

envoy

SUMMER 2017

 **ROYAL
AIR FORCE**
**Families
Federation**
Investigate | Influence | Change



FREE
Please take
a copy

Envoy - produced by the RAF Families Federation for RAF personnel and their families

Queen Victoria School



Raising to Distinction

**Admissions Deadline
15 Jan each year**

Queen Victoria School in Dunblane is a co-educational boarding school for the children of UK Armed Forces personnel who are Scottish, or who have served in Scotland or who have been members of a Scottish regiment.

The QVS experience encourages and develops well-rounded, confident individuals in an environment of stability and continuity.

The main entry point is into Primary 7 and all places are fully funded for tuition and boarding by the Ministry of Defence.

Families are welcome to find out more by contacting Admissions on **+44 (0) 131 310 2927** to arrange a visit.

Queen Victoria School
Dunblane Perthshire
FK15 0JY

www.qvs.org.uk



Ministry
of Defence

Why should **YOU** contact the Federation?

The RAF Families Federation is funded by the RAF but sits outside the Chain of Command as an independent organisation. We represent all RAF personnel – be they Regular, Reserve, single, married or in a partnership, together with their families.

We provide a voice for the issues and concerns you have about life in the RAF, and we have direct access to senior RAF and MOD staffs as well as Government Ministers.

To do all this, we need to hear from you on issues such as quality of life, accommodation, health, education, pay and allowances. Everyone's views and concerns are important to us.

Key things to remember:

- We work with the RAF/MOD and not against them
- We don't undermine the chain of command; we work with them but will dig them in the ribs on your behalf when necessary
- We will signpost you to the 'best' experts to help you if required
- We always maintain your anonymity and respect your privacy
- We always maintain a fair and balanced approach

Remember:

If you don't tell us, we can't tell them.

Welcome from the editor



I am often approached by the many organisations and charities that are out there for you as Servicemen and women together with your families. It still amazes me how wide this network actually is and how many teams of people are out there and who work so hard to provide support. I hope to continue to drip-feed what's on offer through this magazine and if you know of any particular great shares, please do email me for a future edition.

You'll notice a theme in this issue with the RAF Falcons sharing their training news with us and some fantastically colourful imagery to thread through the magazine. Thank you to Flt Lt David Sellers for putting up with my, what feels like a continual plea for news to share. Hopefully the Squadron will enjoy the publicity and I hope too that Al, our 'front cover man' coughs up on at least a round of drinks for everyone.

Don't forget too that Envoy is free for your family to subscribe to. If you are reading this in a coffee shop, waiting room or crew room – please take this copy home to your family for them to read. They can sign up online and have it posted home four times a year. That includes too, your wider family (parents, grandparents, aunts or uncles). It's our way of helping everyone feel involved.

Enjoy your read.

Caroline.

Front Caption: RAF Falcon Sgt Al Donald undertakes a winter training jump over Lake Elsinore Drop Zone, California.
Cpl Neil Chapman (RAF)/MOD Crown Copyright.



CONTACT

Telephone: **01780 781650**,
email: **enquiries@raf-ff.org.uk**
or via the website **raf-ff.org.uk**

Envoy – The magazine of the RAF Families Federation, published 4 times a year.

To have your FREE copy delivered quarterly to your home, email **enquiries@raf-ff.org.uk** or via our website **raf-ff.org.uk**

Director: Bill Mahon

Communications Manager: Caroline Woodward

Communications Assistant: Nick Crouch

Evidence Manager: Colin Jones

Evidence Assistant: Todd Fellows

Evidence Assistant (Housing):

Stan Brathwaite

Regional Covenant Managers:

Graeme Spark, Jo Wilkinson, Lisa Thipthorp

Transition Liaison Manager: Louise Briggs

Office Manager: Ruth McClelland



Published quarterly by Method Publishing, a division of Scottish Provincial Press Limited, on behalf of Envoy

Design and Typography: © Method Publishing 2017

Editorial Matter and Illustrations: © Envoy

Printed in Great Britain by: Warners Midlands plc

Advertisement Office (UK): Method Publishing,

Main Street, Golspie, Sutherland, KW10 6TG

Contact Chris Cappie on 01463 732223 or

email **c.cappie@methodpublishing.co.uk**

Views expressed in Envoy, unless stated otherwise, are those of the author alone and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of Envoy, the RAF or the Ministry of Defence. No responsibility for the quality of goods or services advertised in Envoy can be accepted by the Publishers or Printers and advertisements are accepted on the express condition that the advertiser warrants that they in no way contravene the provisions of The Trades Descriptions Act 1968 nor any other prevailing legislation in the United Kingdom. The Publishers reserve the right to refuse acceptance of any advertisement without stating a reason.

LAND, SEA OR AIR?

GET A DISCOUNT ON THE ROAD

CURRENT OR FORMER MILITARY PERSONNEL CAN SAVE UP TO 20%* ON A NEW FORD



**FORD FOCUS ST-LINE SHOWN AVAILABLE
WITH 15% CUSTOMER SAVING.**

TO FIND OUT MORE, VISIT [FORD.CO.UK/MILITARYSALES](http://ford.co.uk/militarysales)



Go Further

Important information

Official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the Ford Focus ST-Line range: urban 33.2-67.3 (8.5-4.2), extra urban 60.1-83.1 (4.7-3.4), combined 46.3-74.3 (6.1-3.8). Official CO₂ emissions 140-99g/km.

The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results (EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008), are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience.

*Military Saving programme available to current and ex-Service Personnel. Including veterans and retired members of the UK Armed Forces. Customer savings of 5% to 20% off the On The Road price available across the Ford range (excluding KA+, Mustang, Focus RS and selected Mondeo, Edge and Ranger models) on vehicles contracted from 1st April 2017 and 30th December 2017 and registered between 1st April 2017 and 30th June 2018. Retail customers only. This promotion cannot be used in conjunction with other manufacturer promotions or incentives. At participating Ford dealers – for terms and conditions, including the eligibility criteria, eligible models and customer savings visit: www.ford.co.uk/militarysales

Contents



10

6 In the News

FEATURES

8 Surveys – What's the Point?

Fed up with being asked to complete another survey about an aspect of Service life? Before you decide it's not worth it and nothing ever comes of completing surveys, Air Cdre Harper offers a contrary view.

10 Exercise Falcon Stack 2017

The RAF Falcons' Parachute Display Team can be seen at display venues throughout the UK and Europe during the busy display season – but what do they get up to for the remainder of the year?

12 Terror from the sky

One week after the invasion of Normandy, London was hit by the first V1 flying bomb. Eventually around ten thousand of these unmanned aircraft would be launched against England in what became known as 'the Second Blitz'.

FEDERATION

16 Accommodation Matters

Housing information and accommodation updates from your Federation.

18 Living-in survey

Top level results from the Living-in survey illustrated as an infographic.

BUSINESS NEWS

20 A thriving careers network

Project Fortis is a well-established and growing online careers network, set up four years ago to provide contacts, support and job opportunities – now available to military spouses.

24 Yes, no and maybe...

Schools Admissions: Can the Covenant help? As we approach the summer holidays many parents are starting to investigate new school places as they prepare to move to new postings.



12



24



34



36



38

26 Finding a school place

Case study of a six-year-old about to start her third school – how the Covenant can help with school places and how it sometimes falls short of expectations.

29 Armed Forces Covenant Champion

Spotlight on RAF Scampton's Station Covenant Champion.

30 A career in technology?

Amazon Web Services have a brand new programme called AWS re:Start. A free training and job placement programme running throughout 2017 which aims to equip service leavers, reservists, veterans, cadets, cadet force adult volunteers and spouses with the knowledge and skills to build a career within the digital economy.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

34 Patient Co-ordination Cell

A look into the Patient Co-ordination Cell at The Royal Centre for Defence Medicine.

36 Turn to Starboard

Envoy magazine finds out how sailing can treat injuries that are not always visible.

38 Family Planning & Fertility Options

Being a service family has its own unique set of challenges and busy lives can often get in the way of important considerations.

OF INTEREST

41 Importance of bedtime reading

RAF Association's Storybook Wings project helps serving parents to 'make it home' for bedtime.

42 Honours for Supporters

The RAF Benevolent Fund held its annual Awards ceremony at the Royal College of Surgeons in London to celebrate and honour its supporters, donors and volunteers for their remarkable contributions.

FROM THE Director



We often get asked the “So what...?” question when we are talking to people about what we do. Well, if you read the Defence Select Committee 2016 Report on the Armed Forces Covenant you will see us mentioned several times – both as providers of evidence and opinion on key issues but also as influencers of Covenant-related policies, pan-government. Just one example of the influence we can have as a result of the evidence and opinions you provide to us. So thank you to everyone who gets in touch and to all those who complete our surveys too....keep it coming.

Regular readers will know that we are being funded by the Forces in

Mind Trust (FiMT) to work with our colleague Federations on research into families transitioning from the Services into Civvy Street. If you and your family are due to leave the RAF within the next 2 years, or have left the RAF within the last 2 years, and would like to help this important research project, please do get in touch with Louise, who is masterminding our work. Louise.Briggs@raf-ff.org.uk. We'll also be running a Transition survey towards the end of the summer, so keep an eye out for that too – it's an opportunity to share your experiences (good and bad) and to help those who will transition in the future.

Finally, the summer season of Families Days and unit visits is

upon us. Keep an eye out for us at your unit Families Day – we are attending as many as we can – and do please come and have a chat. It's the best bit of our job.

We know that the RAF is incredibly busy and that the current operational cycle is placing great demands on many personnel and their families alike but, if you are able to get some time away over the summer, enjoy it and make the most of it. ●

The RAF Families Federation is an independent organisation parented by the RAF Association



The charity that supports the RAF family

www.rafa.org.uk

Registered charity number
England and Wales 226686
Scotland SCO37673

The RAF Families Federation is supported by the RAF Benevolent Fund



www.rafbf.org

Registered charity number
England and Wales 1081009
Scotland SCO38109

Foreword by

AIR MARSHAL SEAN REYNOLDS CBE DFC RAF
Deputy Commander Capability and Air
Member for Personnel & Capability

I was delighted to be asked to pen a few words for this the summer issue of the Envoy. The 'RAF Family' is extremely close to my own heart and continues to play an integral part in all our service lives now and in the future. I do not need to tell you just how busy operationally the Royal Air Force is across the world – And, importantly I know our Airmen and Airwomen would not be able to make the contribution they do without the support, understanding and flexibility of their families.

Our success depends on us continuing to recruit and retain the remarkable people that I continue to meet during my visits to our Stations, Units and Deployments worldwide – and maintaining that bond and trust we continue to receive from the wider RAF Family. As the Air Member for Personnel you have my assurance that there remains no higher priority for me and the senior leadership of the Royal Air Force than dealing with our people challenges and opportunities.

I personally want to know how you are feeling, the challenges you and your family face and importantly how I can help. That is why I rely on our RAF Families Federation to play their part in doing this. I need them to remain your independent advocate and voice – and to support you and your family when you most need them. I have been delighted to receive their recent reports on Childcare, Reserves, Future Accommodation Model and Single Living and I thank you for taking the time to complete the surveys. It is quite remarkable that completion of the surveys has risen by 70% since 2015. However, going forward the Federation still needs to know what you think ... and about life in our RAF Community. That is why I have asked them in the next few months to carry out a survey on 'mobility' and to continue their excellent work around the Armed Forces Covenant to ensure that we identify and understand any disadvantage that your families may face. Enjoy the magazine and I hope you have a fantastic Summer. ●



Car Finance

The UK's Only Specialist
Armed Forces
 Motor Finance Broker

www.mkcarfinance.co.uk
 03335 775533

Unique Financial Services South East LTD T/A MK Car Finance, company reg 6376027.
 The Old Courthouse, 20 Simpson Rd, Fenny Stratford, Milton Keynes, MK2 2DD.
 Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority FRN: 666832

News

A new first point of contact



A new 24/7 support service for Armed Forces veterans has now been launched. There is now one gateway to find the right support quickly and easily.

Ice hockey team hit the ice



The RAF's only women's ice hockey team has been hitting the ice, with players travelling across the country for their first-ever game.

A career in technology?



Are you interested in a career in technology? Amazon Web Services have a brand new programme called AWS re:Start. A free training and job placement programme.

Additional needs and disability



A Guide for Service Families is available to assist military families with a member who has a disability or an additional need. Its aim is to signpost some of the services and resources available.

Business networking



The Forces Enterprise Network (FEN), Recruit for Spouses and Evolution Forces Families have collaborated to develop a new social enterprise 'Forces Enterprise Network Hub'.

Register now for GP online services



The three Families Federations and the Armed Forces Clinical Reference Group have been working with NHS England on the GP online service, which accesses services via a computer or mobile.

Guide for e-bluey replacement



Quick start guide for INtouch messages the e-bluey replacement. The alternative to Forces Free Air Letters (FFALs), 'blueys', was introduced 1 Apr 17 - they are also free to send.

Legion awards grant



1,250 Forces children and parents across the country to receive books and scrapbooks in the read, share, talk and stay connected initiative. A grant from The RBL was awarded to Reading Force.

Online passport application



HM Passport Office has launched a new online passport renewal service as part of its drive to improve customer services. The service means that the majority of adults can renew their passport online.

Chip and pin withdrawal limit



From 1st May, there were changes to the amounts Forces Post Office (FPO) customers overseas can withdraw using the chip and pin facility.

RAF confirms red skies



The skies above RAF Scampton will be coloured red this September as the legendary Red Arrows are named among the first display aircraft to confirm participation.

Bereavement Scholarship



The Bereavement Scholarship Scheme is available to provide University and FE scholarships for the children of Service personnel whose death has been attributed to Service since 1990.

Wingwalking display confirmed



The organisers of the award-winning RAF Cosford Air Show confirmed that the popular Breitling Wingwalkers would be returning to RAF Cosford in June.

Full force behind Air Tattoo



Reflecting its close relationship with the RAF, the Royal International Air Tattoo has confirmed that this summer's flying display will feature some of the Service's most iconic aircraft.

End of an era for Lossiemouth



XV(Reserve) Squadron, the Tornado Operational Conversion Unit, completed its final formal flying on 17 March 2017. The disbandment of the Sqn, on 31 March 2017, follows 102 years of service.

BuildForce helps ex-military



BuildForce is an industry-led initiative to encourage military service leavers and veterans into careers in the UK construction sector. BuildForce's chair, Andy Parker, is a former Squadron Leader.

Further details on all these stories can be found on
raf-ff.org.uk

Search for the headline



Tax Free Childcare as from 28th April



Tax-Free Childcare will be available to millions of working families across the UK, and over time it will replace childcare vouchers, which will close to new entrants from April 2018.

Kettle on, tea pot at the ready...



It's time to sign up for SSAFA's Big Brew up! SSAFA, the UK's oldest Armed Forces charity, is excited to announce the annual Big Brew Up is now open for sign ups.

Airbus vies for top rank



Another great example of the Covenant working... Airbus supports the UK military not only by supplying aircraft like the A330 Voyager and A400M, but also by helping staff who volunteer as reservists.

Compensation Scheme



Here is a useful factsheet on the compensation scheme for those of you living in SFA. It covers missed appointments and significant defects at the Move-In stage.

2016 Annual Report



The Service Complaints Ombudsman for the Armed Forces has formally launched her Annual Report for 2016. The Service complaints system received a total of 890 complaints during 2016.

Save on your holiday costs



Now that the Easter break is behind us, and Summer breaks firmly in sight, it's worth checking out the Defence Discount Service for saving money on all things holiday-related.

RAF Engineering Competition



2018 is the National Year of the Engineer and to coincide with that, the RAF has just launched its first ever Engineering Competition.

Are you leaving the RAF?

Is there at least 9 months left to the Service person's last day of service?

We are looking for families to take part in a two year research project to help us better understand the transition process for families.

If you become one of our case study families you will receive a 'thank you' gift courtesy of ESS.

Interested in helping?



For more information:

Visit www.raf-ff.org.uk/transition or contact Louise Briggs:
louise.briggs@raf-ff.org.uk 07849 847067

www.raf-ff.org.uk

Image credit: Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund

Surveys – What's the Point?

Fed up with being asked to complete another survey about an aspect of Service life? Before you decide it's not worth it and nothing ever comes of completing surveys, Air Cdre Harper offers a contrary view.

The RAF Strategy 2017 recognises that our highest priority is to ensure that we have the people we need; we must retain and recruit the right people with the right skills and ensure that they and their families feel fully part of the RAF. With this in mind, the RAF Families Federation plays an important role in helping me and my team deliver the people aspects of the RAF Strategy; their work is vital to ensure that you and me have a voice, be it through their online surveys, station visits, Families Days, or via contact with individuals online or by phone.

It is difficult to overstate how important it is for us to understand your needs and you would expect me to encourage you to take the time to take part in surveys and use the Families Federation to represent your views. I recognise that there are many surveys around at the moment and that feedback can often be slow and change even slower. So why bother? Whether we like it or not, silence is often seen as satisfaction or tacit agreement to a particular point of view. We cannot give the impression that we are complacent or that we do not care about many of the issues that affect us all. In short, your opinion matters.

“It is what we do with that evidence that makes the difference.”

Of course, gathering the evidence is only the first step. It is what we do with that evidence that makes the difference. The link between Air Command staffs and the Families Federation is a key strength; by working together we continue to ensure that your voice is heard. It allows us to understand what you think about a particular issue and what you want.



Air Cdre Simon Harper.

© MOD Crown Copyright 2017.

Importantly, it allows us to make the case wherever and whenever we can in order to enhance the experience of the RAF Family and deliver the RAF Strategy.

For example, the work currently being undertaken by the MOD and DIO to produce a scheme to compensate for poor performance under the National Housing Prime contract is due in large part to evidence you provided.

It was also great to see that 2,323 of our personnel occupying Single Living Accommodation responded to the recent RAF FF survey. You'll see an infographic on page 18 sharing a summary. Your evidence will be passed to RAF Community Support staff who requested that the Families Federation carry out a survey of our 'Living-in' personnel. This was in response to one element of the annual Armed Forces Covenant Report to government, focusing on Single Living Accommodation. We can better influence this report through strong well-founded insight and evidence and only you can provide this.

Working together produces results. We have seen successes in the Forces Help To Buy Scheme with over £38 million committed to around 2,500 RAF personnel; our influence under the Armed Forces Covenant umbrella has influenced mortgage lenders, mobile phone companies and other areas of industry to ensure that our personnel and their families are not disadvantaged as a result of their military service. So, if you decided to give the latest survey a miss – please think again. I know that progress can often feel slow and I cannot promise to deliver everything you want. But, surveys are important and your views matter. ●



© MOD Crown Copyright 2017.



© MOD Crown Copyright 2017.

If you want to learn more about the RAF Strategy go to:
raf.mod.uk/role/strategy.cfm



– film clip available

A BREATH OF FRESH AIR EVERY SINGLE DAY



INDEPENDENT DAY & BOARDING SCHOOL
 For girls and boys aged 2 ½ to 18 years

Full, Flexi and Weekly boarding options available
 Excellent GCSE, A Level and IB results
 Exciting extra-curricular programme including competitive sailing

NEXT OPEN MORNING ON SATURDAY 7 OCTOBER
 Scholarships & Bursaries available for entry into Years 7, 9
 and the Sixth Form
 Forces Bursaries & Funding Packages available

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO VISIT
 Call +44 (0)1983 617970 or
www.rydeschool.org.uk
 Queen's Road, Ryde, Isle of Wight, PO33 3BE



RYDE SCHOOL
 WITH UPPER CHINE

An Island School with a Global Outlook

IM, irwinmitchell
 solicitors

The expert hand, with the human touch

Armed Forces Compensation Scheme

Making a claim through the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme for injuries caused by service can be anything but straight forward. If you have already made or are thinking about making a claim under the Scheme, we have a specialist team committed to helping you get the best possible result.

irwinmitchell.com 08000 23 22 33 @Military_IM

For a list of our offices visit our website. Irwin Mitchell LLP is authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority.



RAF Falcons Exercise Falcon Stack 2017

By Flt Lt David Sellers

The Royal Air Force Falcons Parachute Display Team is widely recognised as the UK's premier military parachute display team. They can be seen at display venues throughout the UK and Europe during the busy display season that runs from May to September – but what do they get up to for the remainder of the year?

The answer to this question is simple; they train and prepare for the next season, to ensure that their displays are visually impressive for spectators and that the new members of the team are fully integrated and prepared for the display season. In addition to this, second and third year members of the Team will also be working towards gaining a number of parachuting qualifications, such as Lightweight Parachute Instructor, High Altitude Instructor and Military Advanced Freefall Instructor in preparation for their next role, delivering military parachuting to UK airborne troops.

At the time of writing, the RAF Falcons have just returned from their latest month-long winter training exercise in California – named Exercise Falcon Stack. It is one of two training trips that take place annually throughout November and February. The first two weeks of the exercise involved practicing flying in a canopy stack, gradually increasing the stack size from small, to medium and finally a full stack, as parachutists become accustomed to flying in close proximity to each other. Although the idea of training in California may sound glamorous, the reality of it is that the training is both physically and mentally demanding; especially for

those first year Falcons, who although they are qualified Parachute Jumping Instructors, will quickly need to learn and put into practice many new skills that are needed for display parachuting. Flying in close proximity to other parachutists during the RAF Falcons ten man non-contact canopy stack formation requires extreme concentration for obvious reasons. It is physically demanding, as parachutists are constantly working to maintain the separation between themselves and the parachute just feet below them.

The intensity of the training increases during weeks three and four, with the addition of the four smoke canisters which are attached to the parachutist's ankles; these produce the red and white smoke trails which can be seen during displays. The smoke is activated by the parachutist reaching down to his ankle and pulling a small string loop that attaches to the top of the canister – these are activated on the command of the Team Coach via an in-ear radio piece. The smoke canisters become extremely hot during use so parachutists must ensure they do not get too close to the canopy of the parachutist below them, as any contact between the hot canisters and the nylon canopy could damage it!

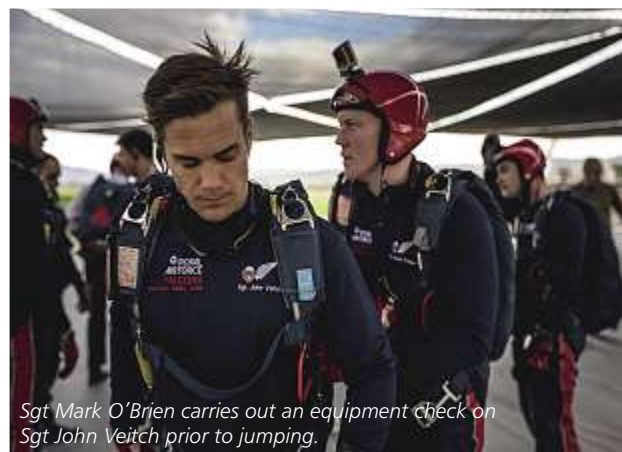
The typical training day involved eight jumps, starting with a safety brief and daily inspection of parachutes and equipment prior to the first jump taking place at around 07.30 am. This first jump was immediately followed by another – as soon as the parachutists have landed they will put on their spare



Team coach Flight Sergeant Ceri Marshman leads the Team in to land during a training jump.



The Team on board the aircraft above Lake Elsinore Drop Zone.



Sgt Mark O'Brien carries out an equipment check on Sgt John Veitch prior to jumping.

parachute and board the aircraft. Following these 'back-to-back' sorties Team members will then attend a debrief to analyse their performance. Each phase of the jump is analysed in detail, with all team members discussing the footage and the Team coach giving feedback on what is required to improve on the next two descents. The analyses is aided by Go-Pro camera footage that each member of the Team captures with a camera attached to their helmet. In addition, video footage is captured by a cameraman filming from the 'Drop Zone', so that they can see what the display looked like from a spectator's perspective. Following this debrief the parachutists re-pack their parachutes and repeat the process another three times until a total of up to eight descents have been completed for the day.

Although the Team has now returned to UK, there is still a great deal of training for them to undertake. They will now be conducting a further three weeks' training to fine-tune their display to the level where it can be considered good enough to request ratification to perform for the public. This ratification is awarded by Air Officer Commanding 2 Group; should he deem the display that he observes be up to the standard required. However, the Team is confident that this season's displays will be up to the high standards that previous year's RAF Falcons Display Teams have set and look forward to performing for spectators at the many exciting events that they are booked in for up and down the country this season.

If you would like to see the RAF Falcons Parachute Display Team in action this year, then please go to the 2017 Display Calendar at the RAF Falcons Webpage: raf.mod.uk/falcons/displays/



Team members prepare themselves on board the aircraft during the climb to drop altitude.



Sgt Paul Smith visualises the next jump.



Carterton Mayor's mascot Ted Little chills in the sunshine.

It is important to note that the Team consists of not only the ten parachutists seen at displays but also a large number of support personnel, who without which, parachuting would be impossible. These include two RAF Falcons Survival Equipment Specialists and a number of personnel that are attached for each exercise; such as medics, armourers and a photographer.

Follow them on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram or Periscope



An original V1 at the RAF Museum.

Terror from the sky

By Kris Hendrix, Researcher at the Royal Air Force Museum London

One week after the invasion of Normandy, London was hit by the first V1 flying bomb. Eventually around ten thousand of these unmanned aircraft would be launched against England in what became known as 'the Second Blitz'. The V1 was officially known as the Fieseler Fi 103, but is better known by its propaganda name: V stood for 'Vergeltungswaffe' which meant 'Vengeance Weapon', no doubt referring to the unabating bombing of German cities by RAF Bomber Command. Although most malfunctioned or were shot down, 2,419 hit London, causing 6,184 deaths and tremendous destruction.

Allied air superiority meant German bombers could no longer operate over Britain without suffering unsustainable losses. This led Nazi Germany to the development of the V1. Its innovative pulsejet engine propelled it to great speed which they hoped would make it impossible to intercept. Compared to a turbojet engine as used in jet fighters, a pulsejet was a much more basic design, leaving out the elaborate compression of air prior to ignition. Due to this simplicity it was cheap to produce, perfect for an

expendable weapon. To cut the costs further, slave labour from concentration camps was used to build these weapons. German records show that a V1 costed only 2 % of the cost of a standard German bomber aircraft.

The weapon was launched from a rail pointed toward its target after which an autopilot with a powerful gyroscope kept it on course. A little wind-driven propeller was linked to an air-log which measured the distance that the missile had travelled. Once the distance had been reached, the V1 would go in a steep dive. The engine would suddenly seize and cut out, announcing its terminal dive to a terrified populace below. Interestingly, this was not a design feature but because the increased speed of the dive damaged the engine.

In November 1943 Flight Officer Constance Babington-Smith from the Central Interpretation Unit was examining aerial reconnaissance photographs of a German base. She quickly realised this was an unmanned flying bomb. Her interpretation persuaded the RAF to start finding and attacking launch ramps in France. This Operation Crossbow greatly delayed

the start of the V1 campaign, although it costed the lives of 3,000 British airmen.

Nevertheless, the V1 campaign started on 13 June 1944 and over a period of two weeks two thousand were launched. To combat this threat hundreds of anti-aircraft guns and fighter aircraft were relocated to the V1 approach area to combat this menace. The guns were aided by radar as well as the secret radar-assisted VT-shells. The aircraft were modified with weapons converging at larger distance and made faster with engines uprated and lightened through the removal of armour. The preferred aircraft were late-Mark Spitfires and Tempests but also the first Meteor jet fighters were used. Although these guns and aircraft were able to shoot down a large proportion of the V1s, it also meant they were unavailable for the fighting in Normandy. Additionally, shooting down the V1 was especially dangerous for the RAF fighter pilots.

One of the top V1 killers was Belgian ace and recipient of the DFC with two bars Squadron Leader Remy Van Lierde who destroyed 44 V1s (with a further 9 shared). On 18 June 1944 he mentioned the dangers of friendly anti-aircraft fire in his combat report:

"On take-off saw Diver (VI) crossing over Dungeness, speed 360 mph at 1,500 feet, but ack-ack (anti-aircraft fire) from Newchurch caused us to break off. Returned to Dungeness and saw another Diver coming in four miles east of Dungeness, same speed and height. Closed to 500 yards and gave one-second burst, but while no strikes were seen the Diver turned to port. No.2 (his wingman) fired two bursts, again seeing no strikes in glow of jet. Flak (anti-aircraft fire) again caused us to break, and as I was completing my turn I saw Diver hit the ground and explode."¹

Beside the risk of being shot down by friendly fire, shooting at a live bomb from close distance could result in the bomb setting off and blasting the fighter aircraft out of the sky. Young mother Gwen Chadwick and her friend were taking a walk when ...

"... we heard a Doodlebug flying over Mount Pleasant. Having

nowhere to shelter we crouched down over the pram and just hoped for the best. At this point a fighter aircraft suddenly appeared out of the blue and fired at the Doodlebug, which exploded in mid-air. The plane then turned in a semi-circle, dipped its wings and appeared to do a victory roll. We could see the pilot waving to us and we were so excited we cheered and waved madly. Then, to our horror, the plane passed over our heads and came down like a stone in the adjoining field and burst into flames, less than 100 yards away. The pilot had not been waving to us. He was trying to warn us to get out of the way. His crash, as we later learned, had been caused by the impact of the Doodlebug exploding. He was a Polish airman and his remains were buried in the local cemetery."²

Beside the VI there was also a V2. This was the very first ballistic

missile, reaching a speed of 3,580 mph. Unlike the former, the V2 was excessively complex and expensive with its mass production draining the German war economy. The paradox of the V2 is that the impossibility of its interception or shooting down meant that it did not tie up British air defences as the VI did, thereby making it the lesser strategic weapon. In any case, none of them could have saved Nazi Germany. Their low reliability, negligible accuracy and the efficient British air defence reduced it to nothing more than a terror weapon, something the British people would never bow down to. ●

Visiting an RAF Museum

Two world class locations for the RAF Museum in London and Cosford: rafmuseum.org.uk

Twitter @RAFMuseum or read reviews on tripadvisor.co.uk

¹ Brian Cull. *Diver! Diver! Diver!* (2008) London: 51

² Norman Franks. *Number One in Peace and War* (2000) London: 127



© RAF Museum.

Deadly Chase.

FANCY WINNING A LIMITED
EDITION ASTON MARTIN VANQUISH S
RED ARROWS CAR?



INSPIRED BY THE SKY. BUILT FOR THE ROAD.

Find out how this car could be yours at
www.rafbf.org/red10

#AstonRed10

 @rafbf

Terms and conditions apply.
The RAFBF is a registered charity in England and Wales (1081009) and Scotland (SC038109).

"Thank you for your particularly informative email and for putting my mind to rest, very much appreciated"



FIGHTING FOR THE FORCES
AND THEIR FAMILIES

Alan Crawford, FPS Member



Alan contacted us with a concern about whether he might exceed his Lifetime Allowance with a pension from his post-Service employer. He had consulted a pension "guru" but then came to us for clarification of the way the figures should be viewed. Happily we were able to explain how the calculations work and reassure him that he still had sufficient headroom left not to incur a tax liability.

We deal with hundreds of such enquiries from our Members, helping them through the AFPS pension maze every month. Join us and see how we can help you. Or simply become a Member for the peace of mind of knowing we're here to help you when you need us. You'll be in good company; we have almost 50,000 Members.

VALUABLE MEMBERSHIP OFFERS

Our Members have access to a range of exclusive offers with significant discounts from trusted Affiliates.



FPS Health



FPS Travel



FPS Motoring



FPS Legal
& Financial



FPS Personal
& Home

INDEPENDENT, NOT-FOR-PROFIT

At the Forces Pension Society, we value our independence. It enables us to serve the interests of our Members as the Armed Forces Pension watchdog. We hold governments of the day to account, arguing for better pensions and campaigning against unfairness in the schemes. For example, our 2015 campaign won the right for **all** widows to retain their pension on remarriage.

You will receive a range of other membership offers, too.

JOIN ONLINE NOW AND RECEIVE A FREE £150 RAMBLING & ADVENTURE HOLIDAY VOUCHER

Visit our website at www.forcespensionsociety.org

quoting Promo Code **EVY2017**

(T's & C's apply). **Membership**

for you and your partner

costs just **£37 per annum**.



JOIN US AND GET MORE FROM YOUR PENSION

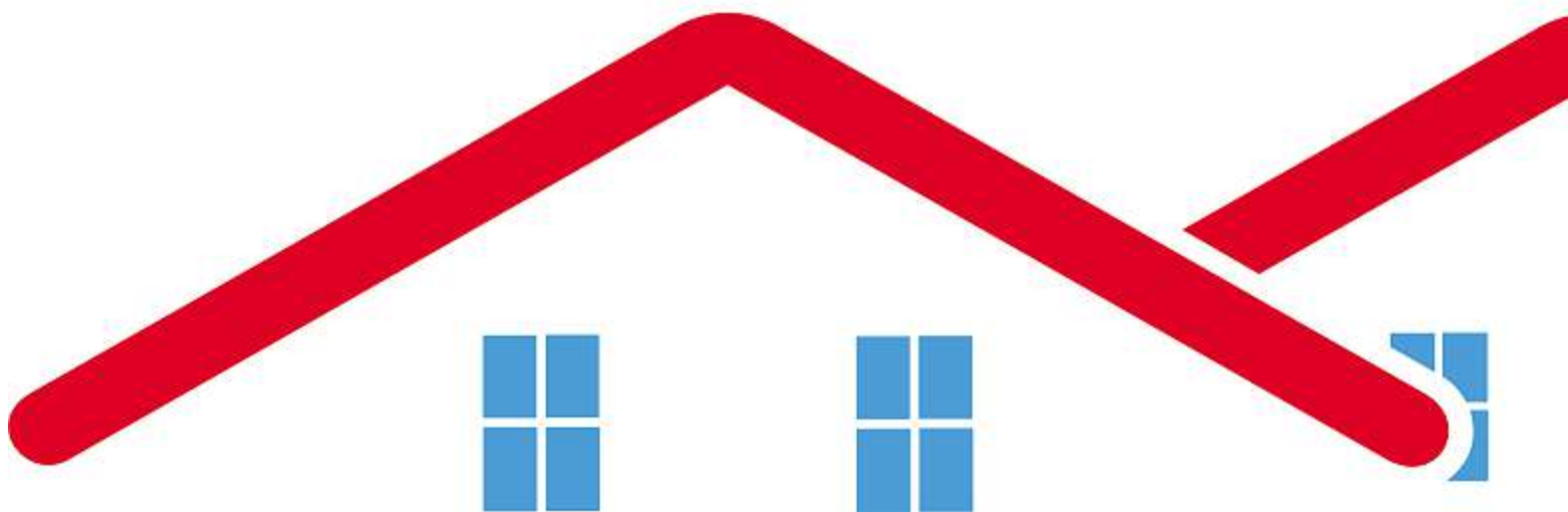
Forces Pension Society

68 South Lambeth Road, Vauxhall, London, SW8 1RL

Tel: 020 7820 9988 - email: memsec@forpen.co.uk - www.forcespensionsociety.org



A member of
Cobseo
The Confederation
of Service Charities



Accommodation Matters

By Stan Brathwaite, RAF FF Housing Specialist

SFA Adaptations

An enduring area of concern is the manner in which welfare cases are handled especially for adaptations. Depending on the complexity of the case, there can be a range of requirements needed to support the family. They can be as diverse as casework from the SSAFA welfare team, an occupational therapist report, input from the SCSO, the Padre, or the SMO as well as from specialist Consultants; plus a significant input from CarillionAmey (CA) and or the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO).

If you have experienced the SFA adaptation process, I would very much appreciate hearing from you about how your situation was handled (or is being handled). This

will assist us in providing more informed evidence to DIO, CA and the Chain of Command.

Future Accommodation Model (FAM)

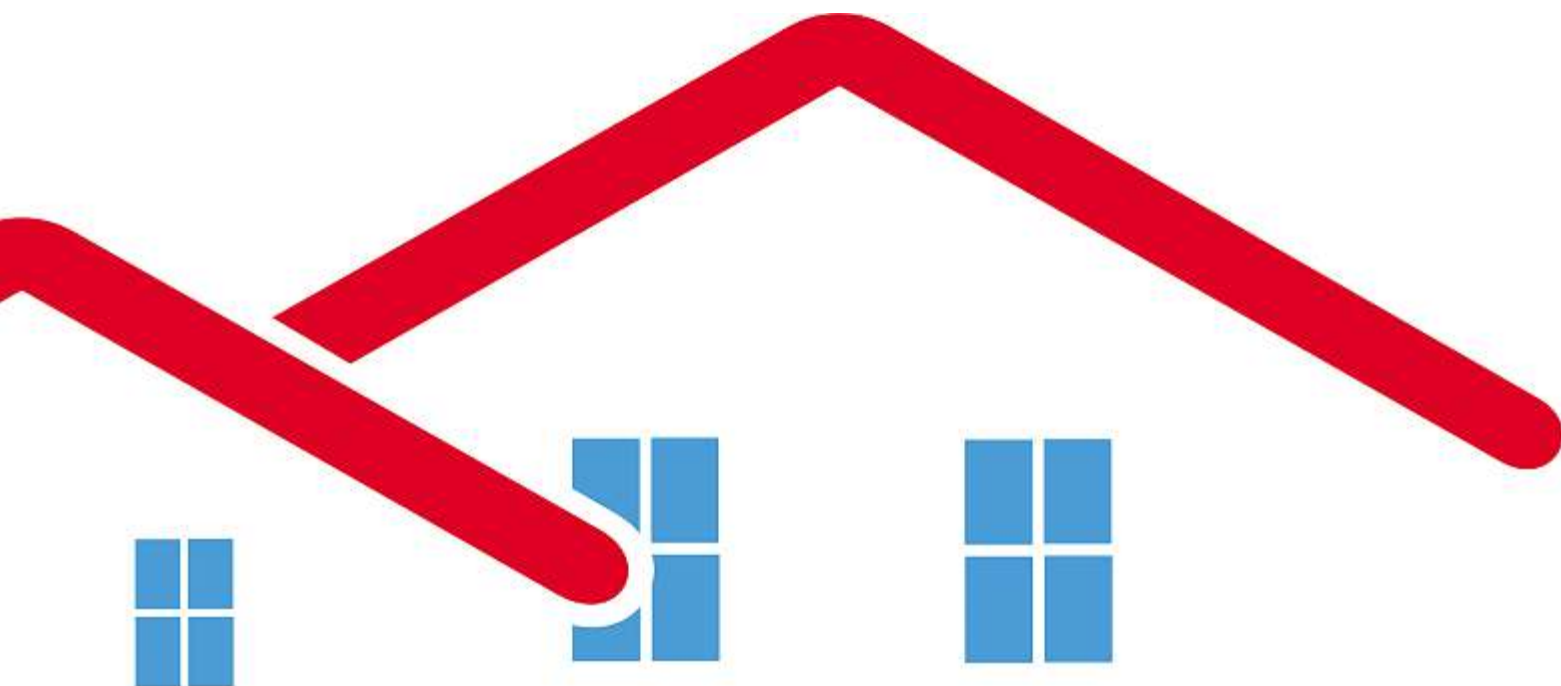
Like you, we wait to hear about the final shape of FAM. Work is ongoing in consultation with the single Services, and we are told that a number of options remain on the table.

However, we are aware that the latest thinking on FAM is that it will not be a 'one-size-fits-all' solution: some personnel will continue to live in SFA and SLA; some will rent accommodation from the private housing market, with Defence committing to retain the subsidy to keep rents low; others will be supported to live in their own homes. So whatever



it looks like, it will probably be complicated!

Before implementation commences with a pilot in late 2018, there are many key questions to tackle... What will the SDSR commitment to reduce the built estate by 30%, reduce infrastructure costs and rationalise the accommodation estate look like when balanced against the acknowledged



need to retain some (how many) SFA? What will the mobility based allowance and geographic variation look like? How will dependant children be defined and supported? What extra leave and support will be available when Service Personnel are required to move? How will FAM link to the other People Programme change projects such as Future Engagement Systems (FES) and New Joiners' Offer (NJO)? These are but a few of many more imponderables. Naturally when we are given more specific details we will let you know.

Compensation

A new compensation scheme came into effect from 1 April 17 covering 'missed appointments' and problems at 'Move-In' – check our website for details. We welcome this initiative because the issue of compensation has caused much frustration for families and we have been campaigning for such a scheme since the demise of the Modern Housing Solution contract. Families have told us that where things go wrong, particularly for missed appointments and failure to achieve the correct Move-In standards, it is they who bear the brunt of the fall-out. We believe that this scheme will go a long way to redress these

problems and to encourage better working practices. However, it will also mean that occupants will have to take greater responsibility for ensuring that they are available at the property to allow the contractor entry for booked appointments and, at move-in, to make sure that the right standard has been achieved and to NOT be fobbed off with promises "that the problem will be fixed next week, so just sign here as accepting the property".

CarillionAmey

Judging by the cases I deal with, the stats we receive from CarillionAmey and DIO coupled with the drop-off in adverse Facebook SFA activity, there is a consensus that the delivery of service by CA is improving. CA is proud to announce that 'Complaints are down and compliments are up in the South East' and that will be a well-received turnaround in that region. We do acknowledge that this region did have particular challenges but it did take the intervention of the Hd DIO SD Accn, an MP and a concerted effort by the Families Federations, SCSOs and Welfare Officers to bring about that change. Let's now accept that any form of improvement must be welcomed.

A lesser known fact about CarillionAmey is their noble achievement in fundraising for SSAFA the Armed Forces charity. They are extremely proud to be one of the largest corporate supporters of SSAFA. They are committed to raising £250,000 over five years of the partnership to help SSAFA provide lifelong support for our Armed Forces and their families. The partnership is built on our long-standing support for military and ex-military service men and women and, through the enthusiasm of their employees taking part in fundraising activities and initiatives, they've already raised more than £150,000 for the charity. On the back of their partnership with Symphony Group, who supply the kitchen upgrades for Service Family Accommodation throughout the UK they recently presented a cheque to SSAFA for £13,710.

Finally

I urge you to continue to contact us on any SFA and Single Living Accommodation (SLA) issue that may be of concern to you. And check out on our website the results of the RAF FF survey about serving personnel who live in. ●

LIVING IN SURVEY - TOP LEVEL RESULTS

**2,323 surveys completed,
76% by singlies and
over 8,000 comments**



Responses to the question:

Do you think your accommodation charge is value for money?

Yes 52%
No 36%
? I don't know 12%



"Do we really get value for money and what should be delivered by this contract? This is one area after 32 years of service where I would expect standards to have improved. I didn't think this would be an area where I would consider the 'good old days' to actually be better!"

OVER HALF

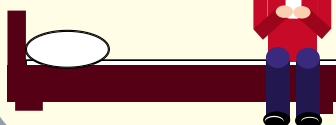
of respondents thought PAYD is NOT good value for money.



"The lack of cooking facilities tied with the poor availability of pay-as-you-dine CRL catering limits the ability to maintain a balanced nutritional intake. The CRL provision seems to be primarily aimed at the 'normal' working day, which does not apply to so many people."

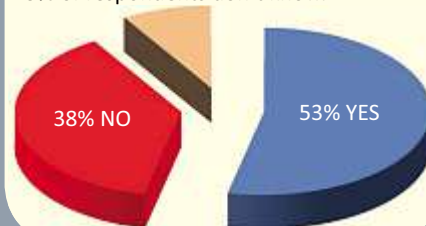
54%

of respondents didn't know what grade of accommodation they were in.



Does the condition of your work environment influence your intent to stay or leave the RAF?

9% of respondents don't know.



31%

of respondents thought the quality/standard of their accommodation was adequate.



31% thought it was good

8% thought it was excellent

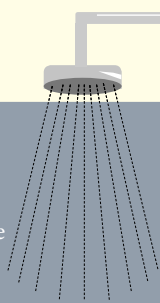
"Overall maintenance is satisfactory, but this station has had a problem providing hot water for the last year. Second block I have lived in here and again I have had no hot water for at least 4 weeks now."

1 in 3

of respondents rated the maintenance of their accommodation as poor.

"We do not get provided with a fridge so we have had to put together to buy our own. We do have 2 washing machines and 2 tumble dryers between 10-12 of us which is good."

"Working 13 hour shifts at a hospital 15 miles away from the station I live at means that if I am working I am not able to use the facilities at the station gym."

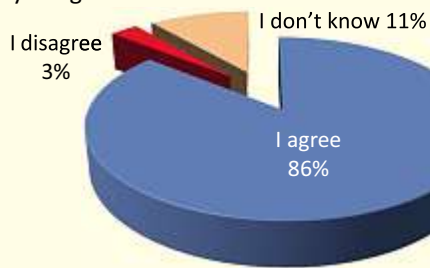


74%

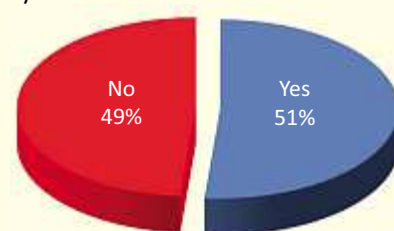
of respondents are able to participate in station sports when they want to? (E.g. CO's Cups)



The 2016 Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey suggested that morale is poor and getting worse. Do you agree?



Do you have cooking facilities in your accommodation?



**ROYAL
AIR FORCE
Families
Federation**
Investigate | Influence | Change

To read the report visit: raf-ff.org.uk/reports.asp

6 MONTHS ON TOUR

300 IEDS

20 MISSILE ATTACKS

Don't let asking for help be the one thing you're afraid of.

Forcesline is a free, independent helpline, that's outside of the chain of command for the Armed Forces and their families. We'll listen and help get you back on track.

0800 731 4880

Open weekdays, 9am to 5.30pm

Or get in touch online at ssafa.org.uk/forcesline

ssafa | the
Armed Forces
charity

Registered Charity No. 210760 and SC038056, Est. 1885. S184.0417

A thriving careers network now accessible to military spouses



Connecting the armed forces community

Project Fortis is a well-established and growing online careers network, set up four years ago to provide contacts, support and job opportunities for service leavers and veterans, to help them make a successful transition to rewarding civilian careers. Having proved this concept, Project Fortis has extended access for military spouses to the thriving community of Armed Forces supporters in industry – representing over 30 top UK employers across a wide range of sectors.

“Securing a great job is getting trickier for everyone.”

Many organisations recognise the enormous pool of talent on offer by engaging military spouses. They also understand some of the challenges faced: returning to work after long periods of absence; finding

rewarding part-time employment; balancing work with family life.

Why Project Fortis?

The team behind Project Fortis found a growing number of people – both ex-Forces and civilians – want to give support to the Armed Forces community. There just weren't many opportunities for individuals to make a difference in direct and practical ways other than through charitable causes and local initiatives.

Equally military spouses may lack contacts to help them navigate the local jobs market and apply their skills and experience if they have had to relocate frequently.

Richard Tyrie – Founder of Project Fortis says:

“We wanted to make it easier to connect people that need advice with others that are keen to give it”.

He adds: “Our community makes it easier for military spouses to access to work placements and hidden job

opportunities. Employers now fill the majority of vacancies without advertising, with up to 70% of jobs being filled through informal networks. Knowing what jobs are coming up and getting ‘introduced’ to an organisation or hiring manager by an insider can often give you the edge.

With the advent of social and business network it's not as simple as reading the local recruitment ads anymore – securing a great job is getting trickier for everyone. We felt that many military spouses were at a disadvantage, so we wanted to fix this by connecting them into the very ‘Forces friendly’ organisations we already work with – giving them more of a chance to showcase their skills and identify opportunities that fit with their life style and family commitments.

So what is Project Fortis and how does it work?

At the heart of Project Fortis is the website: **projectfortis.co.uk** – the platform connects service leavers,

veterans and military spouses to 'Buddies'/mentors from the business community who have pledged to offer personal support.

The 'Buddies' come from a variety of backgrounds and levels of seniority. They're primed and well positioned to give the inside track on their organisation, and share their experience of specific roles and the job application processes.

Richard, who has helped many thousands of people secure employment over the years, explains that:

"To access career advice and 1:1 support you just need to visit the Project Fortis website and create a simple profile – telling us your background, location, and the industries you want to explore, and then we put you in contact with the right people. Our focus is to connect you with people who are keen to help you succeed.

We already have a few thousand members, and the community is constantly growing as word spreads about some of the excellent employment outcomes.

People are using Project Fortis in different ways. Some have a specific organisation or job role in mind, and just want to connect with, say HR managers because they know where they want to end up. Most of the time people connect with several Buddies/mentors at a time to get inspiration and explore opportunities with a number of different organisations.

Often people need some very practical assistance with CV writing and preparation for interviews.

And increasingly, moral support is something that people tell us they value greatly. Going through the recruitment process is a challenge for anyone so having someone that can open doors, and give the right amount of support can prove invaluable in securing the job you want.

84% of people we've worked with tell us the relationships they've formed through Project Fortis have had a significant impact on their job prospects, which is hugely satisfying for us. And we're working continually to get more and more ambassadors on board to broaden the range of employment opportunities for veterans and military spouses." ●

JOIN THE PROJECT FORTIS NETWORK

Website: projectfortis.co.uk

Get in touch: info@projectfortis.co.uk / 0203 176 6711



Entry point salary £23,025 (rising to £25,700 after training)

The Civil Nuclear Constabulary (CNC) is an armed police force, keeping the nation safe from harm by securing the integrity of civil nuclear material. Our primary function is the protection of licensed nuclear sites not used wholly or mainly for defence purposes and the safeguarding of nuclear material in the UK and elsewhere.

The facts: we have some remote locations; you will need to live in close proximity of your allocated site and our officers work 12 hour shifts.

The opportunities: 16 week foundation training course; unique firearms training and after 24 months you can apply to join one of our specialists teams such as firearms instructor, dog handler or escort team.

You will be required to achieve medical and fitness standards as part of the application process, and these must be maintained and demonstrated throughout your career with the CNC.

For more information and to apply, please visit www.cnc.jobs

CNC is an equal opportunities employer

- | Injured Serving Personnel
- | Struggling RAF Families
- | Lonely Veterans

**ROYAL
AIR FORCES
Association**

The charity that supports the RAF family

RAF heroes need you

Please help us care for and
support the RAF family
in your local area

**Join
today**

When you become a member of the RAF Association you help us support RAF heroes when they need us most.

Support RAF heroes from just £8.50 a year.

You can enjoy the camaraderie of your local branch – including social events, RAF discussions and volunteering opportunities. Everyone is welcome, whether you served, or simply want to support the RAF family.

Please join today. Thank you.

0800 018 2361 | rafa.org.uk/join



Patron: Her Majesty The Queen
Registered Charity 226686 (England & Wales), SC037673 (Scotland).



GET EXCLUSIVE MILITARY SAVINGS AT MARSHALL MILITARY SALES

JAGUAR XF

UP TO 23.5% MILITARY SAVINGS. £345* A MONTH

Distinctively Jaguar, XF's assertive design stands out from the crowd. An unrivalled combination of steering response, ride comfort, refinement and performance. Offering a drive with CO₂ emissions as low as 104g/km and fuel economy of 71mpg, with engines with top speeds of 155mph and 0-60mph in as quick as 5.1 seconds – there is an XF for every driver.

Call or visit to find out more.

*Plus deposit and final payment – please see details below.

Representative example XF Diesel Saloon 2.0D (180) R-Sport 4 door Auto

On the Road Price	£29,249.02
Customer Deposit	£2,925.00
Total Amount of Credit	£26,324.02
Credit Facility Fee (inc. in monthly payments)	£0.00
Purchase Fee (included in monthly payments)	£10.00
Initial Payment	£345.14
47 Monthly Payments	£345.14
Final Payment	£14,878.00
Total Amount Payable	£34,024.58
Duration of Agreement	48 months
Representative APR%	5.9% APR
Interest Rate (Fixed)	5.74%

MARSHALL MILITARY SALES

Jaguar Land Rover House, Mallory Road, Peterborough, PE1 5PT
+44 (0)1733 213231 jaguarlandrovermilitarysales.co.uk

The figures provided are as a result of official manufacturer's tests in accordance with EU legislation. A vehicle's actual fuel consumption may differ from that achieved in such tests and these figures are for comparative purposes only. *Finance is subject to status and only available to full time members of HM Forces and Ex full time Serving members qualify up to 5 years from date of termination, aged 18 and over resident in Mainland UK and N.Ireland. Indemnities may be required. This finance offer is available from Black Horse Limited trading as Jaguar Land Rover Financial Services, St William House, Tresillian Terrace, Cardiff, CF10 5BH. This offer is available on new Jaguar and Land Rover models at Marshall Military Sales only. Military on the road price includes: Tax Free for Export – Government First Registration Fee. Tax Paid for UK Government – First Registration Fee, 12 Months Vehicle Excise Duty and 20% VAT. Representative Example is based upon an annual mileage of 10,000 miles. Prices and savings correct at time of going to press.

LAND ROVER RANGE ROVER EVOQUE

UP TO 15% MILITARY SAVINGS. £349* A MONTH

Range Rover Evoque demands respect on every street corner. Its contemporary design and a brand new Ingenium diesel engine – our most fuel and emission efficient ever. The sleek, prestigious Range Rover Evoque provides uncompromised concept car styling and a unique balance of dynamic ability, advanced engineering and contemporary luxury. Call or visit to find out more.

Marshall Military Sales - The right choice.

*Plus deposit and final payment – please see details below.

Representative example Range Rover Evoque Diesel 2.0 TD4 SE Tech 5 door Auto

On the Road Price	£32,818.13
Customer Deposit	£3,282.00
Total Amount of Credit	£29,536.13
Credit Facility Fee (inc. in monthly payments)	£0.00
Purchase Fee (included in monthly payments)	£10.00
Initial Payment	£349.24
47 Monthly Payments	£349.24
Final Payment	£18,701.00
Total Amount Payable	£38,397.28
Duration of Agreement	48 months
Representative APR%	5.9% APR
Interest Rate (Fixed)	5.74%

Yes, No and Maybe...

Schools Admissions: Can the Covenant help?

By Jo Wilkinson, RAF Regional Covenant Manager

"It helps you get a school place" is the often first answer many Service families give when they are asked what they know about the Armed Forces Covenant. For any parent securing the 'right' school place for your child is an anxiety-provoking, emotional time. As we approach the summer holidays many parents are starting to investigate new school places as they prepare to move to new postings. Set against the background of the ever-changing landscape of education in the UK, the complexities of differing admission processes dependent upon country, local authority and type of school and a well-publicised shortage of school places in some areas, the answer to "Can the Covenant help?" is a less-than straightforward "Yes, No and Maybe"

Yes

Under section 2.18 of the Schools Admissions Code all admissions authorities in England *must* accept an application for children of Armed Forces personnel on proof of assignment and in advance of moving to the area. Parents do not need to have an allocated address and applications can be processed on the basis of the unit address or general quartering address. Of course, "yes" turns to "maybe" for areas where a family could be housed in a number of different areas, some of which may be in different local authorities. However, this provision arising from the Covenant has required admission authorities to recognise the unique nature of mobility in the Armed Forces. By comparison non-Service families cannot apply for a school place until they have moved into the area or have proof that they will move imminently, usually within 2 weeks. This applies to all types of admissions.

No

One of the most common misconceptions of the Covenant is that it will automatically help parents to get the school of their choice. This is where the answer to whether the Covenant will help is "no". Applications under the 'normal admissions'

process for entry to Reception year or year 7 the following September, where Service families are already in residence in the area and will remain in situ, are treated the same as any other application by any other parent. The core principles of the Covenant are that Service families should suffer no disadvantage as a result of Service. These families have equal access to school places alongside any other family in the local area and there are no special provisions under the Covenant. Unfortunately, the statutory timetable for normal admissions often results in Service parents making 'late applications' as they have been posted after statutory deadlines. Admission authorities cannot refuse applications because they are late and cannot give priority based on the date upon which applications were received. However, in practice most school places will already have been allocated, offered and accepted by other families. Local authorities are not permitted to reserve blocks of school places for Service pupils even where there are likely to be significant numbers. In recognition of the Covenant, local authorities must find a school place for Service children who move into the area as a result of their parent's posting but if no places are available at the parents' preferred school, there is no duty to comply with parental preference. However, dependent upon a number of factors the answer could become "maybe".

Maybe

The Covenant has encouraged the Schools Admission Code to create several powers which may support Armed Forces families seeking school places. However, the answer to whether the Covenant can help individual families is usually a less than satisfactory "maybe" as powers are only exercised at the discretion of the admissions authorities, hence their use in practice will vary from one area to another and usually depends upon many factors.

The most well-known power is the exception to Infant Class Size limits. By law classes for children in Key stage 1 cannot exceed 30 pupils per teacher. Under the Schools Admissions



Code in England children of service personnel who move outside of the normal round of admissions *may* be admitted as excepted pupils. It is important to note that this only applies to 'In year' admissions for children already at school elsewhere and will not assist Service parents who are applying for the Reception year under the normal admissions process. It is also important to know that many local authorities are reluctant to exercise this power as standard practice. In these circumstances we would always advise parents to seek specialist advice from CEAS (see below) as appeals against Infant Class Size limits are notoriously difficult to win.

If there are no places available at their chosen school, pupils may be put onto waiting lists for places as well as being offered a place at another school. Waiting lists are determined by the Oversubscriptions Criteria for each school. By law looked after children must be the first priority for all oversubscriptions criteria as these are deemed to be the children most in need. Under section 1.39A of the Schools Admissions Code Service children *may* be given priority in oversubscriptions criteria. In practice many oversubscriptions criteria do not mention service pupils or these may come low down the list behind criteria such as distance from school or siblings in the school.

As Covenant Managers and within the wider work of the RAF Families Federation we are working closely with the Department for Education in England, the devolved administrations, the Ministry of Defence and others to continually review the implementation of the Covenant and

highlight ongoing issues for Service parents. If you would like to know more about our specific work in this area please get in touch.

And not to forget Service Pupil premium....

Of course, once parents have navigated the complexities of school admissions and their child has a school place focus switches to Service Pupil Premium (SPP). SPP was introduced in England under the Covenant to mitigate the impact of Service life on children's education. Our Covenant Managers are working with all of the partners above to look at SPP, how it's spent and how it could be used more effectively. For more information please feel free to contact us raf-ff.org.uk/covenant.asp.

For information about school admissions in your local area parents are advised to check the website of their local authority which will have information about who to contact about which type of admission for each school in its area.

All schools admissions in England are governed by the Schools Admissions Code: gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/389388/School_Admissions_Code_2014_-_19_Dec.pdf

For any specialist advice on school admissions anywhere in the UK we would advise parent to contact the MOD Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS).
gov.uk/guidance/childrens-education-advisory-service
 Email: dcyp-ceas-enquiries@mod.uk Tel: 01980 618244

Finding a school place:



A case study

As parents of a six-year-old daughter about to start her third school we have seen, first-hand how the Covenant can help with school places and how it sometimes falls short of expectations. Her first school move was during reception year in spring 2016. We got our posting notice and duly applied for a place at the closest of three local schools. In recognition of us as an Armed Forces family the local authority accepted and processed our application straight away, despite being three months in advance of our move. We were moving to an area with a choice of good and outstanding schools and we naively assumed that, as signatories to the Covenant and with a significant number of Service pupils, the local authority would automatically offer us a place at our local school which had the majority of Service pupils in the local area. We were shocked and disappointed to open our offer letter and find that our daughter had been offered a place at only our 7th closest school which, to make matters worse, had recently been given its second “requires improvement” grading from Ofsted.

With help from CEAS we appealed against the decision on the grounds that we did not feel the offered school could meet our daughter’s needs as a Service child as well as our chosen school. We asked for the local authority to exercise its discretionary power to admit our daughter as an “excepted pupil”. Unfortunately, despite expressing sympathy for our situation, the appeal panel were unable to uphold the appeal as they concluded they were bound by the constraints of infant class size legislation. The panel adjudicated that as the Schools Admission Code uses the words “may” and not “must” it was in the discretion of the local authority whether to exercise its power and the local authority had not acted unreasonably within the legislation.

In the meantime we put our daughter on the waiting list for several other schools and thankfully before we moved she was offered a place at another school. This school had no other

Service children, was still only our 5th closest school, and we had the daily inconvenience of having to drive to school each day as it was too far to walk. However, the school was very welcoming to us as a new family and provided excellent education and support to our daughter.



© RAF FF

We are moving again soon due to promotion and, after our previous experience, we applied for school places in the new area with much greater trepidation. Again the local authority has recognised us as Service parents and accepted our application in advance of our move. This time we were fortunate that there was a vacancy in year 1 at our local school. However, the head teacher assured us that even if the place were allocated elsewhere she had previously accepted Service children as excepted pupils over the infant class limit supported by the local authority. We have duly been offered and accepted a place at the school. By comparison it has been a totally contrasting, straightforward experience.

So did the Covenant help us? Yes and no. It certainly helped being able to apply for school places in advance. For our first move this gave us several weeks to appeal and wait for a place to become available at another school before we moved. For our second move it meant we could apply straight away whilst a place was available. What’s difficult to know for sure is how confident we can be that things will work out well the next time we move.

Need help?

Contact the RAF Families Federation
on 01780 781650 or
email enquiries@raf-ff.org.uk ●



CAMMELL LAIRD

PROUD SPONSOR



24TH JUNE
2017

LIVERPOOL
#SALUTEOURFORCES



LIVERPOOL WATERFRONT

A NATIONAL CELEBRATION OF THE ORDINARY PEOPLE
WHO DO EXTRAORDINARY JOBS

—  —
@CultureLpool

—  —
CultureLiverpool

—  —
www.liverpoolarmedforcesday.co.uk

Culture
Liverpool



it's liverpool





COTSWOLD
outdoor

MADE FOR ADVENTURE

15% DISCOUNT* FOR ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL

STORES NATIONWIDE | COTSWOLDOUTDOOR.COM

*Not to be used in conjunction with any other offer or discount. Selected lines are exempt.
Only valid upon production of military identification in store or use of discount code online. Offer expires 31.12.17.



An Armed Forces Covenant Champion

Spotlight on...

Gill Angel, RAF Scampton

Gill Angel has been the Community Development Officer (CDO) at RAF Scampton for 12 years and has fully embraced the additional function of being the Station's Covenant Champion.

We asked Gill to tell us a little more about how she has made such a success of the role.

1. What is the general reaction from people when you mention the Covenant?

"What is that? What does that involve?" It is important that we relay how personnel and families can benefit from the Covenant. We have been extremely fortunate here at RAF Scampton to have secured a substantial amount of funding through the AFCC therefore there is knowledge of what the Covenant can do.

2. Approximately how many people/families do you feel have been helped at Scampton by the Covenant?

The whole community – both service and civilian – have benefitted from the Covenant. Our Play Park, Skate Park, Community Gardens & Youth Club projects received funding – they are community projects that benefit us all. A number of families have also benefitted from advice in relation to education, employment and health issues.

3. What areas of your work are directly affected by the Covenant and have there been clear changes in the way you do things because of it?

Since being appointed the AFCC Champion on Station I make sure that all the work I do underpins the Covenant. It is important to give families the opportunity to ask questions in general, or about a specific issue that they may have.

4. How do you ensure you are fulfilling the promises of the Covenant in your role?

I make sure that our Service personnel and families are kept fully aware. The AFC Snapshots are uploaded onto our MOSS site and our Service Families' Facebook page; we introduce the Covenant and its role at our Arrivals Brief on Station. I use as many avenues as possible to improve awareness and understanding.

5. What do you think the most important part of being Scampton's Covenant Champion is?

I personally think that the CDOs are best placed to be the Champion on Station but I am aware that this is not the case on all RAF Stations. The CDOs have had involvement with local AFCC Partnership Boards for years with some of us involved in the inception of these Boards. Through the annual Community Needs Analysis and the Community Support Action Plan, we know our community and we acknowledge the needs and gaps in provision.



Gill Angel. © RAF FF

6. What is the main message you feel is important to get to our personnel about the Covenant?

The Covenant is for everyone.

7. What is the main thing you want to tell our families about the Covenant?

It is not just a funding pot. There is a lot more about the Covenant that can benefit everyone.

8. What is your main challenge of being Covenant champion at Scampton?

Raising awareness. Through working closely with Lisa Thipthorp from the RAF Families Federation, we are looking at how to get the message out to a wider audience at RAF Scampton.

9. What advice would you give a new Covenant Champion as to how to get the most out of the Covenant?

Make contact with another Champion closer to you, contact the RAF Families Federation and local AFCC Partnership. Visit the AFCC Page on Air Command's MOSS page to learn about what is going on and keep on getting that message out to all Service personnel and their families that the Covenant is there for everyone. ●

Information: raf-ff.org.uk/covenant.asp



Are you interested in a career in technology?

Amazon Web Services have a brand new programme called AWS re:Start. A free training and job placement programme running throughout 2017 which aims to equip service leavers, reservists, veterans, cadets, cadet force adult volunteers and spouses with the knowledge and skills to build a career within the digital economy.

Working in conjunction with QA Consulting, AWS re:Start is designed to accommodate different levels of experience - **even if you have no previous technical knowledge or experience in the tech sector you can still apply.**

Once you've completed the training we will provide a work placement with one of our customers or partners. The Sage Veteran Programme will provide a specifically trained mentor for each veteran who will give 1-2-1 support to guide you through your initial placement.

Many of the UK's leading businesses have already pledged roles including; BP, BBC, Daily Telegraph, Direct Line, Sage, Tesco Bank

Find out more or register your interest:
aws-restart.com/



Get free training – Gain work experience – re:Start your career



**SNOW
+
ROCK**

**15%
DISCOUNT***

**FOR ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL
IN-STORE AND ONLINE**

 Rab



 **FJALL
RAVEN**

DIDRIKSONS1913
Grundsund SWEDEN

STORES NATIONWIDE | SNOWANDROCK.COM

*Not to be used in conjunction with any other offer or discount. Selected lines are exempt.
Only valid upon production of your military identification in store or use of discount code online. Offer expires 31.12.17.

THE REWARDS OF LIFE IN THE RAF

- Competitive pay and pension
- Training and lifelong learning
- Six weeks' paid leave and public holidays
- Free medical and dental care
- Subsidised food and accommodation
- Sponsorship & bursaries for university available
- A culture of camaraderie

SEARCH ONLINE FOR
RAF RECRUITMENT



My Experience...

SAC **SANGA QUAMINA** - Royal Air Force

After leaving education, Senior Aircraftman Sanga Quamina began to look for office based jobs. As a skilful top-level table tennis player, Sanga was interested in opportunities which he could work around his training and travel to tournaments.

That's when he found the Royal Air Force - an employer offering an apprenticeship opportunity to match both his career and sporting aspirations - with a top benefits package included. Read Sanga's story below...

"I decided to join the RAF as a Human Resources Specialist after I left education and it has been one of the best decisions I have ever made. Working for the RAF gives me an equal balance of work, educational opportunities, a good income and the chance to play my favourite sport.



"I am currently based at RAF High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire, where I provide support to personnel who are preparing to move to a different RAF station or leave the Service altogether. Deployments can be a hard time for personnel and their families as it can mean moving house, but it my job to make everything as simple as possible. This is something I take great pride in as it gives me a real feeling of job satisfaction.

"The main responsibilities of my role include; briefing individuals on the pre-deployment preparation process, booking travel and briefing personnel on the welfare facilities available to their families.

"My apprenticeship began with a 10-week Recruit Training Course at RAF Halton. After graduating I started specialist training for the Human Resources role at the RAF School of Administration based at MOD Worthy Down in Hampshire. The training was very informative and after 16 weeks were complete I felt fully prepared to do my job anywhere in the UK.

"There are a number of extra benefits which attracted me to joining the RAF, including the competitive pay and pension scheme, six weeks' paid annual leave, free medical and dental care and further education opportunities - such as courses at university.

"I play lots of sport which are supported by the RAF and there is often help towards the cost of things like adventurous training from various unit funds and the RAF Sports Lottery. I am also a keen table tennis player and have represented the RAF in the Inter Services Championship, as well as attending a training camp in Hungary. In the future I plan to travel with the RAF Table Tennis team to the USA and Australia - which is another great opportunity to travel alongside my day job."

**NO
ORDINARY
JOB**

A look into the Patient Co-ordination Cellat The Royal Centre for Defence Medicine

By Cpl Jude Fellows, RAF Medic – Aeromedical Evacuation Controller

The Royal Centre for Defence Medicine (RCDM) Patient Co-ordination Cell (PCC) is located within Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham (QEHB). It is a tri-service, multidisciplinary team who work 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to provide care to military patients and support welfare services to their families.

The PCC mission statement is to deliver specialist hospital capability to the highest standard including the safe arrival of military patients and their families at QEHB, their on-going reception, administration, tracking and management.

This is exactly what the team at PCC do, alongside dedicated medical personnel from the NHS and military staff at QEHB and surrounding Hospital Trusts who are providing the medical treatment. PCC encompasses personnel from all 3 services. RAF personnel primarily deal with all Aeromedical Evacuation (AE) aspects, and a mixture of Army and Navy personnel are responsible for the management of patients whilst being admitted to QEHB and surrounding hospitals. A Patient Support Officer (PSO), an Army Major with a non-medical background, organises and co-ordinates welfare aspects for patients and their families. Also working alongside the PSO to support the welfare of the patient and their family is a team from the Defence Medical Welfare Services.

The Aeromedical Evacuation (AE) team are responsible for the return of sick or injured service personnel, mobilised reservists and entitled civilians from worldwide locations to the UK who are deployed on Operations, Exercise or away on Adventurous Training. The RCDM Aeromedical Evacuation team will arrange the correct care pathway from initial notification of sickness or injury to the appropriate hospital, consultant, admission and/or outpatient appointment.

The PCC AE team do not undertake this mammoth tasking alone, they work in partnership with in Theatre and UK

based and Aeromedical Evacuation Liaison Officers (AELO) and the Aeromedical Evacuation Control Centre (AECC) based at Tactical Medical Wing (TMW). This wide ranging team ensure that from the point of sickness or injury, worldwide serving personnel are transported back to the UK in the quickest and most appropriate way, to a level of care at the highest quality appropriate for their condition.

Probably the most publicised work that they do is with the Critical Care Air Support Team (CCAST) who will transit a critically sick or injured service person from the point of injury or country of origin within a suitable timeframe. The highly skilled members of the CCAST, made up of personnel from the AE Squadron at TMW with support from on-call personnel based across the UK, will deploy an Intensive Care Unit on a C17 aircraft. They will use their specialist skills to transport the patient back to the UK whilst providing critical in-flight medical care. Landing at Birmingham International Airport, the aircraft is met by the PCC AE team and the West Midlands Ambulance Service, who will transfer the patient to QEHB.

On arrival at QEHB, the PCC AE team will escort the patient

to the appropriate ward and ensure that a detailed handover is given. All patients receive the highest standard of care from the combined NHS and military staff working at QEHB and surrounding hospitals, supporting their recovery so that they can return to duty and home life as swiftly as possible.

The Aeromedical Evacuation process works effectively due to training, communication and close collaboration between RCDM AE, deployed AELOs, the AECC and the AE Squadron at TMW. This is enhanced by the drive and enthusiasm of the teams who provide exemplary care and selfless service to personnel worldwide. The RCDM PCC AE team would not be able to provide such high quality care without the valued experience and dedication from the military and NHS staff at QEHB, the West Midlands Ambulance Service, the West Midlands Police and Outriders, and Birmingham International Airport. ●

© MOD Crown Copyright 2017.



© MOD Crown Copyright 2017.

A close-up photograph of a Royal Air Force pilot in the cockpit of a fighter jet. The pilot is wearing a black flight helmet with a red star and the name 'ANTHONY WRIGHT' on the side. The cockpit canopy is visible, and the background shows a blue sky with white clouds. The text 'Your Financial Ally' is overlaid in large white letters on the right side of the image.

Your Financial Ally

We understand the needs of the Armed Forces and we source the most cost effective and comprehensive cover possible on a wide range of products.

Our passion and commitment is to deliver the best possible service to our customers. As a not for profit organisation we try hard to be a positive force in the military community and offer a wide range of products and services.

We have branches across the UK, Germany and Cyprus and as a mutual group we exist only to improve the lives of the Armed Forces and those connected to them.

We can also help spouses and veterans to start their own businesses.

For an informal chat contact us today!

Our range of products & services include:

Kit Insurance	Home & Contents
Car Insurance	Personal Accident
Life Insurance	Mortgage
Travel Insurance	My Sovereign Investment ISA

Your Financial Ally Call Us 00 800 00 01 02 03
0044 (0)345 658 1140
www.forcesmutual.org

**Forces
Mutual**



PMGI Limited (PMGI) is registered in England & Wales No. 1073408. The registered office of PMGI is Alexandra House, Queen Street, Lichfield, Staffordshire WS13 6QS. Mortgage Excellence Plc (MEX) is registered in England & Wales No. 3527577. 'Forces Mutual' is the trading name and brand for PMGI and MEX. Universal International Freephone Number (UIFN) - local connection charges may apply, please check with your telephone provider. Calls to 03 numbers usually cost no more than to geographic numbers (01 or 02) and are usually included in call packages, please check with your phone company if they are included in your package. FM1921 (0517)



Turn to Starboard's training yacht Bluster on the water in Falmouth Harbour.

Turn To Starboard

On Cornwall's south coast, a former RAF Squadron Leader has set up a charity that takes military personnel affected by operations out on the open water to help them adjust to life in the 'normal' world. Envoy magazine finds out how sailing can treat injuries that are not always visible.

When two boats are heading towards each other, they avoid collision by both turning to starboard (to the right).

Turn to Starboard is the brainchild of Shaun Pascoe, who served for 16 years in the Medical Emergency Response Team, undertaking tours in Sierra Leone, Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Shaun joined the RAF in 1997 and went on to become Commander of the Medical Emergency Response Team (MERT), leading small teams of highly trained medics who fly out to the frontline in Chinooks to rescue and treat medical emergencies.

Shaun explains, "Apache helicopters were used to clear the ground ahead of us, but the Chinook is much faster, so to get to the wounded as quickly as we could, we often arrived first with no cover whatsoever, that certainly concentrates the mind." Finding it increasingly difficult to adjust to normal life after returning from these war zones, Shaun started sailing with groups of ex-military servicemen who were struggling with PTSD, physical injuries or other mental traumas.



A crew of veterans manning the rigging on board the charity's tall ship *Spirit of Falmouth*.



TURN TO STARBOARD

A keen sailor, he had noticed the calming effects of the sea and began providing sailing opportunities for others. In 2012 he set up the charity to help those in similar situations. "There is something really quite special about sailing," says Shaun. "It can provide a therapeutic and calming effect and when you're out at sea there is nothing to trigger the unwelcome memories that are associated with past traumatic experiences."

Within two weeks of sailing Shaun started to feel in a better place and could also see the positive impact sailing had on other individuals, so decided turned down a job with the NHS to concentrate on setting up the charity.

Based at Falmouth in Cornwall, Turn to Starboard has a national remit to work with veterans who have


been affected by military operations, helping to get them back on track with their lives. The charity runs several different programmes, from Royal Yachting Association-accredited courses for beginners to week-long family trips, as well as an extensive Zero to Hero Yachtmaster development programme, which gives participants the necessary qualifications to begin a career in sailing.

Drastic transformations are not uncommon at Turn to Starboard. 'We had one guy who had been locked inside his house for years. We picked him up and took him sailing. Since then, he's really engaged with life and sails every day with his local club,' says Shaun.

It's testament to Shaun's determination that all the major veterans' charities are now on board, including Royal Air

Force Association, Help for Heroes and the Royal British Legion. HRH Princess Anne visited the charity last year to lend her support and the Prince's Trust gifted the organisation 92 foot tall ship – *Spirit of Falmouth* – which was used on a Round Britain Challenge expedition last year. The epic voyage aimed to help participants gain new skills while raising awareness of the challenges some veterans face after leaving the military.

"Leaving the military, particularly on medical discharge, can see some individuals face significant challenges," explains Shaun. "We try to help veterans regain that sense of value and the belonging they were once so proud of."

To find out more or to make a donation, call 01326 314262 or visit turntostarboard.co.uk. 

Family Planning and Fertility Options



© MOD Crown Copyright 2017.

Being a service family has its own unique set of challenges and busy lives can often get in the way of important considerations. Fertility preservation is something that many of us rarely consider, but it does provide an option to safeguard and plan for the future. The CDP Service Personnel Support team at MOD explains.

Fertility is a subject that is often overlooked or taken for granted until it is too late. However, it's an important consideration because starting a family is a major life event that has long-term responsibilities. Similarly, the inability to conceive children for whatever reason poses major life choices.

Service personnel may be exposed to hazardous duties and environments that might impact on their ability to have children. Aside from hazards encountered whilst on duty, natural disease such as cancer or even the, topical, Zika virus might drastically affect healthy fertility.

Health advances have made it possible to safeguard both men and women's ability to start a family. Preserving fertility is like an insurance policy that will provide you with the potential to have children.

It gives you the opportunity to make an informed choice about lifestyle, employment risks and the potential impact on your future ability to start a family or have more children. Choosing to protect your fertility therefore gives you choice should something happen to affect your reproductive health.

How do you preserve fertility?

Essentially cryopreservation, the frozen storage of sperm or ovum (eggs), is the preservation method. For men, there is no age limit for sperm collection. For women the recommended age range is up to age 40. It is possible to posthumously collect sperm between 24 to 36 hours after death if prior consent is established and there are medical facilities to perform this. Unfortunately, there is no option to harvest eggs after death.

For males the sperm collection process takes up to four clinic sessions costing anywhere between £150 to £400. For females the process is more complicated and risky, requiring the cultivation of eggs inside the body prior to a medical procedure to extract the eggs under general anaesthetic. Egg preservation is also the more expensive process as it involves hormonal treatment and can take between two to five weeks at a cost of around £5,000.

Collection of the sperm and eggs have taken place, they have been stored (storage costs apply) until such time that the couple is ready to start a family. IVF (In Vitro Fertilisation) is the medical procedure for initiating conception.

Other considerations

Service personnel are advised to consult unit medical staff when making a decision on fertility preservation as the process may temporarily affect your medical employment standard.

Fertility costs are not funded by MOD or the NHS (currently only cancer patients receive full funding).

The Human Fertilisation & Embryology Authority is the body that regulates fertility clinics – a link is provided below for a list of clinics. A web search using 'fertility costs UK' will also signpost you to a range of different clinics' costs, some of which offer military discount. ●

Preserving your fertility
hfea.gov.uk/8621.html

What is IVF?
hfea.gov.uk/IVF.html

HFEA Clinic Search
guide.hfea.gov.uk/guide/



GREAT BRANDS AT UNBEATABLE PRICES



Rab

CRAGHOPPERS
Discover Your World

MONTANE

OEX
EXPLORE MORE, EXPECT MORE

berghaus

MAMMUT

Vango

salomon



UK ARMED FORCES, SPOUSES & PARTNERS, VETERANS & DEFENCE COMMUNITY

Save an Extra 10% off*

the Discount Card price

GO WALKING | GO HIKING | GO CYCLING | GO RUNNING | GO FISHING | GO CLIMBING | GO CAMPING | GO RIDING

Just show your **MOD90** or **Defence Privilege Card** at the payment desk in store or online at gooutdoors.co.uk just use webcode 10DEFEN at checkout

*Terms & Conditions apply: A GO Outdoors Discount Card is required. Discount Cards are available in store and online for just £5 per year. Not to be used in conjunction with Price Match Plus, SALE, Clearance, WOW Deals, multibuy, bundles, or any other offer. Does not include Gift Vouchers, Discount Cards or gas hire charges. Subject to availability. Offer can be withdrawn at any time.

GOoutdoors.co.uk



THE UK'S BIGGEST OUTDOOR STORES™

Buying a new home now as easy as 1...2...3...

with **TRINITY**



Are you in the market for a new home and looking for the best purchase package out there for **Armed Forces** personnel?

**Forces
exclusive**

By using **Trinity** you could buy a brand new **Bovis Home** without saving for a deposit – while saving yourself stress and hidden costs.

With **Trinity** you can **combine three** fantastic standalone schemes:

1 Bovis Homes Armed Forces **All Inclusive Discount*** – **£500** off for every **£25K** of your new home's price, *plus free curtains, flooring and kitchen appliances* – and **£500 towards legal fees!**

2 **Help to Buy Equity*** – get a Government equity loan of **20%** of your new home's price and pay **just a 5% deposit!**

3 **Forces Help to Buy*** – borrow up to **50%** of your annual salary, to a maximum of **£25,000**. This can be used towards the deposit and other costs!

It's the **winning combination** to unlock the door to your **dream home!**

Bovis Homes has developments **throughout England**, including a number that are **close to major military bases**, where we have a range of homes from **2 to 6 bedroom properties** in attractive locations.

For further information about the schemes and where we are building, please go to – **bovishomes.co.uk**

The **Armed Forces purchase scheme** is listed within the 'Need help to Move' section and you can find the nearest development to you through our 'search for a new home'



bovishomes.co.uk



*The Bovis Homes Armed Forces Discount Scheme has specific terms and conditions. Help to Buy Equity Loan and Forces Help to Buy have specific terms and conditions and are subject to affordability criteria as prescribed by the Homes and Communities Agency and the Ministry of Defence. Cannot be used in conjunction with any other offers or promotions. Please ask your sales advisor for further information. Photograph shown depicts a typical Bovis Homes interior. YOUR HOME MAY BE REPOSSESSED IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR ANY OTHER DEBT SECURED ON IT.

Bedtime reading as important as ever for UK parents and children



RAF Association's Storybook Wings project helps serving parents to 'make it home' for bedtime



70 per cent of parents read to their child at least once a day*, according to new research from the Royal Air Forces Association.

The Association surveyed members of the public to find out more about the average bedtime in a UK household. Despite technological advances, a surprising 83 per cent of parents and grandparents still prefer to read physical books to their child/grandchild, rather than using devices like a Kindle or iPad.

The *Gruffalo* was cited as the most popular children's book, with 40 per cent of respondents naming it in their top five, and its writer, Julia Donaldson, the most popular author with 63 per cent of respondents naming at least one of her books in their top five.

While stories at bedtime retain enduring popularity, serving RAF parents who

currently use Storybook Wings spend an average of 110 nights away from home every year, meaning they often miss the chance to read to their children. Given that the RAF family includes almost 200,000¹ children under the age of 16, the Association launched the Storybook Wings scheme to make sure that children can hear their parent's voices when separated.

The scheme, which helps serving parents and grandparents record their favourite stories, has been used by 371 serving personnel in the last year making 62,604 bedtimes better. 2,300 families have used it since it was set up in 2009. Storybook Wings recording devices are now available at 32 RAF stations in the UK and personnel are also able to record stories while on active duty, with two recorders in Afghanistan plus others in Cyprus, the Netherlands and at RAF Mount Pleasant in the Falkland Islands.

Flight Sergeant Wayne Swiggs, a Storybook Wings participant, said: "Being stationed away from home and the family is always tough but, unfortunately, it comes with the territory. It means the world to me to know that my sons will hear my voice every night before they go to bed. Storybook Wings has been an invaluable means of maintaining that strong connection with my boys and has

really made it seem like almost no time has passed since I was last home."

Shameera Mandhu, Storybook Wings welfare project officer, RAF Association, said:

"These findings highlight how important storytelling is for parents and children. We understand the challenges for parents who are stationed away from home and children shouldn't have to go for long periods of time without hearing their parents' or grandparents' voices. By helping them to record their favourite stories, we hope to bring mum and dad home for an extra special end to the day.

"The scheme is open to serving parents and grandparents who are stationed away from home, whether that is overseas or within the UK."

*parent respondents

About the survey

The Royal Air Forces Association conducted an online survey of 184 members of the public in February 2017.

For more information: rafa.org.uk/what-we-do/storybook-wings/ ●

**ROYAL
AIR FORCES
Association**

The charity that supports the RAF family

¹ Meeting the Needs of the RAF Family. December 2015. Research by RAF Benevolent Fund and Compass Partnership.

Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund Honours Outstanding Supporters at annual awards ceremony

On April 20 2017 the RAF Benevolent Fund held its annual Awards ceremony at the Royal College of Surgeons in London to celebrate and honour its supporters, donors and volunteers for their remarkable contributions.

The Awards, kindly sponsored by Lockheed Martin UK, were compered by famous voiceover artist and aviation enthusiast Peter Dickson.

This is the fifth year that the Fund – the RAF's leading welfare charity – has recognised the outstanding efforts made by dedicated individuals, stations, and corporate partners who support the charity each year. The recipients ranged from a team of six RAF personnel who cycled from RAF Digby to Edinburgh Castle and back, through to a band of Bomber Command Air Crew veterans who have raised more

than £100,000 for the Bomber Command Memorial and the RAF Benevolent Fund combined. All those nominated have demonstrated tremendous commitment to helping the RAF Benevolent Fund in its mission of supporting members of the RAF family in their time of need.

Air Vice-Marshall David Murray, Controller of the RAF Benevolent Fund, said: "Every year the RAF Benevolent Fund holds its annual Awards ceremony to honour our terrific supporters. This is really our chance to say thank you to all that help and fundraise for us, they are instrumental to the charity and enable us to continue the work we do of supporting the RAF family when in need. It was difficult to select just ten



Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund
THE HEART OF THE RAF FAMILY

recipients as we are truly indebted to all of our amazing supporters."

The winners were:

- **David Stacey**, RAFA Hartlepool, won the Welfare Caseworker of the Year Award. His willingness to go the extra mile for his clients and quality of applications were recognised by the RAF Benevolent Fund for the work he does helping RAF veterans. David is quick to identify the need and often adopts a holistic approach to both his casework and the beneficiary.
- **Denise Barr** won the Airplay Youth Worker of the Year Award. Airplay provides a structured programme of activities and support for children and young people living on or near RAF Stations. Since Denise joined the Airplay scheme at RAF Wyton she has turned it around into a vibrant, fun youth club. Despite only officially working part time, she often works longer hours to ensure she and the staff provide an excellent service to the young people at Wyton and Brampton.
- **MBDA Missile Systems** walked away with the Award for Corporate Fundraising Activity of the Year. Since their partnership began, more than £200,000 has been generously



Special Recognition Award.



© RAF Benevolent Fund.

Award winners at the RAF Benevolent Fund's fifth annual Awards ceremony held on April 20 at the Royal College of Surgeons, London.

- donated to the Fund. The company donate a portion of their proceeds each year from their black tie dinner which is attended by 400 customers. In turn, the partnership also provides engagement opportunities and raises awareness of the Fund's work amongst the Defence industry, keeping the needs of the RAF past and present at the forefront of their minds.
- **The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo** won the Outstanding Support from an Organisation Award. REMT has been supporting the RAF Benevolent Fund for more than 35 years, with approximately £700,000 being generously donated to the charity during that time. More recently, the partnership has blossomed with the delivery of several exciting joint projects such as the 'Eve of Waterloo' production and the 2015 RAF themed Tattoo.
 - The award for Corporate Social Responsibility went to **Hypnos** for their Gift in Kind. Princess Marina House, the Fund's respite facility on the south coast underwent a recent refurbishment and Hypnos very kindly donated all of the beds.
 - This very generous Gift in Kind is a terrific example of ways in which businesses may choose to support the charity.
 - **870 (Dreghorn) Squadron, South East Scotland Air Training Corps** scooped the award for ATC Squadron of the Year. The air cadets have generously donated their time and energy to help the RAF Benevolent Fund at a number of events over recent years including the Edinburgh Marathon Festival. They have also arranged their own fundraising events and are busy planning a charity golf day for later in the year!
 - **Flight Lieutenant Gary Walker** was recognised for his outstanding commitment to the charity and received the Above and Beyond Award. During his post as Officer Commanding Community Support Flt at RAF Marham, Gary has enhanced the profile of the Fund and inspired both personnel and civilians to fundraise on our behalf. It is said that his amiable leadership and boundless energy has resulted in more than £40,000 of fundraising for the charity.
 - The Fundraising Team of the Year Award went to the **Six Spoke Army**. The team of six RAF personnel, four riders and two providing logistical support, cycled more than 600 miles from RAF Digby, where they are currently stationed, to Edinburgh Castle and back in a bid to raise money for the Fund.
 - The RAF Station of the Year was awarded to **RAF Benson**. Their impressive recruitment of almost 100 runners in the Reading Half Marathon in both 2015 and 2016 raised an incredible £26,000 for the Fund. This was further supplemented by an additional £4,000 from events such as a train pull, golf day and railway collections.
- The evening ended with a Special Recognition Award, given to the **Bomber Command Air Crew Veterans Group (Sussex)**. The award was collected by John Bell MBE DFC and George Dunn DFC, in recognition of their commitment to fundraising on behalf of the Bomber Command Association and the RAF Benevolent Fund. To date they have raised a staggering £100,000. ●



ASHDOWN HOUSE

Co-educational
Boarding & Day 4 - 13

www.ashdownhouse.com



*Space and
freedom
to learn...*

- High Academic Standards
- A Home from Home...
- Strong Boarding Community
- A Warm, Kind Environment
- Easy Access to London & Airports

Forest Row • East Sussex • RH18 5JY



Smart kids Smart parents

**Choose a state boarding school
and save more than 50%**

State boarding is less than half the cost of independent boarding because government pays for the education. Offering comfortable and homely boarding, top-class facilities and great academic results, state boarding schools are an attractive, affordable option for forces families.

Take a closer look and see how your Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA) could work harder for you and your family.

stateboarding.org.uk

020 7798 1580

sbf | STATE
BOARDING
FORUM



ST LAWRENCE COLLEGE

Co-educational, day & boarding school for 3-18 years in South East England

Full boarding from 7 to 18 years

Warm and supportive family ethos

Strong academic results at 11+, GCSE and A Level

Modern en-suite boarding accommodation

Fast train only 75 minutes from London

**HM FORCES PERSONNEL IN RECEIPT OF
CEA PAY ONLY 10% OF THE BOARDING FEE**

T: 01843 572931

E: admissions@slcuk.com

College Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 7AE

www.slcuk.com



Lincoln Minster School

An education for life



STEP INSIDE

AN EDUCATION FOR LIFE

- 'Outstanding' Nursery accepting 2 year olds from September
- Sunday Times Top 100 Preparatory School
- Excellent opportunities in music, sport and the arts
- 88% of pupils achieve their first choice University destination
- Flexible boarding options

For details of our Open Days or to arrange a personal tour call 01522 551 300 or visit lincolnminsterschool.co.uk



MONMOUTH SCHOOL AND HABERDASHERS' MONMOUTH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

with boarding from 7



A life-changing education is closer than you think.

PAY ONLY 10% OF THE FEES, AROUND £900 PER TERM*

*This applies to Service Families who are eligible for the Continuity of Education Allowance, entering the School 2017/18. Additional means-tested support, subject to availability, may be offered to families who lose the CEA.

www.habs-monmouth.org/forces

Registered Charity Number 525616

LEADERSHIP ● CHARACTER ● PRIDE ● SELF-DISCIPLINE ● SPIRITUALITY ● SPORTSMANSHIP ● RESPECT



The Duke of York's
Royal Military School



Open Morning

Saturday 7 October 2017, 9am - 12.30

Located on a beautiful 150-acre site in Dover, Kent, The Duke of York's Royal Military School is a state boarding school for students aged 11 to 18.

We welcome applications from any student who wants to study GCSEs and A Levels at our unique and iconic school with its strong traditions.

Why Choose Us?

- An independent school atmosphere at an affordable price. £4,332 per term* covers ALL the boarding costs, with the education paid for by the State.
- GCSE results significantly above the national average.
- Graded 'Good' in all areas by Ofsted.
- A £24.9m building programme has just been completed to enhance our already impressive school site and facilities including new boarding houses, teaching blocks, drama studio, sports centre and climbing wall.
- Full and weekly boarding available.
- Students enjoy an active lifestyle including sport, music, drama and outdoor activities, with over 70 clubs and activities offered.
- Unique ethos helps promote character and life skills, with students encouraged to achieve their potential in a supportive community.
- Frequent involvement in high profile national events including the Royal Festival of Remembrance.
- Good transport links to London and Europe.

2017/18 fees are just £12,996* per year (£4,332 per term / £433.20 if you qualify for CEA).



Ministry
of Defence

Please call 01304 245073 to book your place
admin.office@doyrms.com

www.doyrms.com

*Fees are reviewed annually



REPTON

OPEN MORNINGS

13+ Saturday 10th June 2017

Sixth Form Saturday 9th September 2017

Repton is a co-educational boarding school in the heart of the Midlands and is proud to support HM Forces families.

For further details, please contact the Registrar:

Tel: **01283 559222** Email: registrar@repton.org.uk

www.repton.org.uk

Cranbrook School Open Events 2017



Cranbrook School

- Ofsted Outstanding – Day and Boarding
- Selective Entry 11+ & 13+
- New Year 7 Entry
- 97.6% A*-C GCSE
- 73% A*-B A Level
- Oxbridge & Medical Success
- Expansive Co-Curricular Provision, inc. CCF and DofE

17th May	Year 7 Information Evening
21st June	School in Action Day
20th September	Year 7 & 9 Open Mornings
22nd September	Year 7 Open Morning
26th September	Year 9 Open Morning
27th September	Year 9 Open Morning
17th October	Year 7 Open Morning
8th November	Sixth Form Open Evening

For full details and to register your attendance please visit our website: www.cranbrookschool.co.uk/admissions/open-days or call: **01580 711800**



An extra perk for you and your family



Service personnel can get up to 25% off an O₂ Refresh Airtime Plan with O₂ Open. And it's not just for your mobile – you can save the same on your tablet or mobile broadband device too.

And that's not all

Get 20% off accessories, like fitness trackers, smart watches and headphones. And you'll have all the benefits of Priority, with free coffee and tickets to gigs 48 hours early.

How do you get it?

Start by signing in to My O₂ Open at o2.co.uk/open using your My O₂ username and password. You'll need to enter NAV01 which is a unique code for The Royal Navy. Once you're logged in, the website will guide you through the next steps.

Need an extra device or want to treat a loved one?

Whether you want a new a tablet for yourself or another phone for one of the family, we'll reward your loyalty with an O₂ Additional Line discount with 20% off your Airtime Plan on O₂ Refresh, or 10% off selected sim only tariffs.

more
for you **O₂**

Get your Tesco orders overseas at UK prices



From Fitbit to flip flops, we'll send whatever you order to wherever you're based via BFPO.

And thanks to Tesco Direct, delivery is the same as you'd pay in the UK.

Visit [tesco.com/bfpo](https://www.tesco.com/bfpo)

Every little helps

TESCO