

# envoy

SPRING 2019

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

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



Design and Typography:  
© Method Publishing 2019

Editorial Matter and Illustrations: © Envoy

Printed in Great Britain by: Warners Midlands plc

Advertisement Office (UK): Method Publishing,  
64 Main Street, Golspie, Sutherland, KW10 6TG  
Contact Chris Cappie on 01463 732223 or  
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The RAF Families Federation is an independent  
organisation parented by the RAF Association



The charity that supports the RAF family

**[rafa.org.uk](http://rafa.org.uk)**

**Registered charity number**

England and Wales 226686

Scotland SC037673

The RAF Families Federation is supported by  
the RAF Benevolent Fund



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**[rafbf.org](http://rafbf.org)**

**Registered charity number**

England and Wales 1081009

Scotland SC038109

## Welcome from the editor



I am still enjoying having so many approaches for  
articles on new or updated areas of support available  
to you all as serving personnel or family members –  
and in mixed areas of interest.

I also can't share enough that despite our logo perhaps  
leading you to believe we are just here for the traditional family, we are  
actually here for ALL personnel – so if you are single, married, a regular or a  
reserve, this magazine builds each quarter with you all in mind.

An area that is particularly growing at the moment is support around  
spousal employment. More businesses are approaching us to promote  
that they are forces friendly employers and not only that, much of the  
pre-employment and business start-up training that is offered is fully  
funded! So whether you are serving or a family member, life is tough at  
times and I hope you can use Envoy as a way to find out what's there for  
you to tap into. And if what you are looking for isn't in here – do email  
me and I will see what I can find.

Stan, our accommodation and housing expert shares his latest news. There's  
also a pretty crucial update from the Forces Pension Society on the change  
of rules to the AFPS 05 and AFPS 15 pension  
schemes – so worth noting and checking you are all  
up to date on your own personal details.

Enjoy the magazine.

*Caroline.*

Front cover: Tornado GR4 farewell photo flight over the North Sea and RAF Marham on  
Wednesday 23rd January 2019. © Crown copyright 2019.

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Contact the Legion's legacy manager at [freewills@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:freewills@britishlegion.org.uk) or call **020 3207 2253**



*"It's a huge comfort to know the Legion's support will never stop."*

Mark Stonelake, who lost his left leg following an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) explosion in Afghanistan.

# LIVE ON

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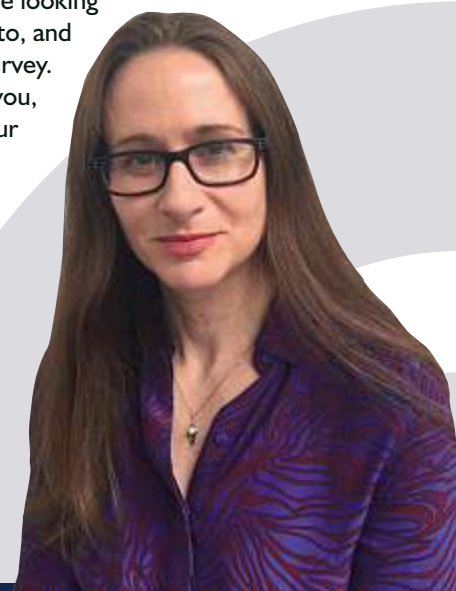
**SPRING** seems like a really good time to update you all on some of the major themes where we will be focussing our efforts during this year. These themes come from the issues raised to us by individuals (in their hundreds... or thousands) through our website and surveys. When we are out and about, we often hear the same themes again – raised by Welfare teams and line managers, as well as serving personnel and their families:

- **Accommodation and Housing:** This area still forms the bulk of individual queries that are raised to us. We are working hard to shape the future contract for SFA maintenance based on our knowledge of the issues that RAF families have experienced. Also, to help us deal with the current questions people have – and ensure that we are supporting all RAF personnel, including those in SLA – we will be recruiting another member to our team to help us.
- **Childcare:** Availability and cost of childcare is a key concern for us. There is some hard work going on within the RAF and MOD focussed on how childcare provision can be improved, and we believe it is so important for families when tackling the demands of service life. I am discussing this with the Armed Forces Select Committee and a Policy Advisor role has been established that has childcare as part of the remit.

- **School Place Allocation:** We still have a substantial number of issues raised to us on this. A survey and report have been done that will be released shortly, and we will be continuing to lobby both locally with the relevant local councils, and also at policy level with the Department of Education.
- **Health/Additional Needs:** This is an area where we have been supporting both single serving personnel and families for some time. This year it becomes a focus for the work of the MOD Armed Forces Covenant Team, and we want to ensure we fully understand the needs of the RAF community and are well placed to support it. Another Policy Advisor role will be focussed on this work too.

Lastly, please keep an eye out for a short piece in here from Tor Johnson who is leading for us on the Dispersed Families research project. The first stage of her report will be published very shortly. The next stage of her work will look at the experiences of those posted overseas, with the aim of identifying best practice, and areas where the provision and processes could be further improved. She will be looking for people to speak to, and circulating a short survey. If this is relevant to you, then please keep your eye out and support this work.

**Maria Lyle**



## FROM THE **DIRECTOR**



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Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures with other cars tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load.

\*There is a new test used for fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures. The CO<sub>2</sub> figures shown, however, are based on the outgoing test cycle and will be used to calculate vehicle tax on first registration.



# FOREWORD

Chief of Defence Staff -  
General Sir Nicholas Patrick Carter KCB CBE DSO ADC Gen

**As a country, we ask much of our military people who are always available for any contingency at any time and who proudly give of their service at unlimited liability. Fulfilling that duty is often to the detriment of time with family.**

Separation is tough, both for those who are away from home and those who keep the home running while also worrying about our safety. Personally, I have drawn great strength from the long-suffering support of my family. Knowing that they, and the families of those who serve with me, are being cared for while we are away is an essential part of being able to focus on the operational task.

2019 brings both challenge and opportunity for our military family. Uncertainty about proposed changes to the provision of housing and other terms and conditions of service is unsettling. But together with the Chief of the Air Staff and the other Service Chiefs we are ensuring that your interests are understood and accounted for as solutions are designed. Your views are important and do make a difference. Please continue to engage with the surveys and make good use of the RAF Families Federation and other forums to contribute to informing the future. I hope you will see your views being properly recognised in

the new Veterans strategy, the extension of the Forces Help to Buy Scheme, the evolution of the Future Accommodation Model, the approach to mental health, transition and spousal employment, and in the commissioning of the study mapping the support available across our military families that will report in the summer.

Our success has always depended on the commitment and remarkable ability of our people, so my priority as the head of the Armed Forces is about maximising talent. I feel strongly that anyone who has served their nation with honour, and their families, should be able to transition smoothly back into civilian life and contribute fully to a society that understands and values what they have done and what they have to offer. But we need the public to understand us, and bring more people in touch with who we are, what we do, and why we do it. So I appeal to you to help convey that understanding within your local communities, and build a strong support base for Defence.



# News

**Social houses for former servicemen and women with PTSD**



Former service personnel suffering from PTSD or other mental illnesses will be prioritised for social housing under proposals published for consultation by Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP.

**Registration is open for The Annington Challenge 2019**



Open to all military sons/daughters, aged between 11-19 years of age – experience a real adventure and return home with new-found confidence, teamwork skills and friendships.

**Amey work on national programme to upgrade the MOD estate**



Amey provide an update on a national programme to have smart meters installed in all domestic properties within the MOD estate by the end of 2020.

**Defence Secretary sets sights on next century of British air power**



Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson revealed that Britain's combat air power has reached new heights whilst speaking in a brand-new hangar displaying one-hundred years of fighter jets.

**Armed Forces pay award 2019**



The Government has asked the Armed Forces Pay Review Body to conduct the 2019 pay round and submit their report containing their recommendations on the 2019 pay award in early May.

**Armed Forces Pension Scheme 2015 explained**



AFPS 15 pension entitlement starts accumulating from your first day of paid service and provided you have completed at least two years qualifying service you will be eligible to receive a pension.

**Successful military Help to Buy scheme extended**



A government scheme to help military personnel get on the housing ladder has been extended until the end of 2019, Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson has announced.

**A guide to flexible working in the RAF**



The Armed Forces flexible working bill came into play in February, offering various options to help military personnel achieve a good work-life balance.

**Thinking of applying for an Armed Forces Covenant grant?**



Now open for applications towards the Local Grants Programme where the Covenant Fund Trust grant up to £20k for local projects that support community integration or local delivery of services.

**Amey and DIO reflect on a year of changes**



Tim Redfern, Amey Director of Defence, and Air Commodore Wendy Rothery, the DIO's Head of Accommodation, have been reflecting on the past year's achievements.

**2019 Forces Pension Society Roadshow Programme**



The FPS group briefings last for approximately 60 minutes and describe our work and its value to serving and retired members of the Armed Forces and their dependants.

**Helping hand to set up new businesses**



More than 200,000 new businesses have used a new one-stop cross-government service allowing new start-ups to register their company and also register for tax at the same time.

**Defence Minister signs £250M aircraft deal, sustaining 450 jobs**



Defence Minister Stuart Andrew has announced the MOD has signed a £250 million deal to support the RAF's intelligence-gathering Shadow aircraft fleet.

**Did you know that drone technology is over a century old?**



The Imperial War Museum shares that it may feel like drones have only come into existence in the past decade but did you know that drone technology is over a century old?

**Online video courses with LifeWorks**



If 2019 is the year for finding work, LifeWorks has some great online courses to build your confidence and get you up and running without leaving the comfort of your own home/daily commitments.

**How the Armed Forces Covenant can support Reservists**



The Armed Forces Covenant is here to support you in your role as a reservist, helping you to balance your civilian work with being part of the armed forces and this section can share with you how.



Further details on all these stories can be found on

**raf-ff.org.uk**

Q Enter Keyword

Search

Search for the headlines on our website

**FDIS Housing report 2018 available online**



We are really grateful to the 973 personnel and family members who filled in the Future Defence Infrastructure Services survey – it is now available to read online.

**Defence Secretary commissions new report**



A new study that will assess the support available to military families has been commissioned by Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson.

**Date announced for Red Arrows American tour**



A start date has been confirmed for the historic Royal Air Force Aerobatic Team (the Red Arrows) tour of the USA and Canada.

**RAF releases stunning images of iconic Tornado fast jet**



The Royal Air Force has released stunning images of a unique aircraft formation to celebrate forty years of service by the Tornado GR4 fast jet.

**Probate applications made simpler and easier with online service**



The service enables people to apply, pay and swear a statement of truth online – saving time and offering convenience to those dealing with a bereavement.

**Living in SFA? Have you taken out Licence to Occupy insurance?**



A reminder for those who may be living in SFA for the first time. When you signed your Property Acceptance Certificate you acknowledged your agreement to your Licence to Occupy the property.

**Support to enhance mental wellbeing and combat isolation**



RAF Benevolent Fund report finds that challenges our serving RAF and their partners are experiencing include mental wellbeing difficulties, social isolation and partner employment opportunities.

**Hawker Typhoon is back on display in Hangar 3**



The Typhoon was designed by Sydney Camm as a successor to the Hurricane. Powered by the most powerful engine available at the time, the Typhoon was faster than any RAF aircraft at low altitude.



## British Forces Post Office's Top Tips

- **Post early** for special occasions to avoid disappointment!
- **Check your item isn't oversize or overweight** for the BFPO you're sending to. Remember that parcels to Ops must be under 2kg!
- **Check which items are prohibited** - if you don't, you'll face the delay or non-delivery of your items.
- **Package carefully to prevent damage** - especially liquids, to avoid leaks.
- **Never send mail to a service person you don't know** - this could stop mail getting through from loved ones.
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# CALLING ALL ENVOY MAGAZINE READERS ... THE ROYAL AIR FORCE MUSEUM **NEEDS YOU!**

The RAF Museum has recently launched 'RAF Stories'. It is an oral history project which digitalizes and makes accessible engaging, historical and contemporary stories of people's personal connections to the RAF and the service's influences on their lives.

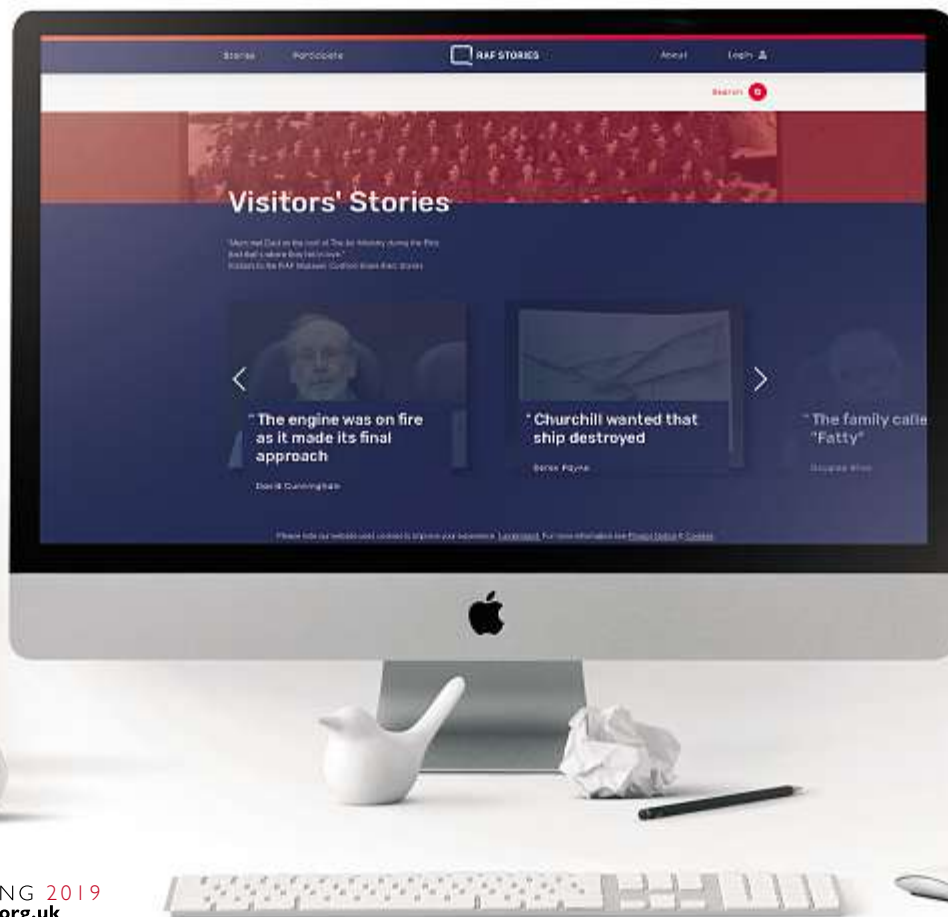


Over the last months, the Museum has captured stories up and down the country with hundreds now available online for the public to view. By calling out to the public to share their stories, the Museum has expanded its reach, capturing stories, whether that be about courage, love, tragedy, friendship, bravery, triumph, humour, happiness, sadness and everything in between. Together this catalogue of stories will expand and enrich our understanding of the RAF today.

**“All stories help to widen our understanding of what’s it like to be a part of or influenced by the RAF.”**

Taking the lead on this project is RAF Museum Community Engagement Officer, Jess Boydon:

“We are looking for stories from anyone with a connection to the Royal Air Force. You could be a current serviceman or servicewoman, a veteran, an air cadet, have family links to the RAF or any other connection. You could describe in detail a training course you had been on, or recall that one memorable night on the tiles with your mates. All stories help to widen our understanding of what’s it like to be a part of or influenced by the RAF. We really hope the good readers of Envoy magazine will take up the opportunity to share their RAF story with us through our RAF Stories Online App.”







Jackie Moggridge as an ATA pilot during the Second World War.  
© RAF Museum

Many amazing stories have been shared, from a Harrier fighter pilot during the Falklands war or a WAAF who worked as a plotter during the Battle of Britain to a former Senior Aircraftsman who has travelled the world with his pet ferret, Bandit. One quite touching story was told by Candida Adkins who as a child and before bed was told how to fly a Spitfire by her mother, Air Transport Auxiliary pilot Jackie Moggridge. She was told the controls of the Spitfire were very sensitive: "if you want to turn right, just think it, don't move and you will turn". Many years later, when her mother died, Candida thought it would be a good idea to scatter her ashes from a twin-seat Spitfire flying over the local aerodrome. When in the air, the

pilot asked her to take over and Candida, never having flown a plane in her life, remembered her mother's words "just think, don't move" and it went beautifully to the right. The pilot commented "oh my goodness, you are your mother's daughter!"



Candida for the first time in the Spitfire  
© RAF Museum

## CONTRIBUTING IS EASY

All you need is a smartphone (Android or Apple) to download the free app. Signing up is simple and straightforward. You can start right away or go through a dry run before you start creating your story. There's the option for either audio or to upload a pre-recorded video from your camera onto the app. Once you've recorded or uploaded your media the Story Builder is there to add more information to your story. You can make your story richer by providing a title, a short description, select what emotions or values your story carries, when and where your story took place and more. This information will help us surface your story to readers once it's published on the RAF Stories website ([rafstories.org](http://rafstories.org)).



## Come and See the Sights

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# WORKING IN – STEP INTO

When people think about job roles in healthcare, the ones which generally spring to mind are doctors, nurses, midwives and paramedics. While plenty of staff are needed to fill those invaluable roles, and many in the Armed Forces community already do those jobs, did you know there are actually 350 different careers available in the NHS?

The range of roles offered within the NHS is vast, from frontline clinical staff to project managers, healthcare scientists and the huge support workforce such as electricians, secretaries, accountants, gardeners and chefs who keep the ship afloat. Don't forget that not all jobs in healthcare are based in hospitals either. You could work in a GP surgery, a pharmacy, an ambulance trust or a mental health service provider.

The Step into Health programme works with NHS employers to provide a dedicated pathway for the Armed Forces community to access the numerous career opportunities available in the NHS.

Gemma Wright, Armed Forces programme lead at Step into Health said: "Veterans and their families are a perfect fit for roles in the NHS and have a tremendous amount of skills and attributes to offer, such as adaptability, planning, organising, dealing with change, emotional resilience and being able to work under pressure.

"Employers in the NHS are welcoming contacts through Step into Health, so if you haven't already, it's really worth considering a career in the NHS."

You can find details of employers running the programme on the Step into Health website. There are also links on the site to Health Careers, where you can explore the different roles and apprenticeships open to you.

If you're at the point of looking for a new role, the NHS Jobs website can also help you find roles within a particular area and there is a range of supportive guides on how to apply for roles in the NHS.

Whatever your skills and experience, it's likely the NHS needs people just like you. As the NHS celebrates its 70th birthday, could you be part of its future?

**Jane O'Brien, a Practice Educator for Dorset County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust shares...**

In 2007, after five years' service I left the RAF – I thought I knew what to expect as a 'military wife' working within the NHS....I was wrong! It can be a bumpy ride and one that is very unique and underestimated.

Moving is hard. We are committed to being a family unit, but this entails sacrifices. Relocation means a new job and this can result in you leaving a much loved position. Prior to this posting, I had a job within a specialised department at The Royal Papworth Hospital, it was such a small field (pulmonary hypertension) and I had no chance of continuing in this when we moved. This was tough as it was a job I adored, it took some time for me to adjust and settle in a new role after relocating.

Career progression can be stunted as you can work hard to establish yourself in a role - only to move and start all over again. Additionally, you can miss out on promotion opportunities due to moving, but I feel this is countered by a broad range of experience in different clinical settings. It helps to see the silver linings!

At our previous two locations, I was fortunate to have a good network of friends – postings were reasonably close together so we could still meet regularly. Our next move was hundreds of miles, so these friendships became 'long distance' and I have felt quite isolated. This makes finding a good

job even more important, as it is the main way to make friends and develop a support network – this is something I most missed in 2018 when my husband was deployed. It's the first time I have felt alone and this had an impact on both me and my five year old son. However I was fortunate in that my line manager was incredibly supportive and this was a huge relief. Flexible working can be a constant worry due to lack of support and reliance on childcare and this can prevent spouses within the NHS from taking

“I have gained some **incredible experience** and made some **amazing friends** along the way.”

Jane O'Brien

**STEP**

**INTO**

**HEALTH**



# THE **NHS** HEALTH

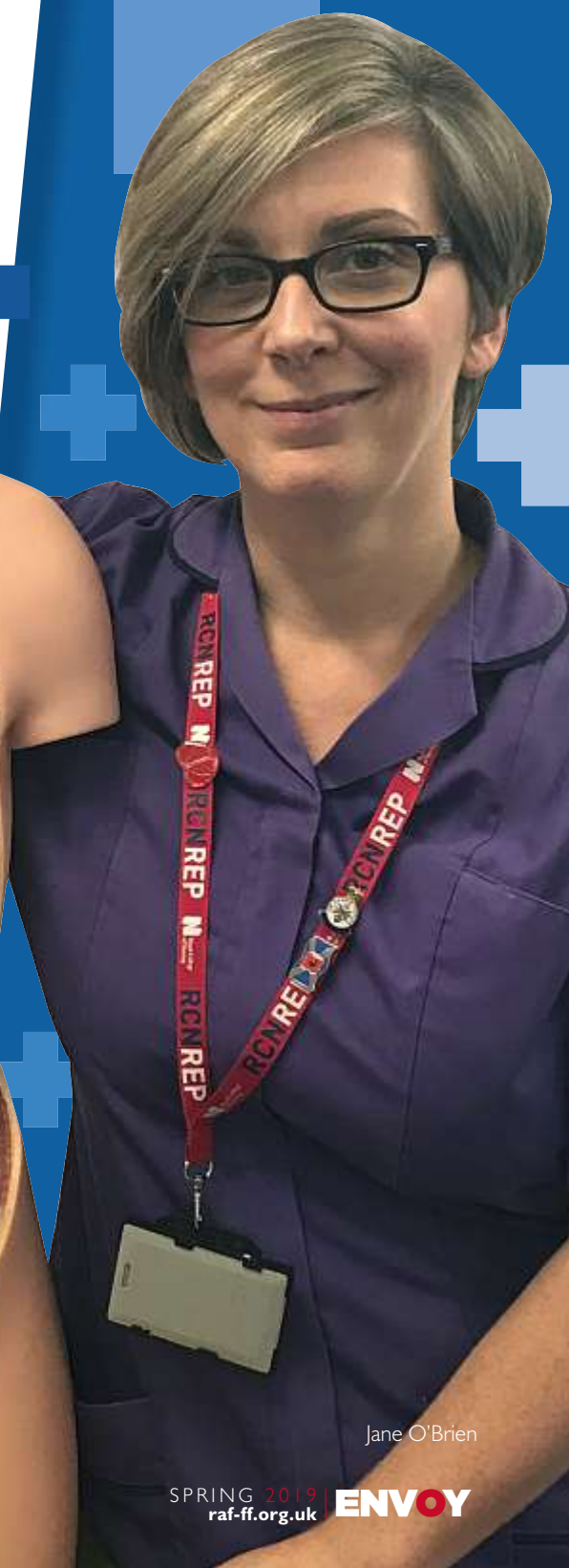
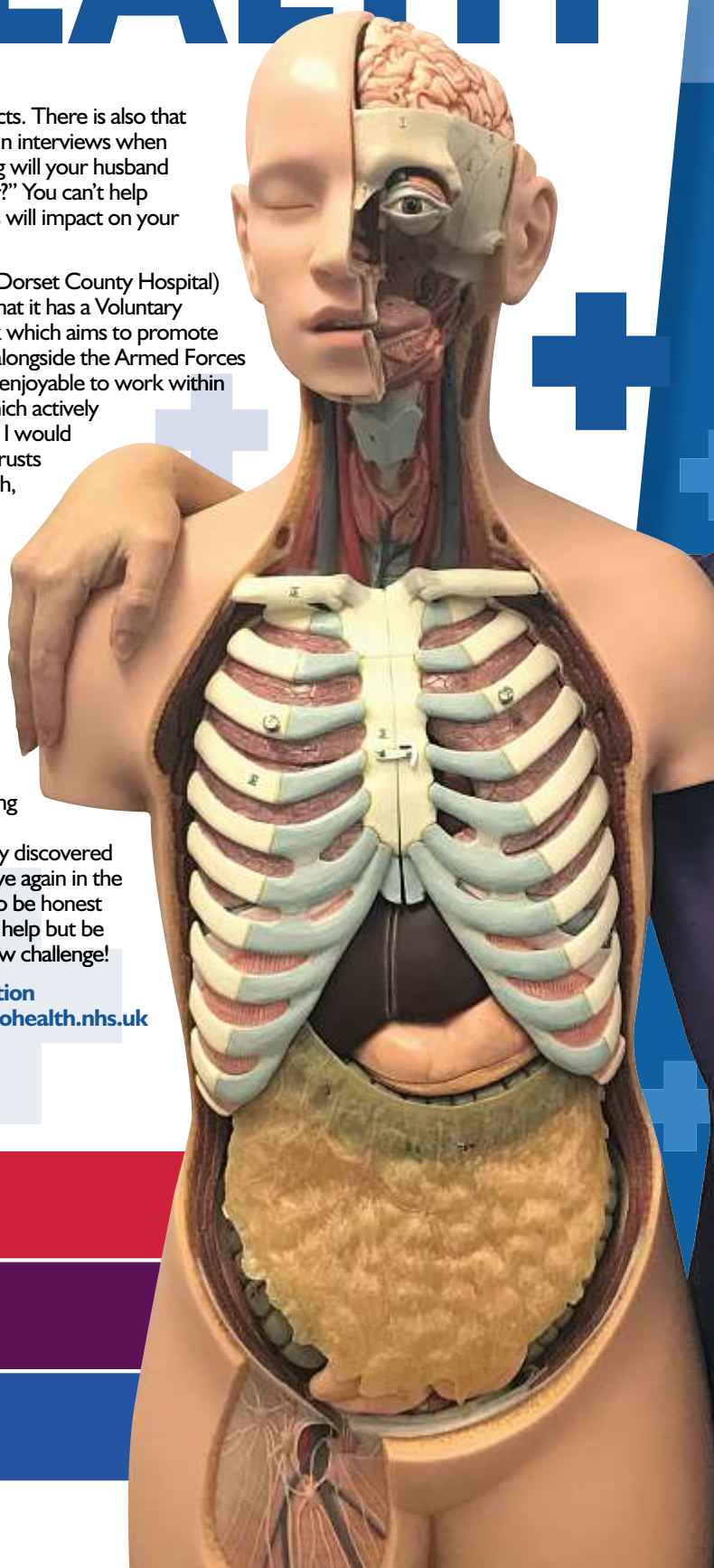
permanent contracts. There is also that dreaded moment in interviews when they ask “how long will your husband be posted here for?” You can’t help but worry that this will impact on your employability.

My current Trust (Dorset County Hospital) is quite unique in that it has a Voluntary Veterans Network which aims to promote veterans’ welfare alongside the Armed Forces Covenant and it is enjoyable to work within an organisation which actively supports veterans. I would love to see more trusts adopt this approach, raising awareness for the challenges we can face.

Overall, working as a nurse in the NHS is incredibly rewarding, I have gained some incredible experience and made some amazing friends along the way. I have recently discovered we are due to move again in the summer – I have to be honest and say that I can’t help but be excited about a new challenge!

#### Further information

- [militarystepintohealth.nhs.uk](http://militarystepintohealth.nhs.uk)
- [jobs.nhs.uk](http://jobs.nhs.uk)



Jane O'Brien

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# ACCOMMODATION MATTERS

by Stan Brathwaite, RAF FF Housing Specialist



**A**s we look forward to the increasing daylight hours of Spring I would like to reflect on the most profound and troubling of issues that arrive in our mythical mailbag here at the Families Federation. The usual culprits are naturally the day-to-

day response to maintenance problems that families encounter. However there are also cases of Additional Needs and Adaptations, and also cases of families that are exiting the

RAF and have - or are about to - lose their entitlement to SFA. These cases are few but cause us great concern. In the cases of the potential of being 'homeless' we welcome the following initiatives to help to alleviate the problem:

**Social Housing** - Recent Accommodation initiatives - Former service personnel suffering from PTSD or other mental illnesses will be prioritised for social housing under new proposals. New measures could help councils ensure that members of the Armed Forces and veterans suffering from mental ill health are given the right priority for social housing. They will be prioritised for social housing under proposals published for consultation by Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP.



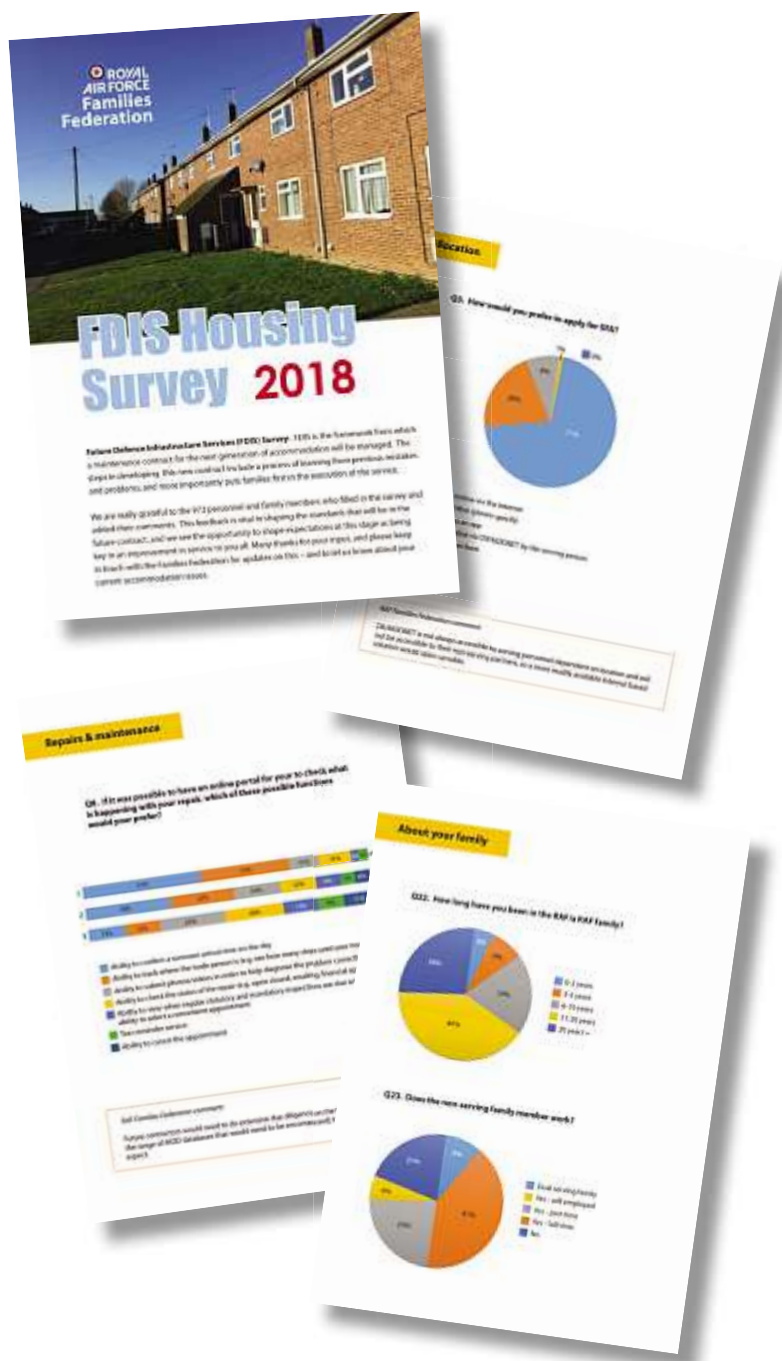


**Divorced partners of Armed Forces personnel** will also benefit for the first time. The measures will also help people who divorce or separate from their partners in the Armed Forces by exempting them from rules requiring them to be a local resident before being given a property.

While the majority of military personnel transition successfully into civilian life, an overhaul of the system will also mean all applicants for social housing will be asked if they have served in the Forces at the outset of the process to ensure veterans get the help they are entitled to. All the details on these proposals can be found online: [gov.uk/government/news/james-brookshire-prioritises-social-houses-for-former-servicemen-and-women-with-ptsd](http://gov.uk/government/news/james-brookshire-prioritises-social-houses-for-former-servicemen-and-women-with-ptsd)

**Future Defence Infrastructure Services (FDIS) - FDIS Survey update** – In our Winter edition of the Envoy I mentioned that FDIS is the framework from which a maintenance contract for the next generation of accommodation will be managed. Interested companies have had the opportunity to bid for the contract. FDIS is intended to avoid many of the pitfalls that beset the current contract, and more importantly puts families first in the execution of the service. We were invited to contribute in developing the scope of the contract on behalf of families. We were delighted to have the opportunity to contribute to the debate and you have our assurance that we will represent your views when and where we can.

We finalised our FDIS Housing Report at the beginning of January and presented it to the FDIS Project Team at Andover. We were also involved in evaluating specific questions and answers from bidders for the contract.



The survey ran from 05 to 30 Nov 18 and we attracted 973 respondents and that provided over 2000 comments. These findings bear out the casework on accommodation of the issues that most causes families to put pen to paper and complain.

The analysis of the Report, along with the equivalent reports from the Naval FF and Army FF will help to forge the next accommodation maintenance contract. This is of significant importance because it is the first time that families have been consulted for their views ahead of a contract let. Our gratitude to all those that took the time to complete that survey last year and we have published the full report online: The report can be found online: [raf-ff.org.uk/publications/raf-ff-reports/](http://raf-ff.org.uk/publications/raf-ff-reports/).

We would like to say thank you to all RAF family members that had completed the survey. Please also do not hesitate to continue to contact us on any issue that causes you concern by calling us on **01780 781650** or emailing through our online form: [raf-ff.org.uk/contact/report-issue-form](http://raf-ff.org.uk/contact/report-issue-form).

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[www.cessaha.co.uk](http://www.cessaha.co.uk)

## CIVVY STREET NEEDS YOUR HELP.

If you are about to leave the Forces and have time to spare, come and work as a part-time volunteer for charity.

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FIGHTING FOR THE FORCES  
AND THEIR FAMILIES



## How you can influence your pension

You may be surprised at the numerous ways you can influence the value of your pension and its suitability for you and your family's needs. You also have options about how and when you draw it, how much of a lump sum you want on departure from the Forces and what happens if you become a Reservist. But you'll be surprised at how straightforward many of the options are, such as Pension Top-ups.

Choosing when to leave (and when not to) can have a really beneficial (or negative) impact on the value of your pension.

When you join the Forces Pension Society, we help you become aware of your pension options and entitlements. You'll receive our regular e-newsletters with up-to-the-minute information, our bi-annual Members' magazine *Pennant* – a great read plus a whole section dedicated to pensions. And of course when you're in need of serious guidance you'll have access to our pension experts.

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Our Members have access to a wide and growing range of discounted products and services. These include exceptional no-age-limit travel insurance, discounts on new cars, white goods, pet insurance, best-in-class health insurance, low-cost money transfers, cruises - the list goes on. What they have in common is that they reflect

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FPS Travel



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FPS Personal  
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## Independent, not-for-profit

Independence is critical to our work. We call governments to account wherever we spot unfairness or injustice in the Armed Forces Pension Schemes and we campaign for improvements on behalf of the whole military community. Recognition of our unique role has led to more than 50,000 people discovering the value of joining us.

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Make the right choice by joining us today. Annual membership for you and your spouse/partner costs just **£39**. When you join us online, quote promo code **ENV2019** and we'll send you a free voucher worth **£150 off** a Rambling & Adventure holiday. (T's & C's apply). Visit [www.forcespensionsociety.org](http://www.forcespensionsociety.org)



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# Lifting the Lid on Transition

– The families' experience and the support they need

By Louise Briggs, Transition Liaison Project Manager

It's hard to believe that over two years have gone by, but in 2016, I started work on a two year, tri-service research project together with the Naval and Army Families Federations to undertake research into families' experiences of transition out of the Armed Forces and to make recommendations on support they need.

On 1st November 2018, our report was published by the Forces in Mind Trust and you can find it online: [fim-trust.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Transition-Final-Report-FINAL-ONLINE.pdf](http://fim-trust.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Transition-Final-Report-FINAL-ONLINE.pdf) more information on the Transition pages can be found on the RAF Families Federation website of the RAF Families Federation website.

Our report is the first to specifically look at the lived experience of service families, and reveals the complex nature of transition.



## THE REPORT TELLS US:

- Families are affected by transition as well as the service leaver.
- Transition is about more than just employment – housing, health, education, finances and wellbeing are all factors as well.
- Support needs to be available to families, not just the service leaver. Families want to be involved and to help.
- The more a family prepares in advance for civvy street, the more successful the transition.
- It's never too early to prepare for life outside the RAF. The fact that a service person will leave one day is perhaps one of the only certainties of service life! Visit our website for more information and tips to get started: [raf-ff.org.uk/transition/](http://raf-ff.org.uk/transition/)
- Unexpected doesn't have to be unplanned – if you have given some thought to the future it will help enormously when you leave, or especially when you leave unexpectedly.

“Start early. Plan early, before resettlement starts if you can. Take about four years to get used to the idea, think hard about where you want to live if you can. Re-establish links with civilian friends and family that you might be going to live near. Investigate civilian sources of help and advice.

Put feelers on LinkedIn to get a sense of opportunities for work for the service leaver. It all helps to get in the mindset...” RAF family

We are enormously grateful to everyone who has helped over the course of the project – the families who have given us their time and benefit of their experiences and the organisations who have so willingly engaged with us.

## What is the RAF Families Federation doing?

- We have developed new resources to help families (and service personnel) – all available on the transition pages of our website.
- Our new Families Transition Guide ‘Departures’ will be available soon through our website and in hard copy.
- With the continued support of FIMT we have been able to continue to work to influence key service providers to better benefit families in transition and to raise awareness of what you have told us is needed.
- We will continue to represent families and service leavers in this area, collecting evidence and seeking to influence policy makers and service delivery. So do report your experiences and issues to us through completing our issues form online: [raf-ff.org.uk/contact/report-issue-form/](http://raf-ff.org.uk/contact/report-issue-form/)



**Ray Lock, Chief Executive of the Forces in Mind Trust, said:**

"The process of transition is not solely about the service personnel, it affects the entire family unit. What has become clear, from the library of research funded by FiMT, is that the earlier planning for leaving the Armed Forces starts, the more successful and sustainable is the transition. "The recommendations within this report highlight the need to do more to ensure that the families of service personnel are given the support required to successfully navigate the transition pathway."



Funded by the Forces in Mind Trust (FiMT) a £35 million scheme run by the FiMT using an endowment by the Big Lottery Fund.



Waddington Families Day.  
©Crown Copyright (Sgt M Jones)

**Maria Lyle,  
Director of the  
RAF FF said:**

"This piece of work is a really timely insight into how families can be better supported through the significant changes that occur during transition. I know that this work will be hugely helpful to both RAF, MOD and the new Defence Transition Services as they look to understand how they best help families prepare for the future."

## GOVERNMENT & MOD DEVELOPMENTS

The government has made a number of announcements in late 2018 and this year, that affect service personnel and their families while they are still serving, in the process of leaving, and afterwards. The Veterans' Strategy, launched in November 2018, included the announcement of a new tri service Transition Policy,

offering a more 'holistic' approach to planning for transition, helping serving personnel and families better prepare throughout career for life outside the forces. Our research showed that this is one of the key elements leading to successful transition. We continue to represent families in this important area of policy development through our meetings with Ministers and MOD and we will keep you updated on developments.

# THE RAF OVERSEAS EXPERIENCE



At the RAF Families Federation, we regularly hear from families in a range of overseas locations. Over the past four years we have dealt with issues and queries relating to postings from the USA to Brunei, and from Norway to the Falklands!

We would now like to find out more about the RAF Overseas Experience and this Spring we will be running an online survey and a series of interviews. We are therefore looking for RAF personnel and their families who are currently serving on overseas postings to take part in this study (or who have returned within the past 12 months). Our focus will be on overseas accompanied postings, but we would also welcome views from families who chose not to accompany their RAF Serving person.

We are carrying out this research as part of the ongoing RAF Dispersed Families Project, an initiative funded by the Chancellor using LIBOR funds.

## HOW CAN YOU TAKE PART?

The survey will be going live on our website over the coming weeks. We will advertise it via Facebook and Twitter, so please follow us on these channels and subscribe to the eBulletin to make sure that you do not miss it. Interviews will run alongside the survey and will be conducted face-to-face, or by Skype or telephone where needed.

You can also get in touch with the Project Manager, Tor Johnson, to express an interest in taking part:

Email: [tor.johnson@raf-ff.org.uk](mailto:tor.johnson@raf-ff.org.uk)

Telephone: 07773 968601

We will ask for some basic details so that we can get in touch once the study is up and running\*

The more responses we get, the better idea we will have of what life is like for our overseas families, so you can also help us by spreading the word with your colleagues, family and friends.

## WHAT WILL WE DO WITH THE RESULTS?

As ever your views are important to us! Once our data collection is complete, we will examine the evidence that we have collected to identify the key benefits and issues associated with overseas postings. As with all of our reports, all information will be presented in an anonymized and confidential format in line with our Confidentiality Policy – it will not be possible to identify you or your family members through any information made available outside of the RAF Families Federation.

We will present our results to the RAF, MOD and other agencies, as appropriate. The views that you provide will help us to shape policy and to ensure that support for families living overseas meets their needs. We appreciate that overseas experiences may depend on posting type and location, but if we receive enough responses then we may also be able to make recommendations that are specific to these factors.

## SUBSCRIBE TO THE EBULLETIN

- [raf-ff.org.uk/publications/](http://raf-ff.org.uk/publications/)
- [raf-ff.org.uk/privacy/confidentiality-policy/](http://raf-ff.org.uk/privacy/confidentiality-policy/)

\* We are very protective of our families and will only use your details for which you have subscribed to and we will not share it with anyone else



Search for RAF Dispersed Families





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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](http://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. †Bovis Homes specify the curtains, carpets and flooring offered within the scheme. 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.

# SUPPORTING OUR ARMED FORCES CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS



The Armed Forces Covenant works in so many ways to support our personnel and families, all aimed at ensuring the military community receives fair treatment whilst being posted to new locations. One example is how the covenant supports service children in schools and the RAF Families Federation paid a visit to Wittering Primary School to find out just how they manage it – and with good results.

Two frequent asks that come into the Federation for education-related advice is the allocation of school places for sons and daughters coming into areas on a new posting. The other is around Service Pupil Premium (SPP) and how, practically that should work at school level and how the £300 per service child should be spent.

Wittering Primary School provides state education to some 330 children - two thirds of whom are service children. A cohort of the staff grew up as service children themselves and so have lived the experience and feel can empathise with the memories of deployments, separation and frequent family moves to different areas and the whole new friend-making process that ensues. All of which some children thrive on and others not so.

Each local authority (LA) has a different school admissions process. Some are online, some are hard copy only and others are also only 'manned' during school term time. This, coupled with occasionally delayed Admin Orders (AO) to confirm postings can cause the process to become quite cumbersome and stressful. SFA cannot be allocated until the AO is given and LAs can't accept an application before a home address is given so whilst that all sounds pretty straight forward, it can actually hold things up at various points and can result in a very short 'move-in' window which is very unsettling for the family.

To add to this, there is also often a delay in the Common Transfer File (CTF) which is used by schools and LAs to send pupil data from one school to another, ironically set in place to enable a smooth handover between schools. Wittering Primary School has worked with Peterborough LA and added its own mutually agreed internal process to join up the dots with the aim of inducting, integrating and settling in children from day one.

## Wittering Headmaster, Mr Rhys Thrower adds:

"It's tricky on postings as personnel don't always get their new SFA addresses straight away and that can hugely hinder the school allocation process. We always like to talk to each family moving into area and advise on solutions depending on their situation.

"We have a good working relationship with our LA in Peterborough and in addition to their process, we also do an in-house assessment (although it's not as formal as it sounds) for absolutely all of our children, whether service children or those from the local community. It gives us an immediate picture of any emotional needs that we need to be aware of as well as what stages in the curriculum they are at (some schools do different parts of the curriculum at different stages of the school year so it's not always about capability). We can then map in any 'catch-up' sessions that may be needed. We also work to a buddy system together with issuing a settling-in book which has notes in of their new friends, where to go for various events at school, thoughts and reflections. The book is kept in school for the first week and then goes home for families to see."





**Deputy Head, Mrs Charlotte Blake added:**

"We have a wellbeing club which is run at lunchtimes and offers a break from learning. Parents can come along too if they wish to – particularly any remaining parents of those deployed where time is short at home and it's a chance for them to sit down and just do something easy but fun with their son or daughter. We draw, colour – simple things to do that in turn, encourages natural conversation and keeps those communication lines open. Things flex too as they need to with changing needs etc. The school has 'a mind to be kind' culture that we instil in the children alongside a 'superflex' approach and it's really been embraced to the point that children now ask about it."

**SERVICE PUPIL PREMIUM**

Mr Thrower added "In terms of how SPP is used by us here, we don't pin it on a particular thing or service. As well as the wellbeing club, we use a Teaching Assistant's time to help the in-house assessment on entry to the school as well as monitoring at breaks/lunchtimes and the intervention groups who do the mop-ups of phonics, maths, sentence structure etc – basically where it's needed.

We also work really closely with RAF Wittering's Community Development Officer (CDO), Mark Davis,

**Mark adds:**

"We have a very positive working relationship with Wittering Primary School and work closely on a number of projects. We try to make transitions as smooth as we can with new arrivals to the school, ensuring they contact Peterborough Schools Admissions as early as possible to register a place and we have information on which year groups may be close to being full. We also have a strong working relationship with the School Admissions team at Peterborough City Council who are supportive of our service families and will help as much as they can.

"Our Service Community Support Officer WO Neil Paylor and HIVE Information Officer Sophie West also hold a weekly outreach session at the Family Centre in order to meet families and support with a number of issues."

**The Clements family had a good experience of obtaining school places via Peterborough LEA and Wittering Primary School and share their experience:**

"We were living in South America when we received our posting to Wittering. I called the LEA at Peterborough, who were very helpful as to how to go about selecting school options. They then suggested that, should I be interested in the school at Wittering, I call the school directly.

Service personnel with children in state schools in England have an annual deadline of mid-January each year to notify schools of their children's eligibility for the Service Pupil Premium (SPP).





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"Fortunately, due to the ages of my children at the time, there were spaces in the school - and so I dealt directly with them, as advised by the LEA. We landed on Tuesday and the children started school on the Friday."

### OTHER ELEMENTS HOW THE RAF CAN HELP

CDO, Mark Davis (who is also the Unit's Armed Forces Covenant Champion) gets involved if the process hits snags:

"We often raise school admissions issues at Peterborough Armed Forces Partnership Board meetings. If service personnel receive a short notice AO for a posting this does put pressure on the school to develop a school place; if they know in advance a child is coming to the area they can plan more effectively. In some situations but not common, a family has turned up on Monday morning assuming their child can just turn up and go straight into a class.

"The advice is contact the local authority and register with the admissions team as soon as you can, if you do not have details of your postal address, please use the Station postcode or contact your local



Pics © RAF FF

HIVE Information Officer who will advise you on school admissions contact. If you cannot access a school place for your child and need support contact your CDO who will support you through that process."

### NEED HELP?

The team at the RAF Families Federation have lots of experience supporting families who are having difficulties with school place allocation. We are grateful to the relationships we have built over time with covenant leads in Local Authorities and, although school places can't be created from thin air, these relationships have definitely helped to improve understanding of the situations our families find themselves in which has helped smooth the process.

### FURTHER INFORMATION:

- RAF FF's regional covenant support: [raf-ff.org.uk/armed-forces-covenant](http://raf-ff.org.uk/armed-forces-covenant)
- Children's Education Advisory Service (CEAS): [gov.uk/government/groups/the-childrens-education-advisory-service-ceas](http://gov.uk/government/groups/the-childrens-education-advisory-service-ceas) or call its helpline CEAS helpline: 01980 618244
- Service Pupil Premium – what you need to know and also a best practice guide: [gov.uk/government/publications/the-service-pupil-premium](http://gov.uk/government/publications/the-service-pupil-premium)
- Service children in state schools – a handbook for teachers and other professionals: [gov.uk/government/publications/service-children-in-state-schools-handbook](http://gov.uk/government/publications/service-children-in-state-schools-handbook)



Mrs Charlotte Blake (Deputy Head) and Mr Rhys Thrower (Head).





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# CHANGE O TO THE AFPS 05 & AFPS 15 SCHEMES

**BACK IN 2017 WE TOLD YOU THE STORY OF CHARLOTTE HUGHES, A YOUNG WIDOW WHOSE HUSBAND HAD DIED.**

MOD honoured an old nomination form, paying the death-in-service lump sum of over £120K to his mate rather than his wife, even though there was strong evidence to show that that had not been his intention.



**FIGHTING FOR THE FORCES  
AND THEIR FAMILIES**

In this short article Mary Petley of the Forces Pension Society explains what happened next and looks at the rules as they stand now.

Charlotte's plight was taken up by the Society and we helped her make her case to the Pensions Ombudsman. Unfortunately, the Pensions Ombudsman found that the MOD had behaved correctly as the wording of the rules meant that MOD had not got the discretion to ignore Sergeant Hughes' original nomination form. However, recognising the unfairness of Charlotte's position, MOD have changed the AFPS 05 and AFPS 15 scheme rules to avoid the same thing happening to another widow or widower in the future.

AFPS 75 did not need to be changed as it specifies exactly who is eligible to receive any death-in-service lump sum or pension lump sum in the event of the member's death - so there is no ability to nominate.

Both AFPS 05 and AFPS 15 allow the member to nominate one or more people or organisations as recipients. Nominations must be made on an AFPS Form 2 and, if more than one person or organisation is nominated, it must be specified how the sum is to be divided. Veterans UK will comply with the wishes expressed in the nomination from unless one of the following applies, in which case the original nomination will lapse:

- The nominee dies before the member;
- The nominee is the member's spouse or civil partner and the relationship is legally dissolved. The member may re-nominate the 'ex' after the decree absolute, should they so wish;
- The member married or entered into a civil partnership from 1 December 2018 – and this is Charlotte's Rule. If your marriage pre-dates the change, it worth checking that any existing nomination reflect the family's current needs.
- The nominee is convicted of the murder or manslaughter of the member (and potentially any other offences relating to the nominee killing or wounding of a member, depending on circumstances).

Nominations are intended to make the member's wishes clear and, where one exists, a nomination means that Veterans UK can arrange swift payment to the nominee(s). Completion of an AFPS Form 2 is particularly useful in the case of unmarried partners, where Veterans UK will be looking for evidence of financial dependence or interdependence in order for the partner to qualify for a pension. A nomination provides some evidence of the member's intention to provide for his or her partner's financial wellbeing and, as such, can help Veterans UK reach a speedy conclusion. If there is no nomination, the lump sum will eventually go to the spouse or civil partner, or unmarried partner or, failing that, to the estate. Speed of payment is the obvious advantage but there is a danger that an old neglected nomination could result in the payment going speedily to the wrong person!



# OF RULES

Once a member becomes a veteran, there may still be pension lump sums due in the event of their death. For example, AFPS 05 awards a pension and pension lump sum (worth three times the pension). If he or she leaves at age 55 or over, the lump sum is paid to the member but, if he or she leaves before that age with a preserved pension, and dies before drawing it, the pension lump sum is payable to the nominee(s). AFPS 15 awards a pension (but no automatic lump sum) to those who serve until age 60. If they leave before age 60 the pension is deferred and, if the member dies before claiming it, a lump sum of three times the pension is paid to the nominee(s).

AFPS Form 2 is available on the internet. It is simple to complete and there is nothing to prevent the scheme member from replacing an old nomination form with a new one at any time.

In principle it is good that AFPS 05 and AFPS 15 members have a vehicle for making their wishes known regarding who will receive what can be significant sums of money. The message from this article is that, no matter how much of a good idea it is to express any wishes the member might have, if they do so, they must, must keep their nomination up to date.

If you are a Member of the Forces Pension Society and have questions on this or any other pension issue, contact us at [pensionenquiries@forpen.co.uk](mailto:pensionenquiries@forpen.co.uk) If you are not a Member but would like to know more about us, visit us at [forcespensionsociety.org](http://forcespensionsociety.org)

Mary Petley  
Photo © AFPS



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Citroen C3 Aircross SUV, 1.2 PureTech 82 Flair 5Dr



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VW Tiguan SUV 2wd 1.5 TSI EVO 130 SE Nav 5Dr



£363p/m  
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Land Rover Discovery Sport SUV 2.0 TD4 180 SE Tech 5Dr Auto



# ANYONE FOR A COOKIE?



Rev (Flt Lt) Christina Lacey.  
© Crown Copyright

**Hello,** I'm a Padre. It's something I don't often have to say as my uniform and that I'm clutching a tub of cookies to hand out is usually a giveaway! But for the benefit of you reading this, let me introduce myself. I'm Padre Chrissie, a wife and a mum, currently based at RAF Marham as a Station Chaplain (Chaplain being the official title of a Padre). Now I'm aware you're missing the cookies but that's something I want to spend a few moments thinking about. It's not about healthy eating (although that's important as well), it's about how we look after our headspace and ensuring that it is equally healthy.

What do cookies have to do with headspace? Well, it's not the cookie itself,

it's what the cookie invites people to do.

When I go around the station offering cookies; oily gloves come off, swivel chairs turn away from the desk, computer monitor goes to sleep, documents are placed down, and gently people stop. Sometimes only for the time it takes to eat a cookie, but for most that stopping lasts a bit longer. The cookie is the invitation for people to

stop and to take a bit of a breather. It's a great way for me, in my role, to get to know people in a relaxed environment, but more importantly than that, I want to enable people to have a moment to stop.

There's lots of research showing that taking a break is important to our wellbeing and productivity. Although it may feel like we're too busy to stop, paradoxically, in stopping we can increase our productivity as well as keeping our headspaces healthy. So, a simple cookie becomes an invitation to begin a habit which helps develop greater work resilience as well as a healthy headspace...some may call it spiritual resilience. When we stop for a fifteen-minute break, for lunch, or dare I mention having a whole day off a week, we give ourselves time to do things which energise and refresh us. For me it's not just scientific, it's wrapped up in my faith too. I love that God commands us to take a break. To stop working and simply be. Over Christmas, most RAF personnel were given some extra days leave to celebrate RAF 100 and in recognition of how hard people worked during 2018.

What do you do when you stop? Make a brew, go to the gym, eat yummy food, take up a good book (or even the Good Book, had to slip that in somewhere, I am a Padre after all!), go for a walk, listen to music, call a friend, take a nap, meditate, social media...what do you do when you stop? Perhaps you have stopped to read this? I want to leave a challenge here: to start giving your breaks some TLC, and ensuring your headspace is kept healthy in a life that can sometimes run away with us.

# NEED TO TALK?

**SSAFA Personal Support and Social Work Service provides emotional and practical support to Regulars, Reserves and their families.**

Contact our confidential, independent service, call

**03000 111 723**

Available 24-hours a day, 365 days a year, email

**psswsRAF@ssafa.org.uk**

Our offices are also open Monday-Friday 08.30-17.00

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**Armed Forces**  
charity

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 **ROYAL  
AIR FORCE**

Registered as a charity in England and Wales Number 210760 in Scotland Number SCO38056  
and in Republic of Ireland Number 20006082. Established 1885. S337.0119



# FAMILIES ON FACEBOOK

The RAF FF runs a closed Facebook group (RAF Families) and is a place where the mums, dads and partners ask questions, support each other and share their own stories. It was whilst doing one of our many virtual visits to the group that we found this poem, written by one of our founder members who had written to reflect, in her own words, the purpose behind this amazing and growing group.

The parents of those serving in the RAF have pride  
 For their sons and daughters joining up and some travelling the world wide  
 But while they're off enjoying their alternative family life  
 Those of us left behind can feel anxiety and strife  
 We're glad for them, but miss them and can often feel alone  
 With that empty space that's left behind despite all those at home  
 So this group we have created started off with only two has now become four hundred  
 and we're all in voting you to join us, feel supported, share a cuppa of a word  
 We understand each other, you can let your voice be heard.  
 The RAF family and it's net spread far and wide  
 And that family border spreads beyond those serving, those inside  
 That family includes those of us at home - that's me and you  
 We're part of this strange culture, we're the parents of the crew  
 So if you need to talk a bit, don't sit and be alone  
 Make contact, get in touch, you'll find it easy with your phone  
 There's text and email messages, there's Facebook and much more  
 For sometimes you might hear a friendly knock at your front door  
 From Scotland, Northern Ireland, in the UK everywhere  
 A support network is waiting  
 To share friendship, love and care  
 From me to you lot 💕

By Tracey McCabe



To join this group,  
 simply search for  
 'RAF Families'.

**Additional Facebook groups:**

- RAF Dispersed Families
- RAF Reserve Personnel and members of their families

# DEPLOY



**Mj Vallely**  
Deputy Head RAF HIVE (Service Delivery Manager)

## What is deployment and what support is on offer?

**D**eployment is when a serving person (your spouse, partner, son, daughter, father, mother, brother, sister etc.) is required to go to a specified operational location away from their family, the time scales vary but this could be six months or longer. Whether this is your first 'Deployment Separation' or you have been through them before, they can still be extremely difficult for both the serving person and their family.

The affects of this are many, from the simple things on a day to day basis (dealing with bedtime routines/household chores) to that emotional support that daily contact brings. Often military life means you are away from family and friends, this is where your RAF HIVE Information Officer (HIO) and the Station Community Support Team can assist with supporting you.

RAF HIVEs supply RAF HIVE Deployment Packs (these can differ from station to station) and these are full of useful information:

- Booklets and DVDs on the deployment process and contact information for the Station and various outside supporting agencies
- Leisure vouchers
- Small 'gizzits' for children, these will differ from station to station but may include:
  - o Our 'RAF HIVE Hello from Home' book packed full of activities including a 'Chuff Chart' to count down the days
  - o Detachment maps
  - o Talking Tins
  - o Cloud Pets
  - o Cuddly toy
  - o Journals
  - o Sweet hampers
  - o Phone holders
  - o 'Stay Positive Wall' charts
  - o 'My Busy Week' books
- Forms to notify schools when a parent/guardian is deployed
- BFPO postal blueys and the INtouch mail service (a system that provides deployed personnel with a hard copy of a letter but sent from home via email)
- Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC) card
- Information on Storybook Wings (recorded stories made by serving person)
- Station magazine

The RAF HIVE management team provides comprehensive Social Media coverage using both Facebook and Twitter; additionally, each station has individual RAF HIVE station accounts. You will be able to find information on all station activities including Deployment Trips/Events and deployment coffee mornings on these sites.

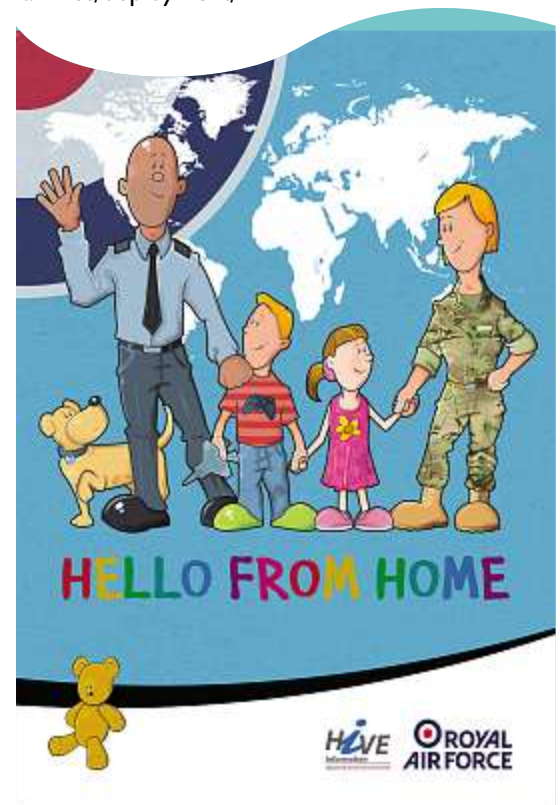
RAF HIVE are there to listen and signpost you in the right direction; please do not sit at home worrying, come and talk to the RAF HIVE Information Officer and join in with the activities on your station. If you are an 'old hat' with 'Deployment Separation' please come and talk to someone who isn't, your knowledge and support could be invaluable to others.

**@RAF HIVE Facebook**

**@RAF HIVE Twitter**

**RAF Community Support**

There is also lots of information available on the RAF Community Support web site pages; [raf.mod.uk/serving-families/deployment/](http://raf.mod.uk/serving-families/deployment/)





# DEPLOYMENT

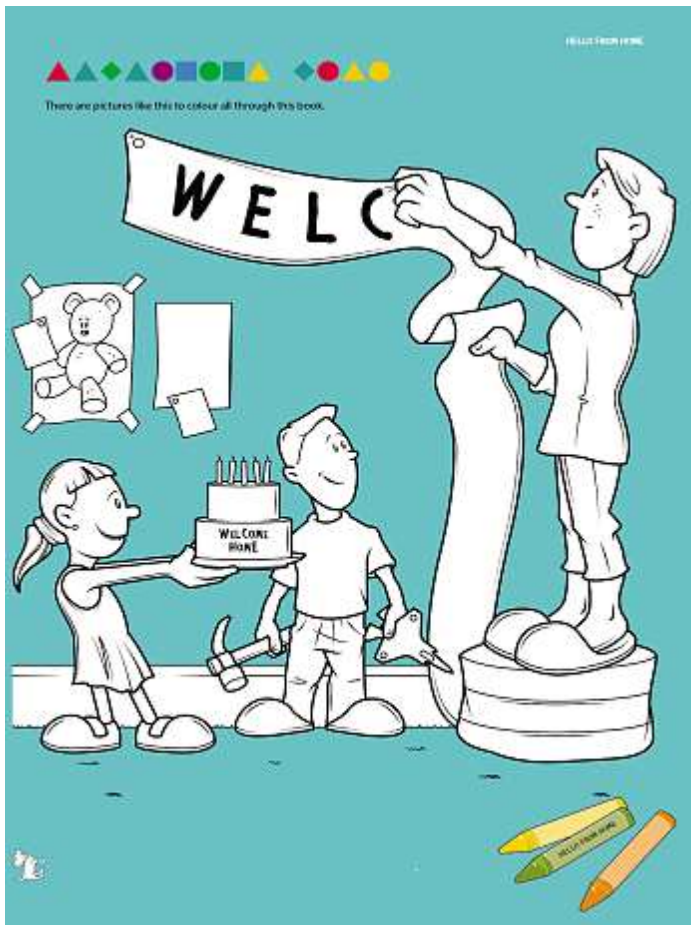
Even if this is not your first deployment, our information is always being updated and there are usually new trips and new people to meet.

Because of 'Data Protection' RAF HIVE cannot contact you or send you valuable information unless your serving person has filled in the correct forms or 'ticked the box', for contact whilst they are away.

Remember you can always contact us...

*You ask, we answer*

## Military Presence of UK Regular Personnel





Royal Air Force  
Benevolent Fund  
CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

# New mental wellbeing support service helps **more than 300 people** in its first year

**A** new Listening and Counselling Service launched last year by the RAF Benevolent Fund has helped more than 300 serving and retired RAF personnel and their dependants, in its first year.

The service is tailored to support anyone experiencing a range of wellbeing issues, from anxiety and depression or bereavement to low self-esteem, loneliness, or even isolation felt due to caring for a loved one. Assistance provided includes a dedicated helpline and email address providing information on the service and access to counselling sessions. Counselling is available either face-to-face, by telephone or at home for those who struggle to get out.

**Alison Wyman, RAF Benevolent Fund Head of Strategy and Programmes, said:** “The Fund has developed this new service after listening to the needs of the wider RAF Family which includes both serving personnel and veterans, as well as their dependent family members.

“As the RAF’s leading welfare charity, we know only too well the pressures the RAF Family face and are constantly looking at new ways to help them. The Listening and Counselling Service offers something bespoke for those suffering from emotional wellbeing issues.”

The support is delivered in partnership with Anxiety UK and Wellbeing Solutions Management.

**To access the Listening and Counselling Service call us on 0300 222 5703 (Mon to Thur 9.30am-4.30pm, Fri 9.30am-4pm) or email [support@rafbf.org.uk](mailto:support@rafbf.org.uk)**

Please note that while non-serving dependent family members and Reservists will be able to access this service directly, serving Regulars may be required to go through their medical officer to access counselling support.

“I knew deep down **something was wrong** but I **did not** want to start that **first conversation**”

People like Abby, a Reservist in the RAF, contacted the Fund for support with depression.

Abby said: “There is still a stigma around mental illness. I knew deep down something was wrong but I did not want to start that first conversation, I had a fear of where to start. I spent a long time in denial. You have to trust your family or a loved one and talk about it. My other half was adamant that things could not be left as they were any longer but I had to be pushed to get help. I thought I was coping but I wasn’t.

“Without the therapy sessions I would be in a far worse situation and I would encourage others to please seek help if they feel they are not coping and talk to someone about how they are feeling.”





© RAF Association

# MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TRAINING FOR RAF FAMILIES

**F**amilies of serving RAF personnel can benefit from new training to spot mental health issues, thanks to the RAF Association.

The charity has received two grants from the Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust's 'Mental Health Promotion Fund' and the Postcode Community Trust to launch the programme, which began at RAF Coningsby in February.

Adult Mental Health Aware Half Day is the first course to be offered to the partners and spouses of serving RAF personnel and civilian staff contracted to work on stations. The Association recognises the vital role families play in identifying and understanding mental health issues and the course provides the understanding and supporting skills to implement practical support

Teachers of children whose parents serve in the RAF at schools local to the stations, can also take advantage of the programme.

3.1% of UK Armed Forces personnel were assessed with a mental disorder at MOD Specialist Mental Health Services in 2017-18\*

RAF Association area director, Ailsa Gough has been on the course and spoke of her own experiences. She said: "We feel it's important to provide support to the families of those serving their country in the RAF and therefore, are delighted to have received this vital funding.

"I have experienced one of the workshops myself and, in my voluntary role as a Befriender to an RAF veteran, it has given me a better understanding of how I can help people in need."

The RAF Association successfully piloted the course at RAF Benson and RAF Valley in 2017 with participants saying they had a better understanding of issues affecting people and the signs to look out for.

Delivery of training courses will begin at RAF Coningsby before expanding to a further 10 stations throughout the year:

- RAF Benson
- RAF Brize Norton
- RAF Cosford
- RAF Cranwell
- RAF Leeming
- RAF Odiham
- RAF Scampton
- RAF Shawbury
- RAF Valley
- RAF Waddington

For further information, personnel need to contact their station's Community Development Officer or family members can call the RAF Association on **0800 018 2361**.

\*UK armed forces mental health: 2017/18: [infographic - gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-armed-forces-mental-health-annual-statistics-financial-year-201718](http://infographic.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-armed-forces-mental-health-annual-statistics-financial-year-201718)



**ROYAL AIR FORCES Association**  
The charity that supports the RAF family

"I have experienced one of the workshops myself and, in my voluntary role as a Befriender to an RAF veteran, it has given me a better understanding of how I can help people in need"

# Welcome to Scotland

The Scottish Government has produced a guide specifically for service personnel and their families moving to Scotland. Available online or in hard copy it provides practical information on topics such as housing, education, healthcare and employment.

Designed to help with what you need to know about your move, this free booklet helps you to research what matters to you most. To also ensure you are fully supported on your move to Scotland, please let your local council know that you are members of the armed forces community and this guide can share links and contact details.

## ACCESSING THE GUIDE:

- Digitally: [gov.scot/publications/welcome-scotland-guide-service-personnel-families-moving-scotland/](http://gov.scot/publications/welcome-scotland-guide-service-personnel-families-moving-scotland/)
- Hard copy: contact the RAF FF office by emailing the team at [enquiries@raf-ff.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@raf-ff.org.uk)



## Forces Children's Education website

The Scottish Government, Local Authorities and schools are also working hard to ensure that moving to Scotland has a positive effect on the educational outcomes of children from Armed Forces families. This website has been created in order to bring all these efforts together and put the resources that parents and the education professionals who support their children need, together in one place: [forceschildrenseducation.org.uk/](http://forceschildrenseducation.org.uk/)



# AIR TATTOO SET TO BE OUT OF THIS WORLD

THE ROYAL INTERNATIONAL  
**AIR TATTOO**  
19-21 JULY 2019  
RAF FAIRFORD  
SWINDON

**O**rganisers of the Royal International Air Tattoo are promising visitors to this summer's airshow that it will be out of this world.

Special Super Earlybird tickets for the event, which takes place at RAF Fairford in Gloucestershire on July 19-21 2019, have already sold out for the Saturday, and as well as featuring the world's most exciting aircraft, the 2019 airshow will turn its spotlight into space.

The airshow's theme *Air & Space: inspiring the Next Generation Air Force* follows an announcement earlier this year that the Royal Air Force will be taking command and control of the UK's military space operations, reflecting the importance of space in ensuring successful military operations around the world.

Andy Armstrong, Chief Executive of RAF Charitable Trust Enterprises, which organises the event, said that whilst the past 100 years saw military operations take place in the sky the next century would see activities increasingly stretching beyond the Earth's atmosphere.

He said: "As well as welcoming air arms from around the world, we plan to demonstrate, through engaging and interactive displays, how space technology is being developed and how it is being used to help counter threats to our everyday lives.

"Our focus on space will be particularly poignant as the 2019 airshow will take place on exactly the same day,

50 years ago that the first Moon landing took place – on July 20 1969."

Super Earlybird admission tickets for this summer's airshow have gone on sale priced £47. This represents a saving of almost 20 per cent on the cost of a full-priced standard admission ticket.

The Royal International Air Tattoo is staged annually in support of the RAF Charitable Trust. To find out more about what's on offer each day, book tickets and explore the various enclosure options, visit [airtattoo.com](http://airtattoo.com)



# NARROWBOAT HOLIDAYS! ON THE LEEMING FLYER.

If you've ever fancied hiring a narrowboat for a short break, then consider hiring the Leeming Flyer. Based at Acton Bridge Marina, on the Cheshire Ring, it is available to all three services, including ex-service personnel.

The Cheshire Ring is a gentle cruise through the idyllic Cheshire countryside, district views fill your route as you follow part of the historic silk trail, and briefly, in contrast you will also visit the heart of Manchester through its secret backdoor.

Made up of three main canals that run through the county; the Macclesfield Canal running through Congleton and Macclesfield, the Trent and Mersey running through Middlewich and Wheelock and then the Bridgewater Canal running through Lymm in the North. The Shropshire Union Canal also skirts Chester's city walls where you can stop off and explore 2000 years of history.

Why not stop off and explore one of the many towns and villages en-route or take a trip to see Anderton Boat Lift, an incredible edifice, perched on the banks of the River Weaver – just like a giant three-storey-high iron spider.

The Cheshire Ring provides a range of canal side scenery from the gentle rolling plains of the Cheshire countryside to the peaks of the Peak District National Park. There is a variety of canal features en-route including locks, aqueducts and tunnels plus the historic town centres of Northwich, Middlewich, Macclesfield and Congleton are within easy reach to explore. The whole ring is 97 miles long, with 92 locks and can take up to a one week to complete. Hire the Leeming Flyer and explore the beauty of Cheshire; many attractions, places to eat are accessible from the canal side.

Perhaps see it as a contact house on the water - the Leeming Flyer will serve as a relaxing getaway experience for serving or ex-serving MOD personnel and their families on the stunning Cheshire Ring canal network.

No experience is required as lessons on how to manoeuvre the boat and canal etiquette are given upon arrival, including a full walk-through of the boat and its facilities.

## FACILITIES:

- Can accommodate up to 6 people (3 x double beds)
- Bathroom with shower
- Kitchen
- Dining area
- Lounge with TV
- Central heating

## FURTHER INFORMATION:

Contact 01677 458153 • LEE-LeemingFlyer@mod.gov.uk



## Hire Fees

(not including fuel which is paid for at the end of the hire period):

Months	Weekend (Fri – Mon)	Example hireweek's Rate	Weekdays (Mon – Fri)	Example hireweek's Rate	Full week (Sat – Sat)	Example hireweek's Rate
Jan – Mar & Dec	£600	£849	£600	£849	£700	£1299
Apr & Nov	£650	£800	£650	£800	£750	£1200
May – Oct	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	£850	£1360

Grant funding has been generously provided by the RAF Central Fund and the Nuffield Trust.

Anderton Boat Lift.  
©Canal & River Trust





**D**id you know that the Services Cotswold Centre offers short term accommodation for Service personnel and their families and the site can be used for welfare, duty or leisure purposes? The Centre offers up to 60 centrally heated, fully furnished, 3 or 4-bed self-catering chalets set in a peaceful and secure 25 acre site near Corsham in the beautiful Wiltshire countryside.

Whether you have a welfare issue and need temporary accommodation and support, are between assignments, close to discharge, recuperating from injury, or just need a break in the country, the Centre has everything you need for a short term stay at very reasonable rates.

Each chalet includes a TV, Freeview box, cutlery, crockery, refrigerator, freezer, bedding and towels. The site also has a gym, games hall, launderette and storage facilities. It is just a short walk into Corsham and I can say from personal experience that it makes an ideal location for a conference, as there is a large room available with working Wi-Fi.

*Finally, there are also experienced staff able to help and advise on housing, benefits and other welfare issues. We want our Service personnel and their families to make use of this hidden gem, so please spread the word!*

For more details and to access the booking form, please visit the website at [gov.uk/government/publications/services-cotswold-centre](http://gov.uk/government/publications/services-cotswold-centre) or call the Services Cotswold Centre on 01225 810358.



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by Warrant Officer Phil Chadwick, RAF Community Support



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**Find out more** [www.habsmonmouth.org/forces](http://www.habsmonmouth.org/forces)





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to request a prospectus and arrange a visit.  
[www.kinghamhill.org.uk](http://www.kinghamhill.org.uk)



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19 March 2019

### Stamford High School Discovery Morning

(Girls 11 - 18)  
20 March 2019

### Stamford Junior School Discovery Morning

(Boys & Girls 3 - 11)  
5 March 2019

To book your place, visit [stamfordschools.co.uk](http://stamfordschools.co.uk) or call us on 01780 750311



Quant je puis.  
As much as I can.

The UK's leading co-educational Catholic boarding and day school for 3 - 18 year olds.  
Boarding from 7 years.



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Spring Open Doors events:

Stonyhurst St Mary's Hall  
9 March 2019

Stonyhurst College  
16 March 2019

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*"I knew by the end of the tour that Badminton was somewhere I wanted to be" Scarlett, Year 9*

**SENIOR & SIXTH FORM  
OPEN MORNING**  
Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019

**WHOLE SCHOOL  
OPEN MORNING**  
Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2019

Be inspired, book your place online **NOW**



[admissions@badmintonschool.co.uk](mailto:admissions@badmintonschool.co.uk)



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[badmintonschool.co.uk](http://badmintonschool.co.uk)





Clifton College is proud of its link with the military, for over 150 years the College has provided a home from home for children of serving HM Forces personnel. Currently nearly 10% of our boarders come from the HM Forces community.

Clifton offers a 20% HM Forces Bursary from Year 4 and the College is on the approved list for the CEA allowance for boarders from Year 4.

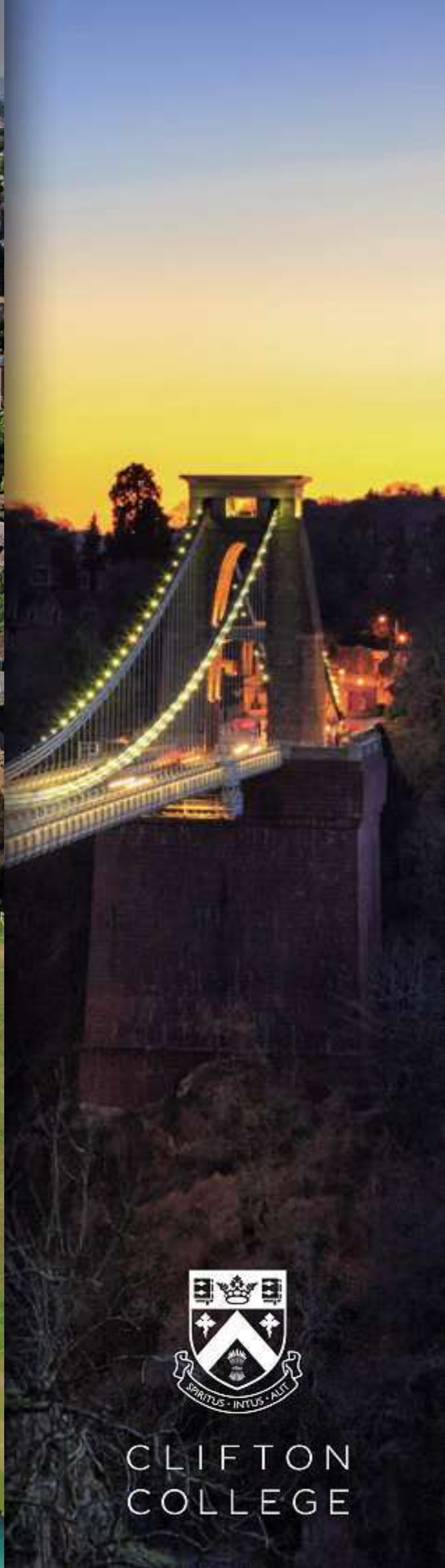
**We are holding Open Days in May:**

**Nursery to Year 3** - Friday 10th May

**Year 4 to Year 8** - Saturday 18th May

**Year 9 to Year 13** - Monday 13th May

[cliftoncollege.com](http://cliftoncollege.com)



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# Queen Victoria School Dunblane, Scotland

Aiming to provide a unique, thriving boarding and educational community in which all pupils and staff work to support and respect one another in realising their full potential



In 45 acres of countryside, our co-educational boarding school is 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 main entry point is Primary 7, which is the broad equivalent of Year 6 in England. Places are fully funded by the MOD, with a parental charge for some aspects of boarding life. Applications for admission to QVS close on the 15 January, each year.

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

[www.qvs.school](http://www.qvs.school)



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