

Helicon

The Magazine of RAF Odiham

Issue 1 • 2024



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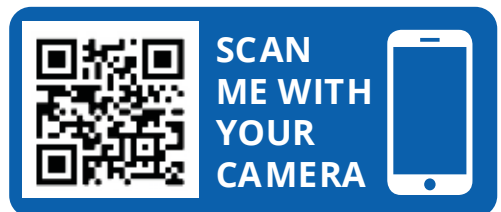
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Article Submissions

Please send all articles to odi.bsw.helicon@gmail.com

Deadline date for the next issue: 12th June 2024

PLEASE SUBMIT ALL ENTRIES FOR THE NEXT ISSUE NO LATER THAN THE DATE STATED ABOVE.

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

The editor assumes article contributors are aware that the magazine has a wide distribution to both Service and Civilian communities and contributors are ultimately responsible for the vetting of their article submissions. The editor also assumes that the contributor has ensured that personnel included in the photographs they provide are aware and have no objection to these images being used in the magazine. Advice on content or preparation of future articles can be obtained by contacting the editor. To this end the Helicon editorial staff endeavour to ensure all articles are suitable for publication. The Helicon is the magazine of RAF Odiham and its intended audience is Station Personnel and their families. It is not an official document and the opinions expressed within it are not those of the MOD, the RAF or the editorial team.

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ON THE COVER

A Chinook approaches the deck of a Queen Elizabeth Class Aircraft Carrier

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STATION COMMANDER'S FOREWORD

Gp Capt Matt Roberts

At the time of writing Spring is finally starting to Spring after what seems to have been a long, dark and particularly wet winter. There has, however, been plenty to keep the Station and its people busy since the publication of the last edition of Helicon.

World events have meant that the Chinook Force is as busy as ever, whether actually deployed or at increased readiness to do so. You will likely have seen that I have taken the difficult decision to pause the Chinook display this year – this is because of the wider commitments we have around the world and my focus on preserving the force wherever possible. We will however be showing off the magnificent aircraft by performing a 'role demonstration' at a limited number of key events. This is much less costly in terms of time and work up, but still shows the mighty Chinook off in its full glory. We will be looking to showcase this on at Families' day in August, which is going to be a fantastic event.

As some of you may be aware there will be a major change coming up to how RAF Odiham is run. A new Stn Cdr will be arriving in the Summer who will take over the running of the base and be directly working to 2 Gp RAF, not the Army. I will then be focusing on command of all the flying elements. RAF Odiham is the last Station in the RAF to transition to this model. I firmly believe having the base back in the RAF fold is by far the best way of ensuring a long term plan for the Station's infrastructure – something that has been poor for too long. This will take time, but the newly published Estate Management Plan (EMP) sets out a vision for the Odiham technical site that we can all recognise as a vast improvement. The new Stn Cdr is confirmed as



Gp Capt Sarah Moorhead, a former Chief of Staff here and a terrific leader – we look forward to welcoming her and her family later in the year.

Work has begun on the design for the new Welfare and Community Centre (WACC) and although there are a few elements we wish to 'tweak' it is great to finally see money in the bank for the work, largely courtesy of our friends at the Nuffield Trust who are huge supporters of Team Odiham. We are very much looking forward to cutting ribbon on the new WACC which will be opening its doors in Summer 25.

Speaking of investment – you may have noticed that the Secretary of State for Defence recently announced that the Govt is proceeding with the decision to purchase 14 new Chinooks. This is a real moment for the Force and shows the importance of the Chinook and what it brings to the country's defence. A huge part of what makes that capability happen is you, so whatever part of the station or wider Chinook enterprise you work in, or whether you are one of our amazing families who support us so much – THANK YOU!

Regards

Matt

Editor's FOREWORD

MACr Richard White

This foreword is my request to the readers to engage with the magazine and make it your own. What would you like to see published, do you have any great ideas that you'd like to share with the station, what have you been up to. Please get in touch by emailing ODI-Helicon.

I also plea that you engage with the local business' that make the magazine possible by paying for advertising space. If you use any of them, please let them know that you found them in Helicon.

Who's Who?



**Warrant Officer of the Royal Air Force
Warrant Officer Murugesvaran Subramaniam**

The Warrant Officer of the Royal Air Force (WORAF) is the senior Warrant Officer of the RAF. The post was created in 1996 and the person holding this appointment advises the Chief of the Air Staff on matters concerning RAF personnel. "As the new Warrant Officer of the Royal Air Force, I am eager to take on the responsibilities that come with this position, particularly acting as the spokesperson for the non-commissioned cadre.

Throughout my career, I have had the privilege of working in a variety of roles and with

colleagues from different branches of the UK's armed forces, including the Army and Navy. I am grateful for the opportunities that I have had to develop strong working relationships across all three branches of the military, and look forward to continuing to strengthen those bonds, in my new role.

I am deeply grateful to the RAF for the trust and confidence they have placed in me, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to support our people and uphold the high standards of our Service."

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RAF 60 Second Update Mar 24

We're back with another RAF 60 Second Update, this week from the legendary 'Dambusters' 617 Squadron, from the flight deck of HMS Prince of Wales.

Here's a breakdown of your update this time round:

- 617 Squadron personnel work with Royal Navy aircraft handlers to launch F-35B Lightning jets to participate in Exercise Joint Warrior.
- RAF Typhoons test their accuracy on Exercise Meteor Flash with French Rafales from the Armee de l'Air et de l'Espace.
- Specialist drivers from 2 MT Squadron make their way to Operation Biloxi to support NATO Air Policing.
- RAuxAF chefs from 502 (Ulster) Squadron, 504 (County of Nottingham) Squadron, and 611 (West Lancashire) Squadron cook for HRH The Duke of Gloucester at RAF Cranwell, to mark RAuxAF 100, supported by music from The Band of the RAuxAF.

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Padre's Corner

I so often find myself wasting hours of my evening watching reels on social media. Amongst the various clips of football, military humour, and Dad jokes that the algorithm keeps throwing my way. I find myself watching clips of some inspirational people who have either overcome adversity or started from nothing and achieved something amazing. As I sit there watching these videos after a long day of Padre-ing and parenting three young children, I am both inspired and dejected. Almost all of these videos either start or finish with the declaration that you can achieve this as well; all you need to do is put your mind to it. The last thing I read or hear as I scroll to the next video is that 90% of people will move on and do nothing about what they have just heard. I am avowedly in that 90% because, in truth, by the time the evening comes around I would much rather collapse in front of the TV rather than strive to be inspiring.

Perhaps that is just me! I am genuinely inspired by what people can achieve when they put their mind to it. In all honesty I am inspired when I speak to so many here at Odiham as they tell me of what they do day-to-day and how they overcome challenges to achieve their daily tasks. Yet I get the feeling that for most of us, whilst we are inspired by what others achieve, we also know that we are happy to collapse at the end of the day having worked hard, spent time with family or friends and know that we will do the same tomorrow.

In the Christian calendar, the time leading up to Easter is known as Lent, which is a time of preparation where the church remembers Jesus' 40 days and 40 nights in the wilderness. This concludes with Holy Week where we remember Jesus coming to Jerusalem and ultimately culminating with his death and resurrection. For many this is an incredibly inspiring story of overcoming adversity and sacrificial living, the giving up of one's life for others.

The act of sacrificial actions is something that we in the military

can identify with. We have chosen to take on a role that not everyone in society could do. We stand in the gap between our nation's adversaries and the rest of society, performing amazing things and acting as a deterrent to the Kings enemies, even to the giving up of ones life.

But what is encouraging for me about the story of Easter, compared to those many social media videos is that the story of Easter doesn't begin or end by telling us that we can do this too. That is precisely the point of it, Jesus went through the events of easter because we can't. There is an acknowledgement that sometimes we can't do everything, and that is ok.

So, I come back to those reels. I have no desire to be up at 0500 to work on my 'side hustle', amazing you that do that. Rather I try and hold to the words of St Paul when he wrote to a group of normal people in a small town in the Roman Empire. He wrote that he had learned the secret of being content in every circumstance. Now contentment is not about settling for something less than your best, contentment is not about hitting the absolute top.

Contentment is about having the ability to look yourself in the mirror and say 'I am enough'. Now Paul, who was living in the aftermath of the easter events was able to say this because his contentment was rooted in his faith. What is more amazing is that Paul wrote those words whilst in prison. For all of you, your contentment might come in something else, be it family or other loved ones.

My encouragement to you as we approach Easter is to be inspired by those who have done amazing things, but don't be dejected if you are not one of them. Look for what makes you content in your life, whether that is found in friends, family, football, or faith. Seek to be the best person that you can be, but also know that if you never reach the top of the mountain, strive to be content in every circumstance.

Confession time – I haven't achieved this myself; I am still very much on the journey. But I hope that one day we all might know contentment, and this easter time is perhaps a great opportunity to start that journey.

Rev Jonathan Stewart



HOW TO



Take Photos in Low Light

Here's some top tips.....▶



Taking photos in low light is always a challenging prospect, for beginner and professional photographers alike.

However, there are several techniques the photographer can use to avoid blurry, grainy pictures when shooting at night or indoors.

Before we look into these techniques, it's worth noting there are two types of low light photography. Firstly, low light can mean a dimly lit room with little or no access to natural daylight, outdoors around dawn or dusk or a particularly dull or overcast day. Taking decent pictures in these settings is possible with just a camera, once the photographer is using the correct settings.

Secondly, there's night-time photography. With a complete absence of natural light, it's usually not possible to take portraits or landscapes without additional equipment, such as flashes or tripods.

In order to take decent shots in low light, the photographer must be aware of the exposure triangle, the three elements of the camera's settings that form the basis of every image.

The setting that possibly needs the most consideration when shooting in low light is shutter speed. The shutter is a mechanism situated between the lens and the sensor (or film in the olden days) that controls the amount of light that enters when a photo is taken.



The speed of the shutter can range from fractions of a second, for capturing fast moving action, to a few seconds for long exposure imagery. The photographer can also opt to take full manual control of the shutter (called 'bulb setting')

and leave the shutter open for hours at a time if needs be.

For low light, a lower shutter speed is necessary. In optimal lighting conditions, when the subject is stationary or there is little

movement happening, the ideal shutter speed is between 1/100th to 1/200th of a second.

Basically, anything below 1/100th of a second is considered a low shutter speed.



Finding the right speed for a particular lighting condition is a delicate balance; too fast, and the image will be underexposed. Too slow, and blurriness sets in. At a certain point, the shutter will be too low to shoot handheld, as it simply won't be possible for the photographer to hold the camera steady enough to avoid motion blur.

The beauty of digital is that allows for plenty of test shots in order to find the right setting.

The next element of the exposure triangle to consider is aperture. The aperture controls the amount of light that enters the camera, which is measured in f-stops. For

low light conditions, the aperture setting is straightforward; as wide as your lens will allow, meaning a lower f-stop number.

This is where professional photographers obsess over the 'speed' of a particular lens. A 'faster' lens means one with a wider aperture that can capture more light.

Faster lenses are obviously more desirable, but they are more expensive.

The final part of the exposure triangle is ISO. While ISO stands for International Organisation of Standardisation, in photography it refers to the sensitivity of a sensor or film to light. Before digital became the standard, photographers had to make do with one ISO setting per camera. If their camera was loaded with a 'slow' roll of film, for example ISO 100, then shooting in low light was not possible without some very strong artificial light.

Now, most digital cameras have variable ISO settings, allowing the photographer to change the sensitivity of the sensor depending on the conditions.

With an ISO set to 20,000, or higher, your camera isn't going to miss much light.

However, similar to shutter speed, there is a balance that needs to be struck when setting the ISO. The higher the ISO number, the grainier the image will become, as the pixels that make up the image become more visible.

The good news on this front is modern digital cameras have noise reduction built in, making higher ISO numbers possible. Whereas 1000 ISO was once considered too high to produce a quality image, now cameras can go to many multiples of that number and still produce great looking pictures.

For night photography, there are two techniques which build on



some points already mentioned. Slow shutter speed photography is a great way to capture dynamic looking shots of night locations, be they cityscapes or nature.

These images are achieved by setting a long shutter speed, 1 second or more. This will cause anything moving in the frame, such as traffic, to create light streaks. For slow shutter speed, it is essential that the camera remains stationary. A tripod will allow the photographer to choose the right angle. Failing that, make sure the camera is positioned well on a flat surface or on the ground. It's best to avoid touching the camera during a slow shutter capture, including pressing the shutter button. Shutter release buttons and apps can be used to trigger the camera remotely, or using the self-timer function.

Finally, taking portraits at night

will almost always require a flash. Direct flash in dark conditions can cause the 'deer in headlights' effect with your subject. This can be avoided by using off camera flash, with a wireless flash remote. If such kit isn't available, or if you don't have a flash at all, try using a phone torch, positioned to one side of the subject.

For all these techniques mentioned, a camera that allows full manual control over the settings is needed.

However, there have been some major advances in camera quality on smartphones in recent years, along with apps that allow full manual control of the phone's camera.

Now, with a pocket-sized device, smart phone users can take images that are comparable to those taken with professional level cameras. Just remember that triangle.





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Veterans' Lunch

On Wednesday 13th December 2023, RAF Odiham hosted 68 veterans from across the local area for the annual Christmas Lunch. The annual lunch was funded by the RAF BF and the community support team.

Serving personnel and Civil servants volunteered their services in the WOSM to serve those who came before us.

Group Captain Matt Roberts

opened the afternoon of festivities by welcoming our guests to the station, reiterating our close relationship with our veterans, followed by grace from Sqd Leader Jonathan Stewart.

With many stories and memories to chat about, members of the whole force joined the veterans to enjoy an exceptional three course meal provided by the catering flight at Station.





Welfare Flats and House

HAMPSON CASTLE APARTMENTS (HCA)

The accommodation is located in Building 102B behind the Cost Cutter shop (access via the car park to the left of the shop entrance as you look at it). It comprises of four apartments and a communal area. Each apartment has a kitchen, living room, double en-suite bedroom, and twin en-suite bedroom, all bedding and towels are provided. The living room also has a double bed settee. The accommodation is fully furnished. The kitchen is fully equipped with cooker fridge, crockery, cutlery, glassware, table, and chairs. A washing machine and tumble dryer are located in the laundry room.



25 FULBROOK WAY

The RAF Odiham House (25 Fulbrook Way, Odiham, RG29 1QG) is a fully furnished 2-bedroom house which is situated amongst the Service Family Accommodation (SFA) at RAF Odiham. The Welfare house has 2 bedrooms (1 double, 1 twin), All bedding and towels are provided. The house is fully furnished. The kitchen is fully equipped with cooker, fridge freezer, washing machine, dryer, crockery, cutlery, glassware, table, and chairs. The bathroom has an over-bath power shower. A vacuum cleaner, iron and ironing board are also provided.

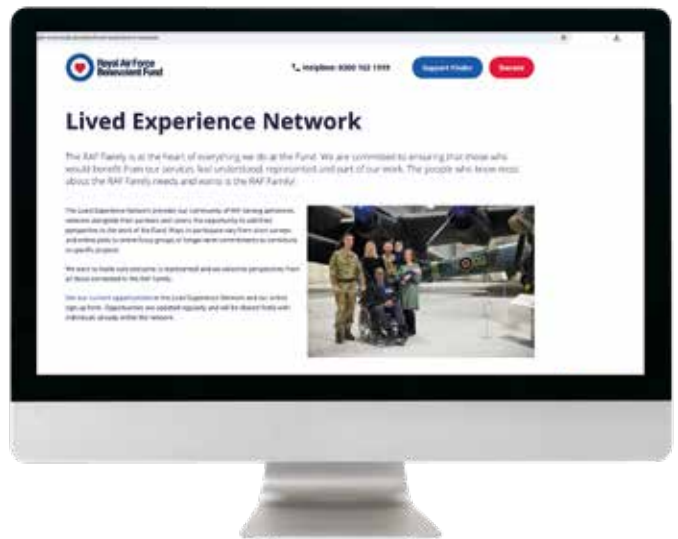


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Whilst your guests/children are staying at the RAF Odiham Welfare Properties you are responsible for their safety, discipline, care, and general well-being. Any breakages that occur during your stay should be reported to the OIC WO Angie Grimshaw Angela.Grimshaw863@mod.gov.uk as soon as possible.

COST

All properties are £30 per night, plus a one off £10 for cleaning. This payment is to be made to the Stn Cashier prior to your stay. The property is to be vacated by 10:00. The key must be returned to the Main Guardroom on the day of departure.



RAFA

INTRODUCING THE FUND'S NEW LIVED EXPERIENCE NETWORK

The RAF Benevolent Fund is proud to launch its new Lived Experience Network which aims to increase the inclusion of the RAF Family in its work.

At the heart of the Lived Experience Network is belief that those with lived experience of the challenges and nuances of life in the RAF can provide an invaluable perspective that can help to shape our services and drive innovation at the Fund.

The Lived Experience Network is a group of volunteers across the UK that the Fund will call upon for their insights as part of the RAF Family. This new initiative makes sure that we are putting the voices of the RAF Family at the centre of our decision making.

Volunteers in the Network can help the Fund in a variety of ways, from completing surveys, joining focus groups or participating in a long-term working group for an internal project. Those who sign up to the Network will find out about these new opportunities as they

arise – all of which can be done from home, so you can take part from anywhere in the UK!

Joining the Network and contributing your point of view can help maximise the Fund's impact and ensure that we remain a beacon of support for the RAF Family.

If you are a current or former member of the RAF, or a partner of spouse, we would love to hear your point of view. Whether you can spare 10 minutes or an hour every so often, sharing your perspective can make a real difference.

To see upcoming opportunities and sign up to join the Network, please visit: <https://www.rafbf.org/get-involved/volunteer/lived-experience-network> or contact our Volunteer Manager for more information at volunteering@rafbf.org.uk.

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For more details, contact: Steve.wevill@rafabasingstoke.org.uk



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Fire and Rescue Section

The Royal Air Force Fire and Rescue Service plays a key role in enabling flying operations at RAF Odiham. The Fire Section is ready to respond to all aircraft emergencies; supporting the Chinook Force, The Kings Helicopter Sqn (TKHS) and visiting Aircraft.



You will have noticed our new vehicle fleet which is now in use across Defence. Our new specialist vehicles are the Oshkosh Striker with High Reach Extendable Turret (HRET) and the Multi-Purpose Response Vehicle (MPRV). Both vehicles are predominately designed for Aircraft firefighting with their huge output of foam and dry powder. They can also be used to attend building fires or as we refer to them 'domestic incidents' they contain specialist rescue equipment such as cutting gear for Road Traffic Incidents.

A routine day at the fire section consists of thorough check of all

the vehicles and equipment, which include daily, weekly, or monthly checks. We carry out regular Crash (aircraft) and Domestic (building) training at our Crash Sim or Domestic Sim to keep up to date with core competencies and improve our tactics, techniques, and procedures. We also conduct specialist training such as confined space and explosive incidents. Some of these training scenarios can be seen in the action shots. A key part of our training is familiarisation of the Chinook and Kings flight helicopters. It is essential that we have a detailed understanding of aspects like danger and hazard areas,



emergency shut down procedures and aircrew rescue. During flying hours, there is always a firefighter on duty in our control room, where we keep an eye on aircraft movements, monitor emergency phones and listen to various radio systems -this is an important role and they are responsible alerting and passing on emergency information to the rest of the fire crew.

Our fire engines can regularly be seen around the Stn, completing a wide variety of tasks. One of these is fire extinguisher maintenance; we are responsible for the servicing of the all of the fire extinguishers on Stn. Other duties include

inspecting emergency water supplies, checking crash gates and completing fire safety inspections.

A highlight for fire crews is hosting visits at the Section, where we can share our role with the local community. This can be in the form of a work experience visits, scouts and cadets open days or local school visits. We love to share the capabilities of the fire engines and specialist equipment we carry to allow future firefighters to get hands on and have a go! This enables us to give back to the community, promote the firefighting profession and recruit the next generation firefighters for the Royal Air Force.

**By AS1 Katie Segrave
(Green Watch)**



“A highlight for fire crews is hosting visits at the Section, where we can share our role with the local community. This can be in the form of a work experience visits, scouts and cadets open days or local school visit”.



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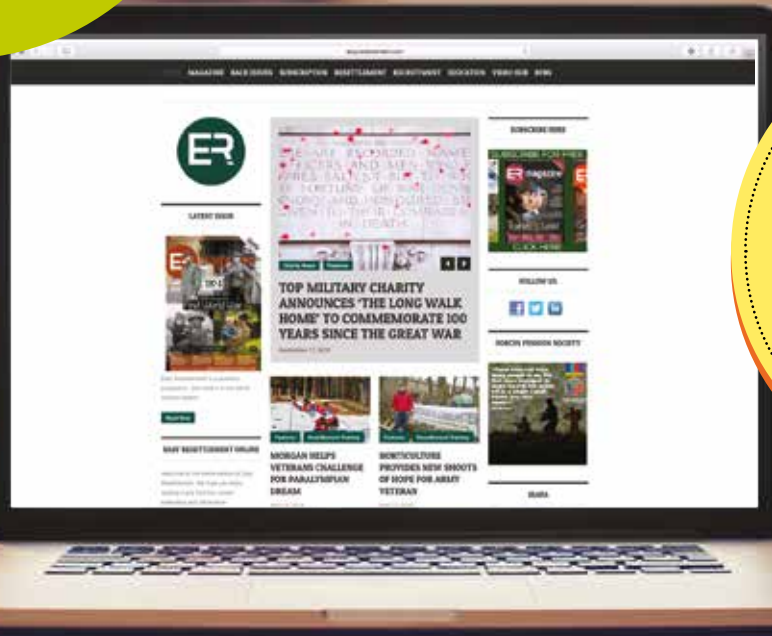
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The event is set to be bigger and better than ever with a huge array of classic and super cars/bikes to keep motor enthusiasts entertained. If weather permits, visitors can pull up a deckchair and watch an array of fixed wing and rotary aircraft taking to the skies including a fly-past by the wonderful Rolls Royce Heritage Flight.

With a mix of food, drink, and gifts in the trader village there will be plenty for visitors to browse throughout the day, along with a wide array of delicious food from the catering village.

Families will have a packed day in store with lots of activities to keep little ones entertained throughout the day. With everything from our replica pedal planes to laser tag, inflatables to craft activities, mini tanks to circus skills.

Older children will also have lots to participate in at the Discovery Den with plenty of hands-on activities to get young minds buzzing.

Other attractions will include live music, a forces charity village, and living history groups. All tickets include a free annual pass to the Museum, which is valid from 14 July.

Discounts are available for MOD90 holders, so don't delay, get your tickets booked today by visiting www.armyflying.com

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BEST WAY TO SPEND YOUR
FREE TIME

Drinks Hours

Monday to Saturday
12-11pm
Sunday's 12-9pm

Food Hours

Wednesday to Saturday
12-3pm 5pm-9pm
Sunday 12-5pm

Butts Road, Alton, GU34 1LH
01420 513486
thegeorgepub.alton@gmail.com



Matt and his team would like to welcome you into The George, Alton. Offering lunch, small plates and Sunday roasts! A large selection of wines, gins and beers!

RESERVATIONS

For parties of six or more, we recommend making reservations at least two weeks in advance. For walk-ins, we only seat parties on a first come, first served basis.

EVENTS

For information on upcoming events please check our website or facebook for more details.

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Royal Air Force
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BUILDING STRONGER FAMILIES

- It's our free **online platform** exclusively for RAF personnel and their partners.
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- The course can be **accessed anonymously**, either as a couple or separately.
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