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WINTER
2023/24



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GORDON'S SCHOOL

Boarding schools have come a long way since the tales of cold showers, uncaring, strict staff and huge dormitories filled with rows of home sick children. These days the emphasis is on patience and guiding students as they navigate social interactions, mental health issues and meeting the high expectations of the school, all that while being away from home for the first time, starting in a new school and living with 30 other peers. In an increasingly uncertain world, boarding provides a balanced, consistent constant.

Nowadays, boarding is often described as 'one big sleepover' by students, who regard it as very much a 'home from home': secure, friendly places where not only can they flourish academically, but also learn tolerance, resilience, discipline, independence - and make life-long friends in the process.

Evenings and weekends are packed with activities, both external and in-house, and as well as large grounds and facilities, children can enjoy the company of perhaps hundreds of others every day and weekend.

Gordon's School, built over a century ago at the express wish of Queen Victoria, as the national monument to General Gordon, is listed as one of Britain's outstanding schools by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector. A non-selective, co-educational state day and boarding school, set in some 50 acres of Surrey parkland close to London, the School is in the top 5% of all schools in England and Wales for progress at A Level.

However, Gordon's is so much more than its academic results. The School's ethos is that high performance without good character is not true success. So it's not just the classrooms where students excel. Successes are also achieved in drama; the arts; debating; public speaking; dance and sport and in the enviable record of Duke of Edinburgh Awards.

Over 70 per cent of the boarders at Gordon's are from Service or Diplomatic families, attracted to the school by its experience and expertise in looking after these children, who may have been uprooted from many schools and countries before their arrival. Boarding offers these children a constant, a place away from perhaps the worry of a parent on active service.

There are three main admission points – at 11 and 13 years old and for Sixth Form. Those coming into the school in Year 7 as residential boarders, are housed together for the first year, becoming part of the extended Woolwich family, headed by Houseparents Sam and Daisy Cooper

The Boarding House is run as an extension of their home – the kitchen door is always open and their children and dog running around. Saturday morning pancakes in their kitchen are a weekly treat! Students feel comfortable, safe and secure - it's their term time home and their aim is to make them feel that way.

While extra support may be provided in the classrooms to make up for any gaps in their education or to stretch and challenge the children, Mr and Mrs Cooper see their job as keeping the atmosphere in the boarding house positive, upbeat and fun, as well as helping their charges to become more independent and organised.

All students are encouraged to 'have a go' at sport, whether for their House or School and the school provides every opportunity to progress in their chosen field through the extensive facilities and coaches, many of whom have played on the international arena.

A new sports hub and additional all-weather pitch have been added to the Surrey site and the school partners Harlequins, providing a pathway for talented rugby players to achieve their potential both on and off the pitch. There are also partnerships with Superleague netball club Surrey Storm, Vanarama League Football Club Aldershot Town FC and the National Shooting Centre.

As well as sport, there are over 128 co-curricular choices for students every week, from Brazilian Jujitsu to Robotics Club and every child experiences the thrill of outdoor pursuits through the Combined Cadet Force, a tri-service offering students training in the Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force services or through the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.

While the individual is celebrated, the whole School unites for parades. Since its inception, as a national memorial to General Gordon, students have marched and there has always been a Pipes and Drums band. Dressed in their Blues uniform, the students parade around eight times a year and the school is the only one permitted to march along Whitehall - an annual tradition in remembrance of General Gordon.

The real judgement of Gordon's is the students. Visitors are struck by the friendliness, discipline and vibrancy throughout the school and by the family atmosphere, exemplified by the special rapport between staff and students

INSIGHT

In this issue...

Winter 2023/24

From the Editor...

Flt Lt D.J. Hopkinson

Welcome to the Winter 2023 edition of Insight magazine. Hopefully everyone had the opportunity to enjoy some respite over the festive period, whether at home or overseas and is feeling ready for the year ahead.

This edition of your station magazine contains a variety of articles ranging from history pieces to calls for volunteers to support Ex WYVERN TOR. Ex WYVERN TOR is a resilience Exercise aimed at young people attempting to complete the Ten Tors challenge and cannot run without the support of a multitude of volunteers.

We are also pleased to champion the charity work carried out by Waddington personnel with an article this edition looking at the 'coat collection' for the East Coast Homeless Outreach (ECHO). ECHO is a local charity and the 'coat collection' is especially poignant at this time of year as we see the weather deteriorate with the most vulnerable members of society having the greatest exposure.

On a final note I would, once again, like to thank everyone for their contributions to the magazine to date. Without your submissions there would be no Insight Magazine and I encourage anyone and everyone to submit articles to WAD-InsightEditorialTeam@mod.gov.uk for publication. We are keen to hear about your professional successes, charity endeavours and sporting prowess. Insight is your space to share the hard work that you do and I would urge you to use it!



EDITORIAL TEAM:

WAD-InsightEditorialTeam@mod.gov.uk

External Email:

Use personal email addresses listed

Tel: +44 (0)1522 726704

Editor:

Flt Lt D.J Hopkinson

WAD-InsightEditorialTeam@mod.gov.uk

Deputy Editor:

Flt Lt Chris Talbot

WAD-InsightEditorialTeam@mod.gov.uk

Designer:

Amanda Robinson

Advertising by:

Jayne Bailey

Tel: 01536 334 219

Published by:

Lance Media Group Ltd,
1st Floor, Tailby House, Bath Road,
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NN16 8NL

Tel: 01536 334 222

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If you would like to see your article in the next issue of Insight please email them in to our editor!

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Station Commander's Foreword...

Gp Capt Mark Lorriman-Hughes



This month sees the publication of the Winter 2023 edition of the Station Magazine. I would like to start by welcoming you all back after a well-earned break and to wish you all well for 2024, I have no doubt it will be another busy and successful year for the Station.

It is noteworthy to see that in this edition we have both historical articles and articles which publicise historical events currently taking place at RAF Waddington. As we look to the past and celebrate 51 Sqn's work in the final days of World War 2 and their role in the Berlin Airlift, we are also pleased to be able to share the successes of the Protector RG Mk1. The Protector's first flight from RAF Waddington marked a huge milestone in the journey to deliver this new asset to the frontline and I, for one, am grateful to everyone across the Whole Force that worked so hard to make this possible.

Our Annual Industry Day was a huge success once

again with over 200 people attending the event and 29 industry partners present. This is an especially important part of the RAF Waddington calendar and gives Station personnel a unique opportunity to engage with industry and to nurture a better understanding of what they provide whilst developing a whole force mentality.

I am also very pleased to see the Annual Station Awards Night featuring in the is edition. The Station Awards is our opportunity to champion the successes on Station and to celebrate those individuals that have gone above and beyond. We should all be extremely proud of the work we do at RAF Waddington and of the Award winners, it is beholden on us to share and praise our achievements.

Thank you to those that have contributed to this edition of the Station Magazine. I look forward to reading more about your activities over the coming year and wish you all the best of luck for 2024.



After Operation HYDRA (check out the last history corner for the full account) in August 1943, the Squadron remained with Bomber Command conducting raids across Western Europe and Germany.

In April 1945 the Squadron was moved back to its former home at RAF Leconfield and it was from here that they conducted their final bombing raids of the war.

On 7th May (the day before victory in Europe was declared) all of Bomber Command's 4 Group squadrons were transferred to Transport Command. The Halifax bombers began to be replaced by the Short Stirling Mk 5 for the squadron to carry out its new role, providing troop rotation flights to India to

support the ongoing effort in the far east. As the allies began to succeed in that theatre, the focus shifted from troop rotation to repatriation of the Far Eastern Prisoners of War.

It is a well-known fact now that squadrons in Bomber Command suffered incredibly high losses throughout the war and 51 Squadron was no different. The Squadron lost 948 personnel with a further 328 taken as Prisoners of War. Included in these losses are seven personnel who were killed in a service bus accident and a further 18 who were killed in a bomb dump explosion at RAF Snaith.

After the war had finished, 51 Squadron moved around a further four times, going first to Stradishall in August 1945, then to Waterbeach in 1946, Abingdon in December 1947



Short Stirling Mk5.



Transport Command.

and then to Bassingbourn in June 1948. While at Stradishall, the Stirlings were replaced by the Avro York.

Throughout the changes of home base, the squadron continued to fly in a transport role, carrying out regular route flying to East Africa, India and Singapore. In 1948, when the Soviet Union implemented a blockade around West Berlin, the Western Allies organised



the Berlin Airlift. 51 Squadron took part for the duration of the operation, called Operation PLAINFARE, with eight crews and five aircraft deployed

to Wunsdorf near Hannover, applying all their previous skills gained during the war and subsequent transport role.

By 1950, with peace in Europe and relations with the Soviet Union being frosty but stable, there was obviously a need to scale down the size of the military and 51 Squadron was one of the squadrons to be disbanded. If you have read each of the History Corners over the last few years, you will know that 51 Squadron conducted many roles after being formed as part of the Royal Flying Corps as a fighter squadron. When the RFC and RNAS combined to form the RAF, it meant that 51 Squadron was one of the first fighter squadrons in the service. Between the wars the Squadron became a training unit before joining Bomber Command at the onset of war

and along with the obvious tasks, also conducted leaflet drops, port raids and were fundamental in the creation of the Parachute Regiment, having been one of the specialised units trained to drop personnel. The addition of maritime patrol while with Coastal Command and transporting troops at the end of the war demonstrates the diverse and interesting history 51 Squadron has. Next time we will look at the rebirth of the squadron in yet another role.

Swift and Sure

51 SQUADRON MEDIA & COMMS TEAM
Sgt Phil Howle



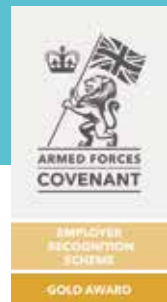
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GREETINGS ONCE AGAIN FROM AREA 51



The past few months have seen a relatively low period of activity for 51 Squadron, and so this edition will see a somewhat reduced article. However, here are some of the things we have been getting up to.

In addition to the regular operational sorties in Eastern Europe, we have also flown more recently in the Eastern Mediterranean. On top of the operational sorties, we have also taken part in both Exercise SPARTAN WARRIOR (which is an entirely synthetic training exercise) as well as Exercise COBRA WARRIOR where we flew live as part of the exercise giving us an opportunity to hone some of the skills that don't get used routinely on our normal missions.

Both exercises were good starting points in preparation for the Sqdn to deploy to Exercise RESOLUTE HUNTER in the United States as part of a multi-national and multi-agency exercise focussed on ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance). That is ongoing as this piece is being written, so look out for the details in the next edition!

Swift and Sure

**51 SQUADRON MEDIA
& COMMS TEAM**
Sgt Phil Howle





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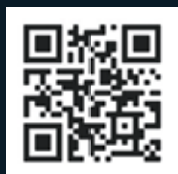
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RAF Waddington hosted the annual Industry Day

RAF Waddington hosted its annual industry day event.

With over 200 people attending the event, whether exhibiting, attending the full event or dropping in to speak to individuals from the different sectors we work alongside here on station.

The event was supported by 29 industry partners and a range of pan-Defence innovation hubs. It enabled us to bring together key industry partners we work with both in and outside of the station. Plus, allowing outside agencies to learn more about what the ISTAR force and RAF Waddington do in aid of the nation's defence all year round.

Squadron Leader Shields, the event organiser, said "Our annual Industry Day is a hugely important event in the RAF Waddington calendar; it sees us come together with some of the very best innovators within the defence industry space. The 2023 event was greatly supported and, around a busy schedule of insightful talks from industry partners, the ISTAR Force Commander, ASWC and RCO, enabled RAF Waddington personnel to speak with industry representatives about emerging challenges, potential opportunities, and available solutions. We are very grateful to the many organisations who joined us this year - for their engagement, thought-provoking mainstage briefs, and continued support to Defence."

It was a lively programme with 10 talks throughout the day, ranging from new research facilities for those

interested in further education to new technologies that will support the ISTAR (Intelligence, Surveillance, Tactical Acquisition and Reconnaissance) force in the future.

Air Commodore Strasdin, ISTAR Force Commander, said "Today is important because we don't get the opportunity to promote the RAF and what the ISTAR force do here with the wider Lincolnshire community often, and continue to develop those links to industry that we currently have. It's really important that the local community know what we do here day to day and for the defence of our nation as a whole- this event supports that openness and transparency."

Flight Lieutenant Jennifer Broome, Media and Communications Officer





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51 Squadron

on its first major exercise in four years

For the first time a RAF RC-135 Rivet Joint has supported the United States Navy's major 3-week air exercise, known as exercise Resolute Hunter.

The aircraft flown by 51 Squadron at RAF Waddington supported the annual exercise in Nevada. Previously, crews from 51 Squadron have flown in US Rivet Joint aircraft on the exercise, but this is the first time the Squadron has sent one of its own aircraft.

The exercise was hosted by the Maritime Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Weapons Centre at Naval Air Station Fallon in Nevada, USA. The RAF's electronic surveillance aircraft worked with MH-60s, MQ-8C, P-8A, E-3G, RQ-4, U-2S, and ground elements on training areas over land and over the Pacific Ocean.

After a short stop at Offutt Air Force Base (AFB), the home of 51 Squadron's RJ partners the Fightin' 55th, the aircraft crew met the rest of UK Rivet Joint enterprise at Fallon, which consisted of 51 Squadron, 1 ISR Wing, and 90 Signals Unit.

Fallon, and its surrounding rugged and mountainous terrain, is home to the United States Navy's premier aviation range. It includes 13,000+ square miles of airspace, restricted areas and ranges.



It is also home to several Navy Weapons Schools including the most famous – the Strike Fighter Weapons School, or, Top Gun.

The exercise aimed to refine the crew's Find, Fix, Track, Target, Engage and Assess skills and also provides an opportunity for 51 Squadron to reciprocate the co-crewing sorties that the USAF's 55th Wing provide.

The exercise gave the squadron the opportunity to switch from its usual

operational taskings to consider other environments, threats, and aircraft. This ensures that they retain the skills required to undertake a wide variety of missions in support of the UK's intelligence requirements.

"The challenge this exercise provided the crews has been phenomenal. The exercise team worked exceptionally hard to ensure that all of the assets were tested in a contested and congested scenario. Our aircraft has shown an extraordinary ability

to support the targeting of the F-18 and EA-18G aircraft. We will continue our co-crewing in future exercises to develop the capabilities of the UK Rivet Joint." Wing Commander Bissett, leader of the RAF Detachment.

Flight Lieutenant Jennifer Broome, Media and Communications Officer





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RAF Waddington hosts the annual Deployed Families Christmas Lunch

The station hosted the annual Deployed Families Christmas lunch on Sunday, 26 Nov 23. Families came from our station and beyond- RAF Cranwell, Coningsby and Digby.

The lunch was the biggest event yet with over 130 people in attendance.

Flight Sergeant Lesley Woodley, one of the Community Support team and a key organiser in this event said, "It's great to see so many families enjoying themselves despite their loved ones being away this Christmas."

The RAF Waddington Station Commander, Group Captain Lorriman-Hughes, said "These events are so important, and it is a joy to be able to make families happy at this particularly festive time. The level of support from station to host and help at this year's event is especially heart-warming."

The event was held in the RAF Waddington Officers Mess and included a small gift bag, the option to record a message to loved ones that are overseas this Christmas and a delicious three course meal. The event was supported on the day by many personnel from around station. A few names include the ISTAR Force Commander, Air Commodore Strasdin, the RAF Waddington Station Commander, the Station Warrant Officer, and the brilliant community support team.

Flight Lieutenant Jennifer Broome, Media and Communications Officer



“MY GIFT WILL HELP LINCS & NOTTS AIR AMBULANCE SAVE SOMEONE ELSE...”

Car Mechanic Joshua Marriott’s back was broken in several places after his motorcycle was in a collision with a car in June 2020.

Also broken were two bones in his neck, both wrists, four ribs and he had suffered internal bleeding from a ruptured spleen. All he remembers is the emergency services and the arrival of the Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance.

When he woke up in Nottingham’s Queen’s Medical Centre six days later, he was determined to get better so he could support his partner Chelsea and their newborn son Lorenzo.

Three years on, Josh is a valued volunteer at LNAA, using his skills as a mechanic to assist in the maintenance of charity vehicles.



Josh said: “This is how I can pay back for what the crew did that day. They saved my life and have given me the chance to watch my son grow up. If it wasn’t for the Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance I wouldn’t be here today. This is why I am leaving them a gift in my Will. In this small way I can play my part in making sure they continue to receive the donations they need to continue their life-saving work.”

Nearly a third of LNAA’s missions are funded by people who have left a gift in their Will, and in the last year alone donations of this kind have paid for over 400 life-saving missions. By remembering Lincs & Notts Air Ambulance in your Will, you will be helping to ensure that they can be there for critically ill and injured people when they are needed most.



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“The end of the beginning” **- The road to Protector First Flight**

The Protector RG Mk1, a remotely piloted aircraft system, took to the skies from RAF Waddington in November, marking another important milestone in the delivery of the surveillance, intelligence, and precision strike aircraft to the front line.

The road to first flight was truly a ‘whole force’ activity with the close support of industry partners. Experts from across UK Defence participated over many months - in some cases over many years - to achieve the first flight of the most complex RPAS introduced into UK Airspace.

Officer Commanding 56 Squadron and Officer Commanding 31 Squadron reflect on their Squadrons involvement in delivering first flight.

56 Squadron, stationed at RAF Waddington, is part of the Air & Space Warfare Centre (ASWC). Since relinquishing its flying role with the F-3 OCU in 2008, the squadron has delivered testing of the RAF's ISR capabilities. In 2023 the squadron took over

from 206 Sqn the mantle of delivering whole aircraft flight test for the ISTAR Force, now including Protector.

The first of 16 remotely piloted Protector aircraft arrived at RAF Waddington in Lincolnshire in September and is undergoing a series of rigorous trials and tests with 56 squadron before entering the RAF fleet.

31 Squadron, the first Protector squadron is providing all engineering and operations staff for Protector test and evaluation. The squadron engineers assembled the aircraft in early October, just before 31 Squadron was formally stood-up on the 11th of October. As the lead operational squadron, it will provide pilots, sensor operators and mission intelligence personnel, as well as engineering staff to Protector.

Capable of operating across the world with a minimal deployed footprint and remotely piloted from RAF Waddington, Protector can operate at heights up to 40,000 feet with an endurance of over 30 hours.

Protector, the largest and most advanced remotely piloted aircraft flown in UK airspace, successfully taxied and flew circuits around RAF Waddington airfield, always under the control of a pilot through its ground-based advanced cockpit.

Equipped with a suite of surveillance equipment, the Protector aircraft will bring a critical global surveillance capability for the UK, all while being remotely piloted from RAF Waddington.

Flight Lieutenant Jennifer Broome, Media and Communications Officer

OC 31 Squadron, Wing Commander Scottie MacColl said,

“There was a huge number of people involved in this effort. Some of our engineers have been working on this for over two years. A lot of work is ahead, but it was a fantastic day for the squadron and the RAF.”

OC 56 Squadron said,

“There has been a colossal amount of preparation for Protector’s first flight across the station, Air Wing, and the ASWC. Once preparation was complete, it was down to the test teams and supporting elements to work through the multiple emerging challenges, and finesse platform integration here at RAF Waddington. It has been amazing to see how those teams across the enterprise were able to deliver this unique test event and significant milestone. For us, as for many of those stakeholders, the analysis continues as we work together on the next steps for Protector.”

Gladiator completes its first major international Exercise SPARTAN WARRIOR

The Royal Air Force's new synthetic training system has completed its first major international exercise.

Gladiator, a world-leading synthetic training system which links synthetic training devices (simulators) to a central hub, has been used by RAF Waddington's Air Battlespace Training Centre (ABTC) in its first virtual large force employment (LFE) exercise.

The four-day long exercise comprised of several challenging virtual air operations, requiring all the participating nations to work together in a challenging, secure, and safe environment.

The biannual event is the capstone exercise in a series of tactical role focused exercises delivered by the United States Air Force in Europe and Air Forces Africa Warfare Centre (UAWC). Specifically designed to support the training of NATO members and alliance partners the event provided training for 19 nations across all roles, including Combat Air, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, and Command and Control, both on site at

the UAWC in Germany and distributed across Europe.

Having already achieved international connectivity with the US, Canada and Australia just six weeks after achieving Initial Operating Capability, the ABTC alongside the UAWC were able to demonstrate the rapid development of the system by delivering composite air operations within this exercise virtually supporting a range of critical air operations.

Whilst forming a crucial part of the multi-domain virtual LFE, the ABTC used the exercise as a test bed for enhancing Gladiator capability in preparation for upcoming UK synthetic training. For future RAF-led exercises, such as Exercise Cobra Warrior, Gladiator will become vital in transforming existing operational training, harnessing Live Virtual Constructive capabilities to optimise and add complexity to better replicate the contested operating environments of today.

Flight Lieutenant Jennifer Broome, Media and Communications Officer

Officer Commanding the Air Battlespace Training Centre, Wing Commander Mark Still, said:

"Being able to support our partners across NATO in this exercise was truly fantastic. This scale of exercise is only made possible through the connection of participating nations and units operating from distributed locations - what Gladiator is designed and built to do. It really does mark a step change in the UK's synthetic Collective Training capability."

ECHO Collection

Driving through Lincoln in early 2020 I noticed how little footfall there was in the town centre due to COVID19, and I realised how isolated the homeless population had become.

That November I organised a 'coat collection' on 14 Sqn and delivered a couple of bags of warm clothes to Jeannine at East Coast Homeless Outreach (ECHO). ECHO is a community volunteer group, who operate a street kitchen in Lincoln and Grimsby, deliver food boxes in Louth and provide support to those 'left out in the cold' either literally or figuratively, by today's economic reality. As well as hot meals and food parcels, this can also be sleeping bags, warm clothes, toiletries or support to those seeking accommodation. I started volunteering at the Lincoln Street Kitchen shortly afterwards and steadily saw the number of meals served rise week on week as more and more people were affected by the pandemic and economic struggle. Since then, whole families have started to stand alongside individuals all in need of the things most of us take



for granted. In the last few weeks of the year, I organise a collection amongst my 14 Sqn peers as well as my own family and friends with this year (2023) providing the largest donation of some eight bags of clothes, coats and sleeping bags all of which were delivered to ECHO a few days before Christmas and will go on to help countless people at an already difficult time of year.

Flt Lt Chris Kirman

<https://thelincolnite.co.uk/2022/09/homeless-group-doubles-its-free-sunday-lunches-to-help-with-cost-of-living-crisis/>



RAF Waddington hosted the annual Station Awards Night

On Thursday 23 November 2023 RAF Waddington hosted their annual Station Awards night.

There were a range of awards presented in the evening and listed below are the award winners.



Outstanding Contribution to Charity – Flight Sergeant Steve Yarlett and Mrs Yarlett.



Industry's Outstanding Contribution Award – Air Battlespace Training Centre.



Resourcefulness and Innovation Award – Supply and Accounting Section.



Outstanding Sporting Achievement Award – Air Specialist 1 Cantley.



The People and Community Award – The Community Support Team.



The Spirit of RAF Waddington – Corporal Li-Proven.



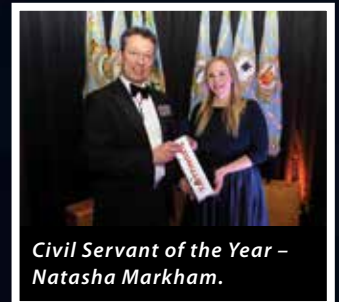
Outstanding Team Achievement Award – Movements Section.



The Squadron Leader David Graham Memorial Award – The Waddington Development Team, Station Services Squadron, STRE, Defence Infrastructure Organisation Team.



Volunteer of the Year – Flight Sergeant Craig Smith. Collected by Wing Commander Donnelly on behalf of the FS.



Civil Servant of the Year – Natasha Markham.



Reservist of the Year – Squadron Leader Jessica Kups.



Aviator of the Year – Flying Officer Joe Skivington.

Thank you to the sponsors for facilitating such a wonderful event.

Flight Lieutenant Jennifer Broome, Media and Communications Officer

Volunteers wanted for Ex Wyvern Tor 2024

EX Wyvern Tor: 5Ws and a H

Ex Wyvern Tor – Who is it for? Any member of the military (RAF, Royal Navy, Army, Marines)

Ex Wyvern Tor – What is it? This is an Army led resilience exercise delivered by HQ South West Brigade, which coordinates several civilian agencies and over 1000 military personal that support and provide the framework for the Ten Tors to take place.

Wait, “What is the Ten Tors?” I hear you ask. Here is what the Ten Tors website says. “There may be many challenging outdoor events in Britain today, but Ten Tors stands alone in its scale, its ambition, and the fact that it is aimed solely at young people. The Event takes place every year on Dartmoor during the weekend following the May public holiday and is now firmly established in the collective consciousness of the South West. All those who attempt Ten Tors will undoubtedly remember it for the rest of their lives and for many it will be a life-changing experience.

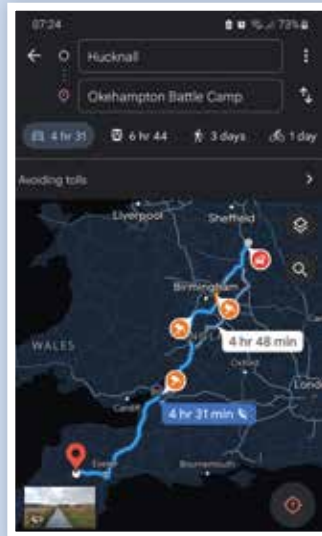


The Ten Tors Challenge is attempted by 2,400 teenagers in 400 teams of six. The teams navigate routes of 35, 45 or 55 miles (depending on age) over the Northern half of Dartmoor, visiting ten nominated tors / checkpoints in under two days. Teams must be self-sufficient, carrying all that they need to complete their route and stay out overnight safely.”

Great, here is more about what Ex Wyvern Tor is. The Ten Tors is extremely rewarding for the people taking part, it is very prestigious but there are a lot of risks that come with it. Ex Wyvern Tor assists in lowering those risks using civilian agencies and military personnel to provide admin, logistics, command and control, all set on a robust safety system.

The Army provides the personnel to run the main site at Okehampton and Moor Support Group. The RAF, Royal

Navy, Marines (and Army in 2023) provide personnel to help ensure the safety of the participants.



This is where the civilian agencies play a vital role. There is the Dartmoor Rescue Group (DRG - Red Jackets) who are experienced hill walkers / mountaineers who have a constant presence all about the Ten Tors area should there be a need to help locate participant(s) who may be in difficulty. They have a good level of first aid training should they need to provide immediate



help to an injured person and potentially evacuate them from the moor. There are the scrutineers (Yellow jackets) who carry out random kit inspections of the teams to ensure they have the correct equipment. This helps ensure the participants’ safety should there be a sudden change in the weather conditions. In addition, St John Ambulance provide first aid if required at the Safety Check Points. There are two types of checkpoints. Safety Control Points (SC) and Check Points (CP). Both types provide a safety mechanism for checking the teams that pass through them.

Ex Wyvern Tor – Where is it? Devon. It starts at Okehampton Battle Camp



	Location and weather	Staffing level	Camp set up	Level of interest form the public	Approx teams camping on Saturday night
SC	Near a road or track for ease of exit. Weather normally ok	5-7 persons with addition St Johns ambulance personnel.	12x12 for admin tent. 12x12 First aid tent for St John’s and DRG to use.	High. People want to see their family members pass by due to the location.	Up to 60 (240 people)
CP	Quite remote on top of a tor (hill), often very windy so feels much colder than it is.	3-5 persons	9x9 admin tent for command post	Low due to remote location	Up to 25 (150 people)

Here is a comparison of the two types of check point.

Dartmoor and then covers the Northern part of the moor (see map for the Start point and checkpoints).

Ex Wyvern Tor – When is it?
 Wednesday 8th May – Monday 13th May . This is the timeline.

Wednesday - Travel to Okehampton Camp, rest then evening social.

Thursday - Briefings and equipment checks at Okehampton Camp, rest then evening social.

Friday - Travel onto Dartmoor to set up campsite, rest.

Friday - Sunday - Staffing checkpoints on Dartmoor (Ten Tors runs 0700 Saturday – 1700 Sunday)

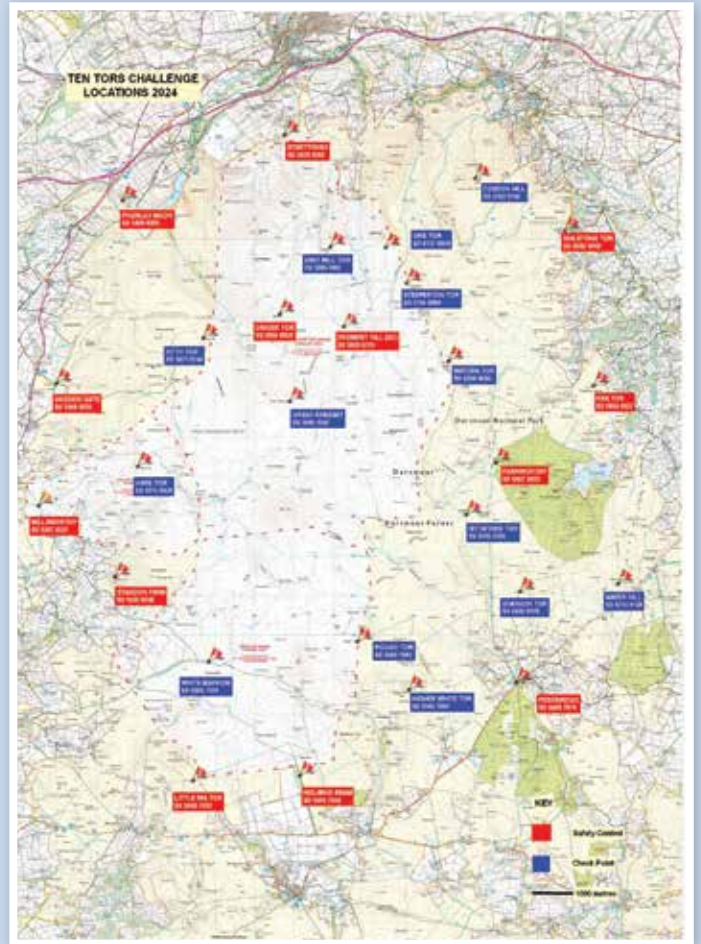
Sunday – Decamp and travel back to Okehampton, rest then short evening social.

Monday - Return from Okehampton Camp

Ex Wyvern Tor - Why should I do it? I can only speak for myself when I say I find it rewarding every time I have been able to help staff a check point and see how resilient young people are and seeing them “just get on with it.” Part of the rules is that participants are not allowed mobile phones iPad etc, so have to rely on their map reading and navigation ability and camping skills for the entire Ten Tors. I was lucky, my line manager at the time talked me into volunteering back in 2016. I remember being unsure of myself before my first time volunteering. I was nervous about making a mistake that could mean a team did not finish the event or worse someone got injured because of something I did or did not do. I should not have been

worried. There is so much experience you can ask any question or for help with any situation and there are lots of people there to support you. No one is there to set you up to fail as everyone there, be it the people picking up litter at Okehampton or the Helicopter pilots, all have the safety and wellbeing of the participants of the Tens Tors at the forefront of everything they do. Secretly the best bit is there is no / extremely poor mobile phone signal on Dartmoor so it is like a spa break for my mind with some of the best views in England. That and when someone brings out some high quality English cheddar and black truffle cheese to go on the classic biscuits brown, we are in the RAF after all. I cannot thank my old chief enough for the great experiences I had helping others. I admit it will not be to everyone’s tastes so I would recommend reaching out to other people on your station who have done this before and speak to them. I guarantee you will get some frank and honest opinions (There is no cleaning service for one!!) but overall it will be positive.

If you do not know anyone you can approach then reach out to: Matthew Lamb (RAF Waddington), Ian Baker (RAF Wittering), Anthony Chapman (230 Sqn).



Ex Wyvern Tor – How can I apply? There are instructions on the A1 ops website, here is what it says.

“RAF Volunteers required to assist with running checkpoints and ensuring participant safety. The task itself promotes leadership, working in austere conditions, with long days mentoring and supporting young, vulnerable

children undertaking the arduous challenge. They will be representing both the RAF and Military itself to the wider community and the highest standards are expected at all times. For more information on the Exercise please visit <https://www.tentors.org.uk/>”

Please email your interest to SWHQ-TenTors-RAFLO-MAILBOX@mod.gov.uk if you would like an application form. Then send completed applications to SWHQ-TenTors-RAFLO-MAILBOX@mod.gov.uk

Summing up Ex Wyvern.
 The most rewarding military volunteering opportunity you have never been told about.

Sgt Matthew Lamb



Hope on the horizon!

By the time you read this, we'll be past Christmas and into the New Year, a time of great opportunity for some, however a bleak time for others.

Long dark nights and cold grey weather days mean that the wintertime for many is a struggle both physically and mentally. Whether the darkness for you epitomises the physical struggle of poor health, long days, fatigue or whether it speaks of the mental struggles you carry; stress, depression, anxiety, grief, we all at times go through darker seasons.

Leading up to Christmas we entered the season of Advent, one of preparation and anticipation in the birth of Jesus celebrated at Christmas. Associated with this season is the

image of light, acknowledged also by other world faiths such as Divali (Hinduism) and Hannukah (Judaism) to celebrate hope. A hope that despite the season of darkness we may be experiencing there is light, there is hope on the horizon.

When we awake each day, we are given a new horizon from which to start and we have a choice as to how we will live that day. Each day the sun rises again on your horizon, some days it completely lights the sky and we can see it clearly, other days it is hidden from view and the world becomes dark around us. Irrespective of the conditions

however, we do still have a choice as to how we respond.

My Christian faith points me to follow the Light of Christ by firstly loving God and secondly loving others. My intent is to bring some light into the lives of those I meet and whilst I'm not always the brightest it only takes one spark to illuminate a dark space!

So may you at the start of this Year firstly seek out the light, may you see some hope on your horizon and may you learn to live in the brightness of each day!

Padre (Wg Cdr) Chris Carré





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Your continued support is deeply appreciated, and we look forward to standing side by side with you in 2024. Thank you for being part of our RAF Family!

**Find out how you can get involved and how we can support you:
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