where they would have to replace a pair of 18 tonne lock gates.

During the task, the reservists were required to come up with a plan to identify what they needed to do, the resources required, timelines and identify key hazards in what was potentially a tricky task.

Warrant Officer Class One Nigel Marshall, who lives in Buxton, said: "The exercise was a great opportunity for the newer team members to gain some valuable training outside of their normal comfort zone."

Sergeant Si Allen, who lives in Nottingham, completed a regular Army career with the Royal Artillery and has since retrained as an engineer. He said: "Having left the regular Army last year, this was something very new to me. The exercise has given me some



Reservists undertaking infrastructure training

new experiences that will hopefully be beneficial to my civilian role."

The training exercise took place at Cromwell Lock near Newark, and troops were divided into groups of three to plan what needed to be done.

Some of those taking part in the activity are true ports specialists and some have more general engineering skills and therefore require specific training for their roles.

509 STRE have been called upon for their skills worldwide in previous years. In 2016, they completed training in Cyprus and some team members have deployed to Anguilla and the Philippines.

"There is a lot to be gained by joining the Reserve Forces"

The prospect of joining a medical-based Army Reserve unit seemed like a challenge worth taking for a new reservist from Nottingham.

Lieutenant Annie Andrews-Owusu, aged 31, joined the Army Reserve's 212 Field Hospital this year after being inspired by an article she read about a medical professional who had experienced working in Camp Bastion, Afghanistan.

Annie, who works as a Diagnostic Radiographer at Queen's Medical Centre in her civilian career, explained: "There is a lot to be gained by joining the Reserve Forces and for me helping both soldiers and civilians in a field hospital sounded like it could be the challenge I had been looking for.

"The Army provides individuals like me the opportunity to gain various leadership and clinical skills that can also be transferred into my civilian career."

Annie started visiting 212 Field Hospital around two months before she completed her Army Officer Selection Assessments allowing her to participate in some of the unit's training and teaching sessions.

Annie continued: "One of my motivations for joining the Army Reserve is that I could play a part in having a positive impact on someone's life in my spare time. I'm looking forward to being a part of an organisation that offers everything from adventure training for its personnel to humanitarian aid in crisis situations. Overall I'm hoping that being a reservist will help me to become a better version of myself.



Lieutenant Annie Andrews-Owusu

"My journey has been far from ordinary to date and I can't wait to push myself to the limit to see what I can achieve in the Army."

212 Field Hospital has the capability to staff and operate up to a 200 bed field hospital almost anywhere in the world at short notice. Many of the unit's reservists are medical professionals in their civilian careers such as theatre nurses, trauma surgeons or healthcare assistants although there are other non-medical roles available at the unit for those interested in driving, vehicle maintenance or working as a chef.

Achievements

Racing across the Irish Sea

A team of eight Army reservists are set to race across the Irish Sea in a 42 foot yacht to take on one of the toughest sailing challenges in the northern hemisphere.

The Rolex Fastnet race is set to take place in August this year, but training is well underway to ensure that everyone on-board is ready to work as a team, manage on limited food supplies and operate in a confined space when they are suffering from fatigue in the middle of the Irish Sea.

One of the reservists taking part in the event is Major Bruce Spencer from 162 Regiment, Royal Logistics Corps based in Nottingham. Bruce explained that he is looking forward to the challenge the race will bring: "I have never raced in an event of this magnitude, but it is about the adventure and pitting yourself and the crew against the raw elements and others involved in the competition.

"This is what military service is all about, pushing ourselves to the limit, mastering new environments and beating down fear. We are all learning to deal with the weather and above all are all learning how

to take care of each other in such an unstable environment."

Each of the eight crew on-board will have qualified in a range of different sailing courses ahead of the voyage, with a particular focus having been on First Aid and sea survival.

The crew will be on-board one of over 200 boats taking part in the race over a six-day period, which will depart from Cowes in the Isle of Wight, past Plymouth, across the Irish Sea and around the Fastnet Lighthouse, before travelling back, completing 600 miles from start to finish.

Bruce's team will be sailing on the yacht Osprey that has been specially refurbished for the race. He continued: "This is the race of a lifetime for me. It is one of the toughest sailing races around

and makes huge demands on every member of the crew. As a soldier I am used to taking on challenges, but this is a mighty big challenge and one that I am determined to overcome. Army training gives me the confidence to know that I can take on anything. I'm sure the crew and I will achieve great things in this tough competition."



Major Bruce Spencer on a previous sailing exercise

Junior doctor believes military experience complements his civilian career

A junior doctor from Nottingham has explained how both his military and civilian careers work hand-in-hand.

Lieutenant James Whereat, aged 29, of the Army Reserve's 222 Medical Squadron, 2 Medical Regiment, is set to be promoted to Captain later this year after completing his phase one soldier training, passing his Army Officer's Selection Board at Westbury and completing his first year of medical practice.

After joining in 2012, James has successfully juggled a medical degree with his time as a reservist and is now looking forward to the future in both career paths.

James said: "You can't practice as a doctor in the Army without achieving officer rank so going before the Army Officer Selection Board and commissioning was always the end game.

"I'd always wanted to do the military side of things and I'd been interested in the exceptionally high level of medical care that happened at Camp Bastian in Afghanistan and wanted to be a part of a team that worked at that standard.

"When I started my medical studies I couldn't think of any reason not to become a reservist given the benefits and opportunities it presents."

James is now a junior doctor at Royal Derby Hospital and he believes his military experiences have benefitted and complemented his full-time career.



Lieutenant James Whereat during a recent training exercise

James said: "You get a very positive response from both patients and fellow staff when you tell them you're a reservist. Most are curious about what it involves as well as the time commitments.

"I'm more organised on a personal level after studying while a reservist and the practical exercises have really benefitted me in developing styles of team working.

"I also enjoy rock and mountain climbing. The adventure training and map work have helped grow my skills and confidence in leading such activities."



A number of reservists who are set to take part in Trailwalker 2017.

Reservists take on an endurance challenge

Two teams of four Nottingham-based reservists are set to take on an endurance challenge by taking part in Trailwalker 2017.

Each serving with the Army Reserve's 350 Field Squadron (EOD), 33 Engineer Regiment (EOD), the group led by Warrant Officer Class Two Nathan Toms will be aiming to raise as much money as they can for both The Gurkhas Welfare Trust and Oxfam.

The event, that is taking place from 28 to 30 July, will see the team trek 100km across the South Downs in under 30 hours, putting both their minds and bodies to the test. Starting at Queen Elizabeth Country Park the route will take the soldiers along the South Downs Way to the finish line at Brighton Racecourse, passing through rolling countryside, flint tracks, dry valleys and villages along the way.

Speaking about preparing for the challenge Nathan said: "Each of us understands that this is a huge challenge and something we need to be ready for both physically and mentally.

"Although each of us enjoys keeping fit, taking part in a 30 hour challenge is a tall order so we have been doing as much training as we possibly can around work and our other commitments."

So far, the team have completed four group walks as well as training individually whenever possible.

Nathan continued: "The walks so far have consisted of progression walks which have ranged between eight and 30 miles covering distances over the Peak District. The peaks are ideal for our training as apart from the odd boulder here and there, the heights and the tracks are pretty much similar to the downs.

"Both teams, as part of Trailwalker training, will have to conduct a 27 mile long night navigation phase that will be timed, so the teams will have to have their wits about them navigating in the dark! The teams will also be taking part in adventure training activities during the day, so this should ideally replicate the fatigue and sleep deprivation that they will encounter on Trailwalker."

Each team taking part in the event pledges to raise £1,400 for Oxfam and The Gurkha Welfare Trust as part of the contest, so the group want to do as much as they possibly can in advance of the event to raise as much cash as they can.

One of the reservists fundraising ideas was to organise a static bike ride at Tesco in Long Eaton.

Nathan, who in his civilian life works as an Openreach Fibre Engineer, continued: "We want to demonstrate to the public how we work as a team to reach our goals. Taking part in the static bike ride shows that we are committed to raising as much funding as we can to help make a difference to the lives of families around the world.

"As soldiers we are used to pushing ourselves out of our comfort zones, so it's great for us to commit to challenging ourselves to raise money for such a good cause."

If you would like to sponsor the team visit <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/norman-dye>

A focus on:

203 (Loughborough) Transport Squadron

203 (Loughborough) Transport Squadron is part of 158 Regiment, Royal Logistics Corps (RLC) and provides general transport support to its paired regular army regiment, 7 Regiment, RLC.

The Reservist



Reservists who serve with 203 (Loughborough) Transport Squadron (203 Tpt Sqn) are trained to manage and drive the regiment's vehicles from Land Rovers to 15 tonne MAN road support vehicles.

However, you do not have to be a driver to join this Army Reserve unit. There are a wide variety of roles available for personnel in the field of logistics including chefs, military clerks and combat medical technicians.

Here we learn about some of the unit's current reservists finding out more about what they have personally gained from their military training and why they would encourage others to follow in their footsteps.

Cooking for large scale events

Name: Lance Corporal Phil Clewer

Age: 35

Civilian Occupation: Plasterer

Home Town: Nottinghamshire

"I did my Class Three Chef's Course through the Regiment about three years ago, then decided to join 203 Tpt Sqn shortly afterwards. I've learnt a lot about being a chef from other people at the unit. I've been able to learn on the job, cooking for large scale events such as Remembrance Days as well as smaller scale training weekends.

"I have the opportunity to put my ideas forward when working out the menu for open evenings. Chefs are often the first up in the morning on exercises and the last to bed in the evening, but if you enjoy cooking it's great. I like to challenge myself to do new things so being in the reserves has been a good experience for me."



Lance Corporal Phil Clewer

"I have achieved my HGV License"

Name: Lance Corporal Clifford Smith

Age: 28

Civilian Occupation: HGV Driver

Home Town: Derby

"I've been in the reserves for 10 years. I initially joined as a driver with a car licence, but during the time I've been with the unit I have achieved my HGV licence and more recently my B1 driver certificate.

"Thanks to achieving my HGV licence with 203 Tpt Sqn, I was able to get a job as a HGV Driver in my civilian life. I now drive all over the UK doing multi-drop work, taking pallets to a variety of different locations.

"There is so much you can get out of being in the reserves. You can have a good laugh, meet new people, get qualifications and get paid in your spare time. I've been to Canada on an exchange programme through the unit, as well as taking part in an annual camp in Gibraltar. I also helped out at the 2012 Olympics in a security role. This was fun and was something I had never done before in my reserve role. We got to walk around the Olympic Park in our time off and I will never forget the atmosphere on site."



Lance Corporal Clifford Smith

"You can experience lots of things through the Army Reserve"

Name: Captain Tim Howard

Age: 29

Civilian Occupation: Teacher

Home Town: Loughborough

"I'm a former regular soldier, but joined 203 Tpt Sqn after leaving the military full-time. Being in the reserves has really helped me through the transitional process of adapting to balancing a civilian career and continuing my military service on a part-time basis. I went straight from school in to the Army and have had a few jobs since leaving the military but being in the reserves has been a constant factor during this time.

"I believe that the Army Reserve encompasses all the best parts of the regular Army. I can do adventure training, overseas exercises and achieve qualifications whilst being at home with my family.

"You can experience lots of things through the Army Reserve you couldn't elsewhere. There are opportunities to test yourself, much more than in the civilian workplace. The trust the Army places in people is fantastic, enhancing your CV in a positive way and allowing you to achieve qualifications that are recognised by civilian employers."



Captain Tim Howard

Adventure training is appealing

Name: Soldier Under Training Sabrina Kohli

Age: 18

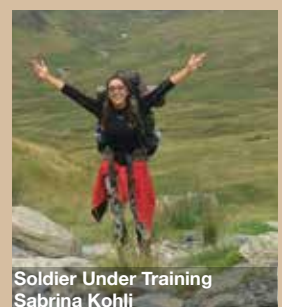
Civilian Occupation: Student

Home Town: Loughborough

"My brother is in the University Officer Training Corps (UOTC) and has explained what it's like being a part of this, so it made me consider joining the Army Reserve in my spare time.

"I'm new to 203 Tpt Sqn but so far my fitness has improved, I have made some new friends and I have learnt about the Army's values and standards. I'm hoping to learn to drive through the Army Reserve, and in the future work towards driving the large HGV vehicles.

"I really enjoy hiking and canoeing so the adventure training aspect to the Army Reserve is a real plus for me."



Soldier Under Training Sabrina Kohli

Employer Engagement

The Armed Forces Covenant

The Armed Forces Covenant 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 charities.

Employers may sign the Armed Forces 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.

Over 1,700 organisations around the UK have signed the Covenant and 155 are in the East Midlands. Those in the region, who have signed since the previous edition of this magazine, are:



United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust
 Welbeck - The Defence Sixth Form College
 Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue Service
 Framework Housing Association
 Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service
 UK Veterans Hearing Help
 County Battery Services Ltd
 Spice Takeaway West Bridgford
 Unique Insurance Services Ltd
 Curry Lounge (Nottingham) Ltd
 Urgent Electrical Services
 Karimia Mosque and Institute
 Pentalpha Exhibitions and Interiors
 Owen Taylor and Sons Ltd
 Autism Care UK Ltd
 Vivaldi Conservatories
 Rangoon Point
 Motorfinity
 Freshlinc

Elite Forces Recruitment
 Investors in Community
 Stage Systems Ltd
 Nationwide Health
 Medical Cosmetics
 All Star Motors
 Babylon Takeaway
 Mother Help Age (UK)
 Selden Research Ltd
 121 Systems Ltd
 Grantham College
 Fred Sherwood Group
 Function Jigsaw
 J. Tomlinson
 Armourgeddon Ltd
 We Fix Feet Limited
 In'n'Out Centres Ltd
 Keyguard UK Ltd
 DG Cars

MSA Transport Ltd
 Cover Express Ltd
 Trent Security
 Pakistan Forum
 Buildbase
 Blueprint Interiors Ltd
 Atlantian Solutions
 Derby College
 University of Northampton
 Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
 University of Leicester
 Reacon Intelligence Ltd
 Derbyshire Constabulary
 BE Design
 Leicestershire Police
 The Barcode Warehouse
 Loughborough Endowed Schools
 University of Nottingham
 Catholic Protection Co Ltd

Information on the Covenant can be seen at www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/

Employer Recognition Scheme

The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (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.



Bronze

Employers who register with the scheme online, stating their intent to support Defence personnel, will receive a Bronze certificate and may choose to have their details on the website to show their intended support for Defence.

Silver

Employers who demonstrate support for Defence personnel through the Armed Forces Covenant may be nominated for a Silver Award. Award winners will be listed on the Defence ERS website and will be presented with the Silver Award at special regional events.

Gold

Employers who become advocates for the support of Defence personnel may be nominated for a Gold Award. Award winners will be listed on the Defence ERS website and will be presented with the Gold Award at a special high profile national event.

In 2017 to date, 27 East Midlands employers have registered for a Bronze Award. The nomination process for Silver closed in April and submissions for Gold will close on 15 June.

To register for a Bronze Award or to see a full UK list of employers who have received awards go to the ERS website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-employer-recognition-scheme

Personal Development & Leadership Training with the Army for civilian employees – FREE!

Would you benefit from free personal development training for your staff?

The Army's greatest assets are not its tanks or missiles, but its people.

The quality of its personnel gives the British Army its cutting edge, enabling consistent success on a wide range of demanding tasks. At the very heart of this is effective leadership.

The Army is providing a unique opportunity for civilian organisations, big and small, public and private sector to gain some insight and learning from the way that the Army does leadership, with relevance to you and the people in your organisation.



On **FREE** one-day personal and professional development exercises, delegates are introduced to the way the Army teaches leadership, in theory and in practice.

Executive Leader is for established leaders and supervisors in junior to middle management positions - 20 September 2017

Future Leader is for those not yet in a supervisory or management positions or those recently appointed - 14 October 2017

Each event is delivered in an engaging and interactive way by selected Army personnel, with plenty of opportunity for thought provoking discussion. Each event comprises a morning session of presentations and syndicate discussions anchored around leadership theory, followed by an afternoon of fun outdoors, having a go at leadership in practice.

Leadership Theory

Leadership is a blend of example, persuasion and compulsion. The Army's clear and well defined leadership code is underpinned by a strong set of values and standards, with a distinct influence on what you do and how you do it; summed up by doing the right thing at a difficult time when no-one is looking.

This module will include interactive discussion and consideration to individual strengths and areas on which to focus for further development.



Leadership in Practice

Projects and practical tasks require leadership, direction and effective management of people and resources.

The Army uses Adair's Leadership Model along with a practical checklist called The Functions in Command.

This will be explained and brought to life in a practical, fun and challenging way with problem solving exercises.

Delegates do not need to be physically fit, but they will need a bit of competitive spirit and a willingness to work in a team.



The events will be held in Chetwynd Barracks, Chilwell, Nottingham NG9 6GX

Photographs from a recent event can be seen at:

www.eastmidlandsrfa.co.uk/gallery/executive-stretch-september-2016/

For queries please contact:

Catherine Suckling Assistant Regional Employer Engagement Director

Tel: 0115 924 8622 Email: em-areed@rfca.mod.uk

Employer Engagement

Hospitals Trust enjoy a team-building day with the Army Reserve

A Leicestershire based Hospital Trust has enjoyed a team building day with a difference, thanks to the Army Reserve.

The University Hospitals of Leicester (UHL) NHS Trust joined forces with 158 Regiment's, 203 (Loughborough) Transport Squadron (203 Tpt Sqn), to attend a military themed activity day aimed at building colleagues' team-working and communication skills.

The event took place at Kendrew Barracks in Cottesmore in February, and included 14 staff members from the Trust's Supply and Procurement Team.

Jeff Oliver, Inventory and Supplies Manager at UHL, helped to organise the event. He said: "We wanted to organise an away day for our staff that would be completely different to anything we had done before. We wanted to step away from the clinical environment and do something that many of us would not have experienced.

"203 Tpt Sqn were very supportive in helping us to meet our objectives and welcomed the opportunity to build further links with us as one of their neighbouring Trusts."

The event was designed to allow attendees to take a look at



Representatives of the Hospital Trust experience military vehicles

'Army Life', and allow them to participate in activities often undertaken by reservists.

The six-hour event saw Trust staff learn how to construct a shelter, how to cook in the field using Army ration packs and how to use First Aid skills in different environments.

Attendees also got the chance to learn about chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear personal protective equipment used by the Army.

Captain Ben Wing from 203 Tpt Sqn, worked with the Trust to set-up this unique visit. He said: "The day was rounded off with everyone putting what they had learnt through the day in to action through partaking in a team challenge. Each of the activities were designed to build individuals' leadership and management skills, and give them an insight into military life.

"203 Sqn organised a similar event last year for another local organisation, so it is great that we have been able to link up with the NHS on this occasion to allow them to experience an away day with a difference."

Nottingham City Transport 'on board' in supporting reservists

Nottingham City Transport is encouraging its employees who also serve with the Reserve Forces to wear their military uniforms into work as part of this year's Reserves Day.

Reserves Day is taking place on 21 June and reservists are encouraged to wear their military uniform into work for the day, allowing colleagues to learn more about their military service and commitment to serving our country.

Currently employing five reservists and a number of ex-service personnel, Nottingham City Transport previously signed the Armed Forces Covenant in March 2015 and currently hold a Ministry of Defence Silver Employer Recognition Scheme Award for showing their commitment in supporting the Armed Forces past and present within their business.

Mick Leafe, HR Director at Nottingham City Transport, said: "2017 will be the first time that we will have staff taking part in Reserves Day and we are delighted to play our bit in promoting the vital work our Armed Forces do.

"We have always had a commitment to employing both ex-regular personnel and reservists, we have had a policy in place for a number of years and this has continued to evolve during my 16 year career to date."



HR Director Mick Leafe with reservists Able Seaman Gary Slater and Petty Officer Andrew Maltby

Able Seaman Gary Slater serves with HMS Sherwood, the East Midlands' only Royal Naval Reserve (RNR) unit, and works full-time as a Bus Driver in Nottingham. Speaking about taking part in Reserves Day this year, Gary commented: "I've been employed by Nottingham City Transport for 10 years, and three years ago I became a reservist. It's great to do something completely different at the weekend, I originally joined to embrace new opportunities.

"I was really proud to 'pass out' from my initial RNR training course at Raleigh and feel really lucky to have such a supportive employer. My managers have been really flexible in allowing me to rearrange my shifts to complete my military courses, which really has made my life easier. This will be the first time I've taken part in Reserves Day and I will be proud to wear my RNR uniform on my bus, and look forward to my passengers' asking more about what my role is all about."



Visiting RAF Waddington

Employers had the chance to find out more about reservist roles and view kit and equipment

Employers were given the chance to go 'behind the wire' to learn more about life as a reservist at RAF Waddington.

Representatives from businesses in Lincoln, Gainsborough, Horncastle, Sleaford, Nottingham and Kirkby in Ashfield attended an employer engagement event at RAF Waddington in March, designed to demonstrate some of the roles and responsibilities undertaken by reserve personnel.

During the event, employers listened to an intelligence-based presentation by 7006 (VR) Squadron, learnt more about the roles of the cyber and medical reserves, visited 8 Squadron to see some operational aircraft and got hands on experience with some of the equipment used by reservists employed in the RAF Logistics and Regiment branches.

One of the employers who attended the event was Dr Adrian Tams, Head of Workforce Planning and Recruitment at Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT). He said: "We were proud to be invited to the RAF Waddington event, as we recognise and welcome the valuable skills and experiences those from the Armed Forces can bring to our workforce."



RAF Reservist explains a planning exercise

"LPFT currently employs two reservists and we signed the Armed Forces Covenant last year. We have also received a Bronze Employer Recognition Scheme Award from the Ministry of Defence, in recognition of our continuing support for members of the Armed Forces."

Richard Fuller, Managing Director of County Battery Services Ltd in Kirkby in Ashfield, also attended the event. He said: "I really want to find out more about the Armed Forces. Since we have employed an ex-service staff member, I have been so impressed with the skills and ethics that have been engendered. My father served in the RAF Regiment in World War Two and I always looked up to my father for the discipline he commanded from his colleagues"

Flight Lieutenant Stephen Spreckley, from RAF Waddington's Intelligence Reserves HQ, said: "Anyone thinking of joining the Reserves must elicit the support of family and employer if they wish to embark upon a successful spare time career as a reservist. So, the aim of our event was two-fold; firstly it allowed our personnel the opportunity to demonstrate to their employers exactly what it is they do as a RAF Reservist and secondly, it enabled employers to gain an interactive insight into some of the exciting training, roles and mobilisations that reservists undertake. Employers and reservists have every right to be incredibly proud of the valuable contribution they make towards the RAF and UK Defence mission."



Not Forgotten THEN

Not Forgotten NOW



We are a unique tri-service charity which provides entertainment and recreation for the benefit of serving personnel who are wounded, injured or sick and veterans with a disability, illness or infirmity. Each year we support some 10,000 men and women through a tailored programme of outings, holidays, events, concerts and the provision of televisions and TV Licences.

As a small, non fundraising charity we rely totally on the generosity of those who support us through their donations, grants, fundraising activities and legacies. Every contribution will help us to ensure that those who have served their country and are now suffering from injury, disability or illness are not forgotten.



THE NOT FORGOTTEN ASSOCIATION

From Comradeship To Challenge™

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Tel: 020 7730 2400
Website: www.nfassociation.org
Email: info@nfassociation.org



Charity No 1150541

Employer Engagement



Chief Executive Scott Knowles

The employer interview

The Reservist Magazine had the chance to visit East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire) to speak to Chief Executive Scott Knowles about why his organisation believes it is important to support the Armed Forces community.

What is East Midlands Chamber and what role does the organisation provide in the region?

“East Midlands Chamber is a membership and business organisation that has more than 4,000 members across Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire. We provide a host of business support products and services, from helping new enterprises to get started, to helping businesses that are more mature with their digital growth.

“The Chamber has a comprehensive representation for businesses that may wish the Chamber to take up issues on their behalf such as trade deals in the most recent political landscape. We also provide a comprehensive events programme for business from training the next generation of business leaders to how people can use LinkedIn more effectively for business purposes.

“On a local level, we assist businesses with international trade services if they have aspirations to open up new offices overseas, provide export documentation advice and other services such as business crime reduction initiatives that could be beneficial to regional employers. We have a really broad portfolio so I would encourage businesses to get in touch because more often-than-not, there will be something that we can assist them with.”



East Midlands Chamber offices

How have you come in to contact with the Armed Forces Community during your career?

“East Midlands Chamber currently employs one reservist. The Chamber has long been a supporter of the Armed Forces including both reserve and regular personnel. We have organised many business engagement events over the years so that local employers understand more about the benefits of employing military personnel, as well as highlighting how they can support members of the reserve and regular forces.

“We also have a couple of veterans working for the organisation at the moment. I have found they require very little management. When they understand what needs to be achieved, they are able to just get the job done. They are self-driven and are self-starters, which is great from a business point of view.”

What transferable skills do you think members of the Armed Forces can bring into the civilian workplace?

“Although the Chamber has only one reservist working for us at the moment we have previously employed ex-regulars. I believe that all of these individuals have brought discipline into the workplace as well as being very goal-orientated and driven to achieve results. Some individuals may also have specialist skills gained through their military training that can benefit us as an employer. Our current reservist is a leading authority in the digital sector which is very valuable to us.”



Chamber President Geoff Poyzer with the High Sheriff of Derbyshire Annie Hall and Chamber Chief Executive Scott Knowles at the formal opening of the Chamber's new offices in April

East Midlands Chamber has signed the Armed Forces Covenant and previously achieved a Silver Employer Recognition Scheme Award. Why is it important for you to publicly support the Armed Forces Community?

“We wanted to demonstrate the value of our reservist and the skills he brings into the business, as well as publicly demonstrate that we as an organisation support the work that is being completed by members of our Armed Forces generally.

“As a Chamber it is important to us to showcase to our members the importance of engaging beyond their sector and their immediate geography into other areas. There is definitely an appetite from business for wider community engagement so we hope we are setting a positive example as to how this can be achieved.”

East Midlands Chamber has previously supported a number of Defence-focused events. Why is it important for you to spread the word to the wider business community about what current and previous members of the Armed Forces can offer to organisations?

“There is always work to be done in terms of demystification of what does it mean if you employ a reservist or a veteran of any age. We want to inform people from a business point of view about the tangible benefits of employing a member of the Armed Forces Community, and what positive aspects this can bring into the workplace. We want to assist Defence in providing practical information to others in the business arena so they can truly understand what it means to employ a reservist and support the Armed Forces in general.”

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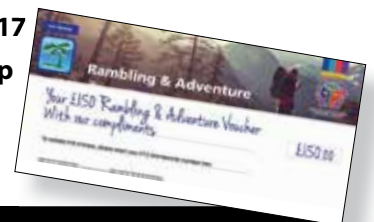
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