

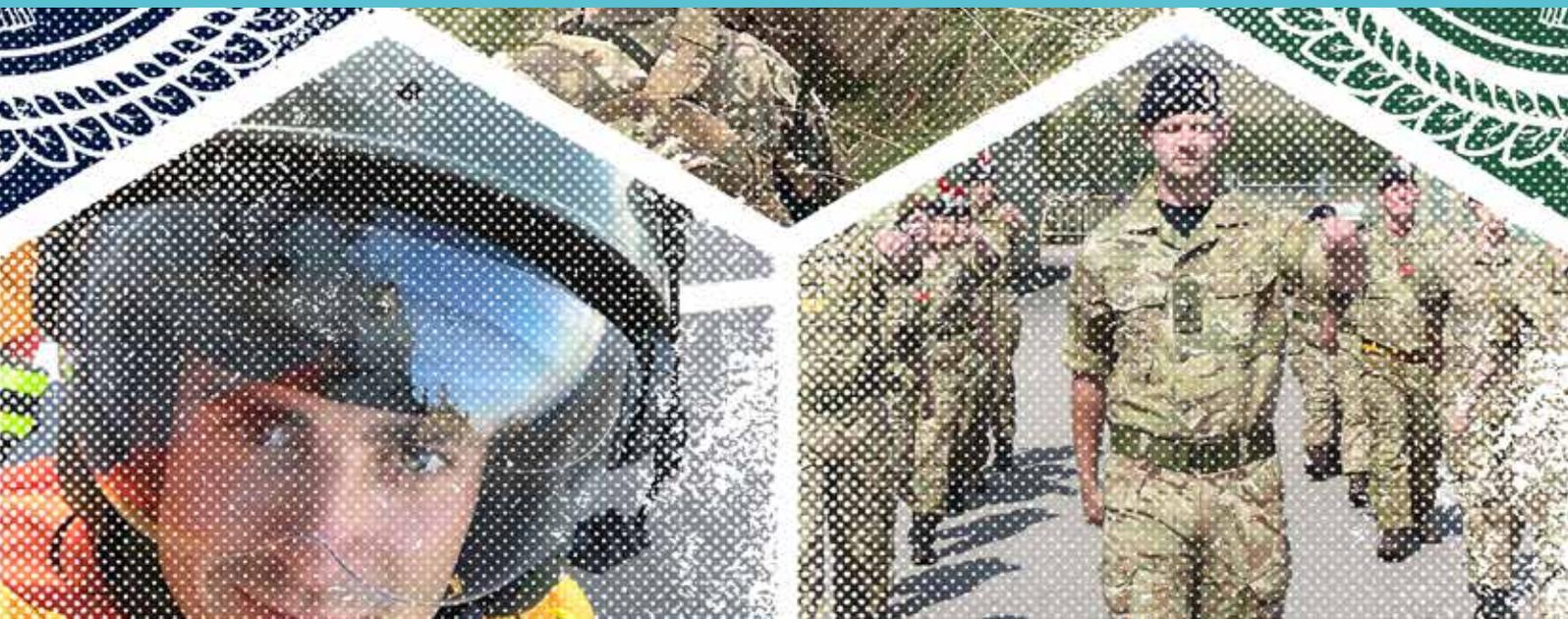


NW RFCA

RESERVE FORCES' AND CADETS' ASSOCIATION FOR
THE NORTH WEST OF ENGLAND AND THE ISLE OF MAN

AGM 2019

Chairman's Report



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Introduction



Col Nick Williams, Chairman Reserves and Cadets “valuable and valued”

As I write this piece for my report for the last year I am aware that the staff within

NW RFCA are madly putting together and closing the accounts for the last financial year. Fingers crossed that we enter the financial year without having to manage beginning of year savings measures. Certainly, from the Grant-in-Aid allocation – in the main the operating costs for the NW RFCA staff, vehicles and Army Cadet Force Support – the budget request seems to have been met in full by Headquarters Regional Command; that is certainly good news. The concern – as always will be the financial allocations from the Defence Infrastructure Organisation, and in particular our routine maintenance allocation, as all readers and especially our units will be aware – we never receive enough! As I look back we fortunately never had the 2017 financial squeeze placed on us. I must place on record my sincere thanks to the Finance Manager – Mrs Anne Chengo and Mr Ray Hadfield for their excellent work within the finance arena.



I was absolutely delighted to see the proactiveness of the salaried staff within NW RFCA in December, January and February when we were alerted to small pockets of money becoming available. Noting the normal end of year financial caveats whereby all projects had to be completed and paid for by 31 March – the pressure on the staff to produce the goods was immense. More of that to follow. In addition to the underspend allocations mentioned below, we had 5 bids – each of c£25k from CRFCA accepted for various projects – many of them under the label of welfare with Holcombe Moor and Altcar Training Camp benefitting.

Three Pillars of Outputs

Under Youth & Cadets I am delighted to report on the excellent support given by the respective counties/Isle of Man Professional Support Staff to the ACF. In addition, and within the respective Service Level Agreements, we have supported the Air Cadets, Sea Cadet Corps and the CCFs. I know you will agree that the cadet forces adult volunteers across all the MODs uniformed organisations – alongside the civilian volunteers/assistants work tirelessly and effortlessly in providing the platform for the cadets to flourish. Within the Schools Cadet Expansion Programme we now have 34 new schools with CCFs in the NW within this scheme. This has been an outstanding effort – led by the Cadet Expansion Officers - over the last four years and we now look forward to supporting the single Services as they now help train the various school cadet contingents.

As I mentioned above, within the Infrastructure Department we saw the release of in-year underspend from the respective Services – most notably DIO, the Army and Royal Navy. For work on the Army reserve estate we saw just under £700k released for c35 different projects – the largest two projects being new roofs at Peninsula Barracks (Warrington) and Jubilee Barracks (St Helens). The Royal Navy also released money for a couple of projects at HMS Eaglet. All, of course, to be completed by 31 March 2019. Once again, under the Head of Infrastructure, the team will work tirelessly to meet all the deadlines set. Another piece of emerging and exciting work last year was the possible creation – under Project NAPIER – of a building at Eaglet similar to a Premier Inn/Travel Lodge for the ships crews as the Type 45 destroyers go through their upgrade fit/sea trials in Merseyside. The legacy of 80 plus en-suite bedrooms for use once the re-fit programme has been completed would be excellent for the RMR, RNR and URNU within Liverpool. However, very sadly though, in the middle of March, the Royal Navy pulled the funding for the project – much to the huge disappointment of the NW RFCA Infrastructure staff – but more importantly - for those based at HMS Eaglet. Another exciting project – this time for the Air Cadet Organisation is the major refurbishment and modernisation to the National Activity Centre in Windermere for HQ Air Cadets. This is a c£1.2m project

Introduction

which will see the creation of c80 bed spaces with welfare rooms. This will be an outstanding facility for the cadet users of the centre once completed. Under the FR2020 announcement, we have recently been given permission to go ahead and sell Myrtle Street ARC (Crewe), Ardwick Green (Greater Manchester) and with the proceeds re-provide for the tri-Service cadet building at an enclaved area on a corner of Crown Gate Barracks (Runcorn) – following this we can sell the remaining area. Turning to the new build for HQ NW RFCA, with Alexandra Court sold – (final sign off will have been completed by the time you read this report), and noting that we have met most of the planning permission conditions at Altcar, it is expected that the new build will commence in earnest towards the end of the year. The challenge for the team – under the chairman’s direction - is to have the new build completed by 1 April 2020 but that is looking unlikely as we have had a couple of challenges to wrestle with!



Under “Engagement”– I am glad that we continue to make inroads across the “Engagement spectrum” – “employer and community”. At the end of March we appointed Major Geoff Nuzum – our previous Regional Employer Engagement Director into the new role of Head of Engagement. This recent appointment means we have completed our re-structuring of the association

headquarters around the three main outputs and delivery pillars: stewardship of the volunteer estate, support to cadets & youth, and engagement which I outlined in last year’s report. We now are recruiting Geoff’s successor and it is hoped the post will be filled by the AGM. With our Head of Communications – Mrs Amy Gordon - firmly in appointment, and with the rest of the team we are extremely keen to work more jointly and collegiately with the single Services; there is plenty to do in this arena. Our engagement – both with employees and the community goes from strength to strength. There are now well over 3400 Armed Forces Covenants signed across the country with over 450 companies/organisations 300 represented in the North West. A continual piece of work is to try and have organisations sign up to support the cadets and cadet force adult volunteers. 14% of those covenants signed in the North West have not signed up to supporting the youth or adults in the cadet community; a sad statistic. I know the team have commenced work with the Isle of Man Government who are very keen to re-sign the Armed Forces Covenant and it is also hoped to run on the same day a wider engagement event on the Island. This will be tri-Service supporting both the reservists, cadets and wider Defence. We hosted the Ministry of Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Silver Awards ceremony in Liverpool Town Hall, and helped support (and fund) the Army HQ NW Festival of Remembrance reception and service in Preston – both events being held last November. An excellent set of Lord-Lieutenant’s/Lieutenant Governors Awards were held in May/June and September last year and we have commenced the 2019 award ceremonies

Alternative Venues

I remain delighted that through the excellent work of our Alternative Venues team, who let out irreducible spare capacity across the reserve estate, we have been able to bring in considerable additional revenue which has not only benefitted the units facilitating the activities on their sites by receiving 30% back but has enabled those units that simply don’t have the marketable estate to raise income. Additionally, we have been able to support some excellent activities through our entrepreneurial outlook – more of which will be covered further into this report. In addition, and working very much in partnership with Army HQ NW we are continuing to trial the Army initiative bringing under the Alternative Venues umbrella three of the Army regular sites within the NW: The Dale (Chester), Weeton Barracks (Weeton with Preese) and Fulwood Barracks (Preston). Fulwood Barracks has been the most successful site and the Station Staff Officer under direction from the Army Commander HQNW will receive money back into their local improvement fund. It will be dependent on the Army how and if the trial is rolled out wider across the regular Army community.

Introduction

Still a significant challenge for us all whether in the RFCA or serving in the reserves or the cadet organisations is that of recruiting – not only more reservists but cadets and cadet force adult volunteers. I used the strap line “Reserves are recruiting & Cadets are growing” in 2017. Last year and again, this year I have used “Reserves and Cadets; valuable and valued”. Sadly, recruiting has become the norm and, for many, the focus of everyday life. The challenges have been there to see across all organisations. With the remit, on the reserve side, to meet and reach the Ministerial Statement Government targets by 1 April 2019, less the RAuxAF, the targets were always somewhat of a challenge. Whilst when you read this report in this month of June, the Trained Strength against target figures (for the Reserve) as at 1 April read as follows:

All Services – 32,845 against a 1 Apr 19 target of 35,000

Navy – 2,845 against a 1 Apr 19 target of 3,100

Army – 27,020 against a 1 Apr 19 target of 30,100

RAF – 2,680 against a 1 Apr 19 target of 1860

In addition, increasing the number of Cadets and Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAVs), which still are in decline, needs all the support we, as an association can bring.

Council of CRFCA

It is worth me mentioning the continual roles that the Council of CRFCA have been charged with undertaking, which report directly to Ministers on the delivery of the Reserves and Cadets. Firstly, the External Scrutiny Team is a statutory role placed on the Chairman of the Council through the Defence Reform Act and is a key tool for working with our Service Customers to aid the support of Reservists of all Services. Secondly, the Cadet Health Check performs a similar but advisory role and is discharged by a team drawn from the volunteer base of the Associations and also external SMEs. Both “Teams” have been in the NW over the last year. It would also be remiss of me if I did not mention the current MOD Review of the Reserve Forces’ & Cadets’ Associations being undertaken by Dr Robert Sullivan – a 1* civil servant – which is underway. It is being directed/run by MODs Reserve Forces & Cadets branch within MOD centre. The Review will consider the tasks undertaken by the RFCAs (covering necessity, efficiency of operation, and reasonable additional tasks to take on), governance and accountability, and classification. For oversight and governance, a Challenge Panel has been established to work alongside the Review team and provide challenge to the Review’s methodology and conclusions. The Challenge Panel currently comprises the Review SRO (ACDS RF&C), RF&C Hd, Hd DSOP EOS, and DFinStrat-Dir. MinAF and CDP will have oversight of the Review and have sight of the final report prior to publication. The report will be completed by the autumn 2019.



Lord-Lieutenants’ and the Lieutenant Governor’s Awards

In January just gone, on behalf of the President and his Vice-Presidents in their roles of Her Majesty’s Lord-Lieutenants’ and the Lieutenant Governor of the Isle of Man, we screened the nominations for this year’s awards. We were humbled by the many submissions but would ask, once again, that those in the chain of command nominate suitable individuals in recognizing the outstanding work that is being undertaken.

We appreciate the difficulty in writing citations but would ask every unit and organisation to spend a little bit of time towards the end of each year in seeking out the exceptional individuals in their own structures. For us, on behalf of the counties and the Isle of Man, this is always a highlight for me as Chairman seeing the fantastic achievements undertaken by our reservists, cadets (adults & cadets) and those civilian staff working tirelessly in their respective organisations. As an association, we do really enjoy facilitating the awards; it is one of the real highlights of the year for us. So, I would urge you all to look long and hard at all those involved in the Cadet and Reserve organisations and submit citations to recognise those outstanding achievements.

You will read on the following pages updates on the Association’s various strands of outputs as well as the other parts of the organisation that are viewed as our jewels in the crown – Altcar Training Camp and Holcombe Moor Cadet Training Centre.

Lastly, I remain amazed, as ever, to the quite excellent work that has been undertaken by the Association – both from the salaried staff and all the volunteer members of the Association who unstintingly give so freely of their time to further the work and outputs of the NW RFCA in supporting the community of Reservists across the three Services, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers and the young cadets throughout the North West of England and the Isle of Man. We are truly blessed with some outstanding people. Thank you for your continued support.

I do hope you enjoy the report.

Cadets

The Cadets in the North West have once again been busy and the opportunities for the youth of the area continue to be provided by the dedicated teams of Youth Leaders in each of the Services. To pick out a few highlights from many across the NW RFCA area, this section provides just a feel of what is happening in the cadet sphere.

Cadet Expansion Programme (CEP)

2018 saw the end of the approvals process for schools wishing to set up a CCF Contingent under the joint Department for Education / Ministry of Defence Cadet Expansion Programme (CEP). The programme now has its desired number of over 500 schools. The North West has

opened a further 12 schools in 2018 to bring the total to 34 new school units opened under the CEP since 2012. Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire are the regional hot spots for the programme and the North West has continued to be a key area in the development of CCFs under the CEP nationally.

As the CEP moves into the final stages, focus will shift from engagement of new schools to looking at the delivery, sustainment, and growth of the newly established CCFs. The Schools Cadet Expansion Officer will work closely with Headteachers, Governors, Contingent Commanders and School Staff Instructors to provide support, guidance and encouragement in order to ensure that they are better advised and prepared to sustain and grow their units for the long term.

The breakdown of CEP schools in the region is shown below:

	Schools	Ser.	Cadet Force / Service	Locality	County	Notes
1	Copley Academy	1	Sea Cadet Corps	Stalybridge	Greater Manchester	Parading
2	Broadgreen International	2	Sea Cadet Corps	Liverpool	Merseyside	Parading
3	St Matthews RC High School	3	Sea Cadet Corps	Failsworth	Greater Manchester	Parading
4	Great Ashton Academy	4	Sea Cadet Corps	Ashton Under Lyne	Greater Manchester	Parading
5	Energy Coast UTC	1	CCF(RN)	Workington	Cumbria	Parading
6	St Antony's RC College	2	CCF(RN)	Urmston	Greater Manchester	Parading
7	Bishop Heber High School	3	CCF(RN)	Malpas	Cheshire	Parading
8	The Belvedere Academy	4	CCF(RN)	Liverpool	Merseyside	Parading
9	Wellacre Academy	5	CCF(RN)	Urmston	Greater Manchester	Parading
10	The Hawthornes Free School	1	CCF(RM)	Liverpool	Merseyside	Parading
11	De La Salle Academy	2	CCF(RM)	Liverpool	Merseyside	Parading
12	Carr Hill High School	1	CCF(Army)	Kirkham	Lancashire	Partnership with KGS
13	Hugh Baird College	2	CCF(Army)	Liverpool	Merseyside	Parading
14	Newton Rigg College	3	CCF(Army)	Penrith	Cumbria	Parading
15	Bishops Blue Coat CofE High School	4	CCF(Army)	Chester	Cheshire	Parading
16	Essa Academy	5	CCF(Army)	Bolton	Greater Manchester	Parading
17	Royton Crompton School	6	CCF(Army)	Oldham	Greater Manchester	Parading
18	UTC Warrington	7	CCF(Army)	Warrington	Cheshire	Parading
19	Beamont Collegiate Academy	8	CCF(Army)	Warrington	Cheshire	Parading
20	Birkenhead HS Academy	9	CCF(Army)	Birkenhead	Merseyside	Parading
21	Gateacre School	10	CCF(Army)	Liverpool	Merseyside	Parading
22	Liverpool Life Sciences UTC	11	CCF(Army)	Liverpool	Merseyside	Parading
23	Walkden High School	12	CCF(Army)	Walkden	Greater Manchester	Parading
24	Blessed John Henry Newman	13	CCF(Army)	Oldham	Greater Manchester	Parading
25	Tauheedul Islamic Boys High School	14	CCF(Army)	Blackburn	Lancashire	To parade NLT Sep 19
26	Highfield Leadership Academy	15	CCF(Army)	Blackpool	Lancashire	To parade NLT Sep 19
27	Blacon High School	16	CCF(Army)	Chester	Cheshire	To parade NLT Sep 19
28	Droylsden Academy	17	CCF(Army)	Droylsden	Greater Manchester	To parade NLT Sep 19
29	Philips High School	18	CCF(Army)	Bury	Greater Manchester	To parade NLT Sep 19
30	Albion Academy	1	CCF(RAF)	Salford	Greater Manchester	Parading
31	Christleton High School	2	CCF(RAF)	Chester	Cheshire	Parading
32	Kings Leadership Academy	3	CCF(RAF)	Warrington	Cheshire	Parading
33	Kings Leadership Academy	4	CCF(RAF)	Liverpool	Merseyside	Parading
34	Ripley St Thomas CofE Academy	5	CCF(RAF)	Lancaster	Lancashire	Parading

Cadets



Army Cadets

The Isle of Man Cadets successfully represented the North West at the National First Aid Competition and achieved a very creditable third place. A fantastic result for such a small Cadet Force and adult team, but also for the Cadets in the North West.



Demonstrating the tremendous value of the wider training the Cadet Forces undertake, Sergeant Instructor Kinsella, an adult volunteers in Lancashire ACF was awarded the Royal Humane Society Certificate of Commendation for his efforts to save the life on a man injured in an accident on the M6 Motorway.

The Merseyside ACF Command Team was re-invigorated last September when Stephen Boardman MBE DL, an ex 4 PARA Reservist took over the appointment of Commandant and Thomas Fitzsimons and Andrew Webster joined him as Deputy Commandants. The previous Commandant at Merseyside ACF, Colonel Ian Holmes took up his new appointment as Colonel Volunteers in HQ NW, vice Colonel Hilary Williams.



Cadets from Lancashire trekked Hadrian's Wall, undertook Adventurous Training in Bavaria, visited the Trooping The Colour in London and completed the 100 mile Nijmegen March. And for the 2nd time in 4 years, the team were graded the best in the British Military Contingent - which includes Regular and Reservist soldiers. The highlight of 2019 for Lancashire ACF has been a visit to Barbados for a lucky group of cadets and a small team of their youth leaders- a fantastic opportunity.



Merseyside also appointed Andy Reid as Honorary Colonel. Colonel Reid, an inspirational appointment and an ex-Corporal in The Yorkshire Regiment suffered a right leg below the knee, left leg above knee and a right arm traumatic amputation whilst on patrol in Afghanistan in 2009. Colonel Reid has not let his injuries hold him back and has been active in fundraising and awareness campaigns. He is a passionate charity Ambassador. We are delighted that Andy has been awarded an MBE in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours List in June

Greater Manchester Army Cadet Force (GMACF) is the largest single County Cadet Force across the 13 RFCA regions nationwide with some 1099 cadets across Greater Manchester. The County Headquarters is situated in Holcombe Moor Training Centre in the beautiful rural surroundings of North Lancashire hills.



Cadets

The Training Centre and surrounding land boasts the Krypton Factor assault course, 400m gallery range, shotgun shooting range and 746 acres of dry training land. Holcombe Moor provides facilities for a wide range of military training, and capacity for adventurous training. The County HQ team runs the Training Centre which provides excellent accommodation with 202 beds, several classrooms, a new welfare area and excellent catering facilities for any tri-service user. New free wi-fi was installed by NW RFCA during March 2019 for all users across the Holcombe Moor site.



Air Cadets

2018 was another challenging year for the Royal Air Force Air Cadets (the community-based Air Training Corps, and school-based Combined Cadet Force (RAF) Sections) in the North West. Although cadet and staff numbers remain generally buoyant, with approximately 3700 and 1200 on strength respectively in the ATC Wings within the NW RFCA area; as for the past few years the provision of sufficient flying and gliding opportunities has been an issue.



The Glider Recovery and Volunteer Gliding Schools Return To Flight programmes have enabled winch-launched operations with small numbers of Viking T1 gliders to resume at 632VGS (RAF Ternhill) and 645VGS (RAF Topcliffe), but there is still insufficient capacity to meet demand for gliding training as per the Aviation Training Package of the Progressive Training Syllabus; and since the gliding “pause” in 2014 very many Air Cadets have had no gliding experience whatsoever. There is better news on the horizon for Air Experience Flying (AEF) in the North West, as the runway at RAF Woodvale has recently been resurfaced, pilot requalification for cadet flying is underway at 10AEF, and it is anticipated that AEF on the Tutor T1 will recommence at Woodvale during Q2 2019.

Other aviation opportunities have been sought in lieu of regular AEF and gliding, and in the summer of 2018 North Region ATC delivered an Aviation Muster for some 1000 cadets at RAF Topcliffe utilising RAF Chinook and Puma support helicopters. This exercise provided the RAF with the chance to practice an evacuation of British Citizens from an overseas territory, and a similar exercise is planned for Wales & West Region ATC at Altcar Training Camp in 2019.



Ground training continues, with DofE, Adventure Training, shooting, and fieldcraft, remaining the most popular activities with cadets. A new Cyber syllabus was also introduced in 2018, with cadets now being taught Cyber skills (up to and including ethical hacking) from joining in Year 8/age 12; culminating in the Gold Cyber Course delivered by No.1 Radio School at RAF Cosford, and several cadets have received interest from cyber-security organisations as a result. The ATC also conducted a footprint review in 2018, with Squadrons, Wings, and Regions all reviewing their size and shape. Within the North West, several Squadrons have disbanded or merged as a result – especially in Greater Manchester Wing – and further rationalisation and consolidation to make better use of staff and facilities are anticipated in 2019.

Overall, the RAFAC – both ATC and CCF (RAF) – remains healthy in the region, and as AEF returns and gliding capacity continues to gradually increase, there is reason to be confident for the future.

Cadets



NORTH WEST CADET FORCE STATISTICS

	ARMY CADET FORCE		AIR TRAINING CORPS		SEA CADET CORPS		COMBINED CADET FORCE	
	May 2019	May 2018	May 2019	May 2018	May 2019	May 2018	May 2019	May 2018
OFFICERS	144	145	192	199	122	139	53	52
SNCOs	579	586	185	188	536	541	0	13
CI/CGIs	-	-	609	631	386	110	-	-
TOTAL	723	731	986	1018	1044	790	53	65
CADETS	3652	3521	3758	3439	1899	1911	1898	1999

Sea Cadets

The Sea Cadets have had a stable year in the North West with a largely new Area leadership team bedding in under new Area Officer Commander Charlie Bagot Jewitt and senior volunteer, Commander (SCC) Phil Burns RNR, who replaced Commander (SCC) Janet Evans in early 2018.

Cadet and Adult Volunteer numbers are largely steady, and the Sea Cadets are currently taking part in a Youth United initiative to start some new 'Junior' sections with an age range of 9 to 11 years in Irlam, Altrincham, Stretford and Morecambe. Recruiting young people for these has not been challenging, but the Sea Cadets envisage developing appropriately skilled adult volunteers into the long term may be more challenging.

The Sea Cadets are also working to ensure that their District structure and 'B' Company RM Cadets are staffed more effectively to deliver training and are working on the longer term sustainability of some Units, especially the four that have been started under the Government's Cadet Expansion scheme where external funding potentially finishes in 2020.

The Sea Cadets recommence Area camps in 2019 for 'Blue jackets' at HMS Raleigh and for Marine Cadets at Altcar in August with the plan that these will drive up skills and competencies.

Area boating activity continues to be centred at Crosby, north of Liverpool, but with district sailing 'hubs' being promoted at Shotwick, Manchester Trafalgar (Gorton) and Knowsley (to include Liverpool URNU) with the aim of ensuring that all their Cadets spend at least 30 hours on the water this year.



Infrastructure

Infrastructure - By Numbers

Property and facilities management is one of the most significant functions of the NW RFCA. Through professionally qualified staff, NW RFCA is responsible on behalf of the Ministry of Defence for the upkeep of just under 200 tri-Service Reserve Forces' sites and Cadet centres for 447 units. This impressive portfolio of properties provides the vital footprint and hub for all Reserve and Cadet activity in the region.

Another major aspect of the team's work includes home adaptations in the region for men and women who are serving with or have served with the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force and who have been injured in the course of their duties. To date, NW RFCA has carried out 38 home adaptations in the North West for servicemen and women. The aim of the programme is to provide normality in the home by altering the building to suit the individuals needs.

£9.4M

Total budget allocation for Infrastructure Department activities

10

Members of the NW RFCA Infrastructure Team

447

Individual 'Units' of the Reserve and cadet forces including CEP Schools

249,000

Total size of the NW RFCA Volunteer and Cadet built estate, the largest in the country

Estate - Reactive Maintenance

2123

Fault reports received from all users for Financial Year 18/19

£9.4 Million

The Infrastructure Department allocation for all activities including maintenance and capital projects

1,666 of 2,123 fault reports were actioned

78.5%



430 of 2,123 fault reports were rejected*

20.2%



27 of 2,123 fault reports were unfunded

1.3%



3000

+ Reserve Forces personnel in the North West of England

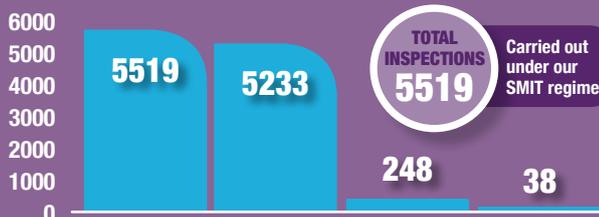
***430**

The 430 rejected, routine, fault reports (above) were handed to one of our Multi-Skilled Operatives who carried out work to resolve the issue. We are unique amongst the RFCAs in this.

SMIT - Not a rude word !

Statutory & Mandatory Inspections and Tests

These fully funded programmes ensure that we monitor the safety, performance and quality of many of the systems that we rely upon. Portable appliance testing and hard wire are obvious examples but it includes testing for legionella bacteria and ensuring that roller shutter doors are safe among some of the 5,500 + inspections carried out each year. The performance breakdown is below.



14,000

Cadets and Cadet Force Adult Volunteers in the North West. Every single one a stakeholder in the Infrastructure Department's output!

13.5 MILLION

The NW RFCA budget For all aspects of business including Infrastructure for Financial Year 19/20

5519

100%

Total number of SMIT tests due in FY 18/19

5233

94.8%

Tests Passed

248

4.5%

Tests Failed

38

0.7%

Tests Missed

Infrastructure



A significant advantage for the Reserve and Cadet Estate in being maintained by NW RFCA is our ability to respond and react quickly to both circumstances and opportunities. When funding is available, we can respond quickly to fault reports, an ability that is usually much more time consuming for those units on the Regular Estate. Additionally, we are able to respond quickly to opportunities where funds have become available, usually towards the end of the financial year and sometimes from funds that were initially directed at the Regular Estate but which can no longer be spent in time by them. Our strength is our flexibility, our willingness to respond and access to a trusted and nimble supply chain and network of trusted contractors.

Benefitting from this ability are a number of ATC Sqns who have received long-overdue refurbishments following the re-direction of just under £400,000 from other projects that could not be completed in-year by HQ Air Command. These works, the requirement for which was only generated in January, are a testament to our ability to deliver works on-time and on-budget and there will be a considerable number of NW cadets in training facilities that have been modernised and refreshed.

The Army Local Infrastructure Improvement Fund (LIIF) awarded over £108,000 for NW unit projects including the redecoration of the Welfare Facility at Bidston Road Army Reserve Centre (£24,000), the redecoration of the Junior Ranks Club at Chavasse House Army Reserve Centre (£18,000) and a refurbishment of the ablutions at LUOTC (£24,000). In addition there was £42,000 granted for incidental works across the Army Reserve Estate.

At Naval Regional Headquarters in Liverpool (HMS Eaglet), Royal Navy Infra provided £90,000 to enhance security features at the Brunswick Dock site including; 360 degree laser coverage, turnstile pedestrian access, new automated front entrance gate and an upgraded HD CCTV system.



Maghull ATC Sqn

Headquarters Air Cadets (HQAC) have invested heavily in the NW this year including two significant projects at Inskip and the National Activity Centre at Windermere.

At the Inskip Cadet Centre £150,000 was secured for the installation of a Command Task and Low Ropes Course as well as a new access control system to front vehicle/pedestrian entrance, automated vehicle barrier, automated gates, pedestrian access and intercom. Works were also completed on replacing the heating and hot water systems throughout the site.

At Windermere HQAC funded the full refurbishment of Windermere Adventure Training Centre. The first phase of the works to install a replacement roof and rainwater goods have been completed and handed over.

Main contract works are underway for the full refurbishment of the centre throughout and providing additional 20 bed spaces through remodelling the existing layout. The centre will also expand into the adjacent unoccupied ATC building on the site to provide additional space for accommodation, ablutions and offices. This is probably the most significant project we will see delivered during the period leading up to the AGM at £1.3 million and demonstrates our status as trusted partners to deliver significant infrastructure projects on behalf of Defence.



Windermere Adventure Training Centre



HMS Eaglet

Altcar Training Camp

Abridgement of Altcar

On 28 July 1860 (159 years ago this July) The Right Honourable the Earl of Sefton fired the first shot down what was known as Balling's Wharf Rifle Range. The Earl fired a .577 round through an Enfield Muzzle Loader. As the range developed a Range Superintendent was appointed with applications for the job personally scrutinised by Field Marshal, His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge who at the time was Commander-in-Chief (CIC) of the Army. The CIC, Prince George William Frederick Charles was a cousin of Queen Victoria.

Altcar – Current Times

Moving on 159 years the site is one of the most prestigious small arms ranges in the UK renowned for being a premier range complex which supports tri-service training, exercises and other military and non-military engagements. In addition to Armed Forces activity Police Constabularies (mainly firearms), Merseyside Fire Service along with a large number of Civilian Rifle Clubs, Outreach Projects/Community Engagement activity (third Party Income Generation) use the site. Altcar Training Camp today remains a very busy site.

Site Activity 2018/19

This has been an extraordinary, interesting, evolving and very productive year for the site. The complex has seen ongoing increase in site use. Rounds fired down the range remain consistent with previous years with between one and a half to two million rounds fired down the range. The demand for dry training areas, classrooms, sports fields and welfare facilities has significantly increased. The site has seen growth in accommodation requests from Regular units participating in range activity and back-to-basics soldiering along with Corps/Regtl sporting activities such as Rugby, Football, Boxing and Tug-O-War. Cadet National Sport activities include the above as well as Cross-Country and Orienteering with Altcar being the designated/preferred location for Cadet National Sporting events. This surge for Altcar space has seen an increased demand for whole site use.

Tired Infrastructure

Significant repeated, frequent and regular site attrition over the winter months has put a strain on site infrastructure especially gas and electrical. Hot water and heating has been an issue with old boiler infrastructure being unable to cope with demand. There have been times when heating and hot water has failed to provide for the site/customer. Hunter Hall (all ranks dining facility) is currently running below capacity pending significant restructure.

Range Fire

The site was subjected to a major range fire over a couple of days which quickly spread across the range complex. Merseyside Fire Service deployed multiple fire tenders around the range complex and along with Altcar Staff support, the fire was eventually extinguished. Extensive fire damage was caused to M and MMTT ranges. The range compressor and hut were completely destroyed by the fire. Significant damage was caused to the coastal sand dunes. The Altcar team pulled together in order to support the fire service in an effort to save the ranges. As a result of the joint effort, site staff efforts and support was recognised with a Lord Lieutenants Certificate presentation to Altcar Staff. Well done to all Altcar staff for their enduring efforts in terms of firefighting and supporting Merseyside Fire Service.



Altcar Training Camp



Armistice Remembrance Parade – Hightown. Some of the units using the Altcar site over Remembrance weekend participated/took part in the Hightown Remembrance Parade. The site received many positive comments from the residents of Hightown regarding the uniformed presence/turnout. A number of the Hightown Residents commented that the military presence was the largest turnout in recollection. Literally there was ‘no room at the inn’ when it came to the Church Service. Those in uniform gave up their seats to enable the residents of Hightown the opportunity to pay their respects/public worship and private prayer.

Altcar Staff Courses. Eight Altcar Camp Operatives attended all of the following courses during this reporting period: First Aid at Work, Chemicals Other Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), Working at Heights, Asbestos Awareness, Working with Ladders and Manual Handling.

Helicopters – Exercise FARADAY FIELD 2019. January 2019 saw the return of the Helicopters to site. A variety of Operational Helicopters including Chinook, Merlin and Wildcat along with support vehicles - Fuel Tankers, Maintenance Trucks and other Logistic Support elements with 300 personnel were on site over a 7 day period. The local populous/keen photographers and interested individuals were invited on to camp to see the Helicopters take off/leave the site on the last day of the exercise. Over 280 people attended the site to watch the Helicopters depart.



101 Rifle Club. Civilian Rifle Club site activity is on the increase. Altcar has 21 Civilian Rifle Clubs who use the site. 101 Rifle Club hosted the All Distance Challenge & Laurels Rutland Teams event in November 2019. The event attracted 92 world-class field competitors on what is described in the write-up as a picturesque Altcar Range complex boasting of 620 acres of fantastic shooting ranges. Medals and trophies in abundance along with some fantastic prizes were on offer for those who were on target!

Year End. What an interesting and challenging year. Altcar has received significant Regular, Reserve and Cadet bids and at the time of this report unit requirements are still being received daily/weekly/monthly. A multi-national European MODEX involving HQ NW, 611 RAux Sqn RAF Woodvale and National Fire Chiefs Council National Resilience and Assurance Team/Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service has just finished with the multi-national element leaving/departing for their home countries. Business Continuity and Security of the site still remains main business. The site underwent a full Range Inspection during the year with positive results. Having been subjected to a myriad of inspections over the past year, we find ourselves gearing up for the next batch of inspections. With summer months fast approaching, staff will turn their attention to the 620 Acre grass cutting event.

Finally, we have Code’s Retreat/PODS for Wounded, Injured and Sick service personnel. Confirmed official opening for the PODS is Saturday, 1 June 2019 at 1000 hrs. It is with much pleasure that we are pleased to announce that triple amputee Andy Read has agreed to open the site. For those of you who do not know Andy, he is described by many as an individual with bloody minded courage, a here soldier and someone who has shown bravery and sheer determination with incredible resilience. Altcar would like to thank Andy for agreeing to open the Code’s Retreat site.



Alternative Venues

**LAUNCHED
2012**

Marketing

across the Reserve,
Cadets and Regular estate

**49
SITES**

3 Members of
staff deal with

approximately

90

new
enquiries
each month

Since 2012

We have
invoiced
over

£3,000,000



**Generated
this year**

(2018/2019)

£630,841

15%

of our
business
comes from

**BLUE
LIGHT
services**



£794,339

went directly back to units

THIS YEAR

**12,141
ROOMS**

booked via

Alternative Venues NW

We have supported
Soldiers & Cadets
with over

£327,254

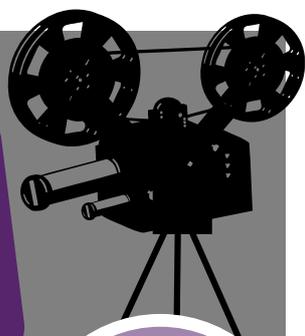
of RGI Grants



Alternative Venues



FILM, TV & THEATRE



OVER 10%
of this year's income came from film, TV & theatre

Shows include :

- Peaky Blinders
- Years & Years
- World On Fire
- Cobra
- Clink
- Hollyoaks

BBC

CH5

CH4

SKY

★ This helps fund things like adventurous training ★



This year has been a really exciting one for the Alternative Venues team and we are really pleased with the financials for 18/19

This year we have been focusing on making the website visible in its own right. We have also added a "Live Chat" function in order to make the business more responsive to enquiries and give a more efficient customer experience.

We've worked hard streamlining the business and are working to expand into growth areas such as Film and TV which is paying off as you can see below.

Our highest earning site this year raised a total of £74,306.51 which is a fantastic result. That this particular site has no caretaking staff is remarkable and shows that the changes to the business model over the past 18 months have started to take affect and the business is flourishing under these changes.

As always, our thanks go to those units who give us so much support and allow us to function at their site. Without their cooperation, Alternative Venues would not be able to function on the scale that we do.



Employer Engagement

The North West Regional Employer Engagement Directors (REED) are focussed on a building trusted partnerships between the regions businesses and Reserve and Cadet units in order to support Reservists, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAV's) and the wider Defence Community including the Wounded Injured and Sick.

New Kids on the Block

In August 2018, two new REED's were appointed in to post following the retirement of Steve Wotherspoon and Victoria Doran moving to the Head of Commercial Operations post. In came Major (Retired) Geoff Nuzum and Wing Commander Chris Ashworth (RAFAC). Geoff had previously worked in 156 Regiment RLC as the Recruiting and Welfare Officer following a regular career in the RLC. Chris moved in to the REED post, which became a full time post, following a couple of years in the Schools Cadet Expansions Officer (SCEO) post. So all change in the Employer Engagement arena and two fresh pairs of eyes to take forward the good work of our predecessors.



**Regional Employer Engagement Directors
Geoff Nuzum and Chris Ashworth**

Employer Engagement in the North West

Last year our predecessors reported on the work they had undertaken to establish a framework for regional relationship between Defence and industry. In particular they had focussed on Liverpool and Manchester, the two main business hubs in the North West.

As at May 2018, the North West has 263 Armed Forces Covenants signed by business, as at April 2019 that figure has risen to 436, an increase of 60%.



**Dr Roy Williams CEO and the team from Sovini Housing
receiving their ERS Gold Award November 2018**

In addition, the North West has seen 14 businesses receive the Employer Recognition Scheme Silver Award and one Gold Award, which was presented to Sovini by the Earl of Wessex and the Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP in November 2018.

So far in 2019 we have received 8 ERS Gold Award submissions and 12 ERS Silver Award expressions of interest, it's all set to be another busy year of ERS Awards in the North West.



**Employer Recognition Scheme
Silver Award Winners Event November 2018**

Employer Engagement

North West Gold Award Alumni

Early this year the REED's were approached by Pertemps and AECOM through the Defence Relationship Management team and asked if they could facilitate a North West ERS Gold Award Alumni gathering for the regions Gold Award recipients.

Working with Pertemps and AECOM, the REEDs turned to another regional ERS Gold Award recipient, United Utilities and set about identifying a suitable venue and date to bring together the group. The group came together AT United Utilities Headquarters in Warrington in March and brought together AECOM, Pertemps, United Utilities, Sovini, Liverpool City Council, John Charlesworth (REEG Chairman) and the regions three service heads.

Early feedback from the GAA members suggest they very much enjoyed the opportunity to meet and discuss how we can bring about a closer partnership between Defence and Business in support of the Defence Community.



North West Gold Award Alumni members 2019



Sci-Tech Daresbury Joint Venture Armed Forces Covenant signing

As at May 2018, the North West has 263 Armed Forces Covenants signed by business, as at April 2019 that figure has risen to 436, an increase of 60%.



Bronze Award holders Wigan Council

Future Engagement

As we move into Q2 of 2019 the focus is very much on supporting units to host employers using a Business Breakfasts as the vehicle for engagement. To date both 4 LANCS and 208 Fd Hosp RAMC have bought business partners together and used the opportunity to promote the Reserves, thank business for its support and to set the conditions for further and wider engagement.

Both REED's are very keen to support Reserve, Cadet units and CFAV's through the business partnerships, so if any readers have suggestions as to how we can provide you with additional support we'd very much like to hear from you.

There will be two changes to the Engagement team in the coming months, Mrs Jan Cox has been appointed in to the REED post and will take up her post 1 July 19, she will succeed Major (Retd) Geoff Nuzum who has now moved in to the Head of Engagement position.

Communications

Our monthly e newsletter continues to be our primary means of communication with Association Members and key stakeholders. We continue to rely on our network of Association members to provide feedback on the quality and value of the information they receive. Our open rates of the e-newsletter continue to remain high at over 30% which is 10% higher than the average open rate for civic/membership organisations.

Looking at our wider media distribution, will be introducing media monitoring so we can analyse our online and offline press coverage and see the advertising value equivalent. We continue to support unit achievements and activities across our counties.

The Volunteer

The Association's quarterly magazine continues to be a popular communication output, highlighting the achievements and news across our cadets and reserves. We have refreshed the appearance of the magazine to provide a more contemporary look and have extended our coverage to include Employer Engagement and Alternative Venues news.

The magazine is available online via our website and we will be investigating methods to utilise digital platforms to improve our reach and engagement of the magazine within the defence community.



Social Media

The NW RFCA has an established presence on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, we have organically grown our audiences and have seen huge increases with engagement across these channels.

Case study content has proven to be highly engaging across our social media channels. For Reserves Day in June we produced video content showcasing the careers of three of our reserves from the Royal Marines, Army and the RAF. The video's had a combined 11k views on Facebook alone, showing the engagement value of producing audience focused content.

Similarly, for International Women's Day in March a tri service case study of our adult volunteers and reserves was produced. Supported by infographics and promoted via

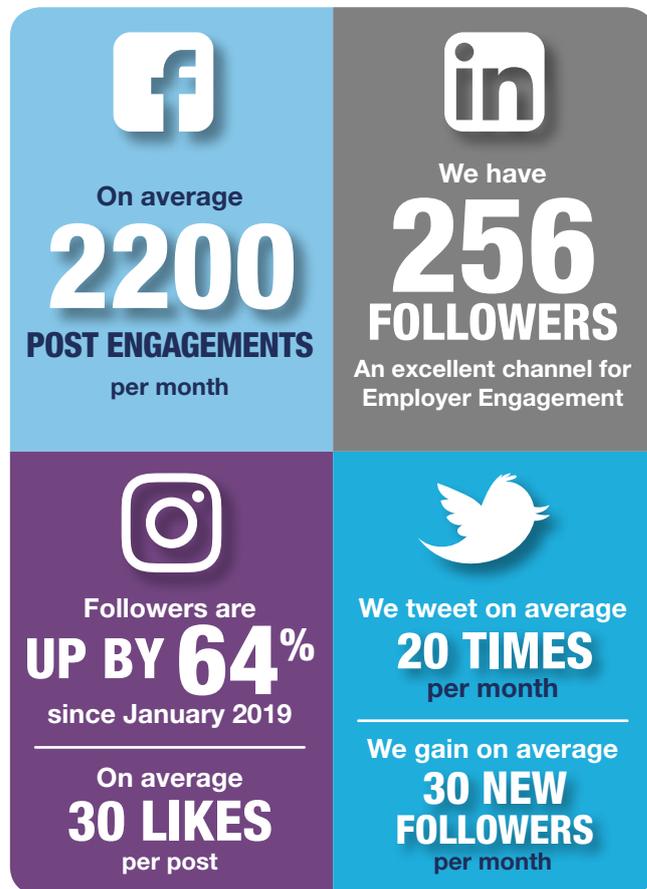
Twitter and Facebook, the campaign was well received with a combined reach of 9.3k on Facebook.

Looking forward, we will continue to monitor our social media performance to ensure our messages are engaging and relevant for all of our audiences.

Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenants' and Lieutenant Governor's Awards

The annual presentations of Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenants' Awards in Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside, and Her Majesty's Lieutenant Governor's Awards in the Isle of Man, continue to be our flagship community engagement events in the region. The ceremonies also include the appointment of Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenants' and Lieutenant Governor's Cadets.

The 2019 awards will be the biggest to date, over 120 Certificates of Merit and Commendations will be awarded to Reservists, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers, Cadets and supporting staff in the region.



Finance

The Association began the financial year 18/19 with a budget allocation of £8.4M. In addition to this the Association had carried forward reserves of £1.2M and receipts in advance of £1.26M to fund various projects.

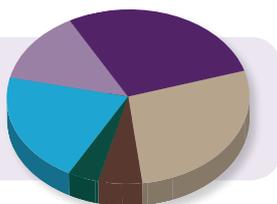
The budget increased by £4.1M during the year to reflect new projects and priorities and funding available for the year totaled £13.8M (excluding RGI). In year allocations included £2.4M for the maintenance of the Estate and a number of minor new works and £132K for additional Injured Service Personnel adaptations.

The Association's accounts represent income from 15 distinct funding streams. The consolidated accounts for FY 18/19 have been audited and the Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure report are included at page 18.

The pie charts below illustrate both the summary of income and how this has been allocated to our outputs with 34% earmarked for Estates Management and 22% allocated to infrastructure (primarily rents and rates).

In addition to the funding provided, NW RFCA has generated £778K of income. £630K was generated primarily through the work of the Alternative Venues team. This Regionally Generated income is used for support to units within the North West both directly and indirectly. Examples of how the funding is used are outlined below:

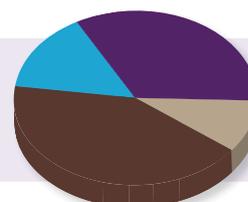
Regionally Generated Income - Distribution



Refunds to units for use of facilities for hiring to 3rd parties	£180,892
Maintenance Works to the Estate	£177,857
Donations to units for Adventure Training, Equipment, Expeditions etc	£36,753
Production of the Volunteer Magazine	£26,243
Business Development and Alternative Venues costs	£130,839
Costs associated with Association properties	£83,691

Turning to our Trusts, they have been able to support units with grant contributions and in FY18/19 the value of grants awarded is shown below. The Trusts meet annually in November and welcome applications from all eligible units

Trust grants awarded in 2018/19

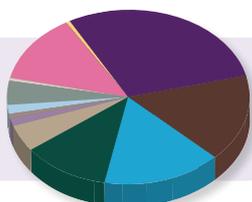


Stretford Road Trust	£23,618
Macclesfield Drill Hall Trust	£6,818
NW Army Cadet Force Trust Fund	£29,300
Congleton Drill Hall Trust (meeting not held)	£0
Blackpool Drill Hall Trust	£10,185
Total	£69,921



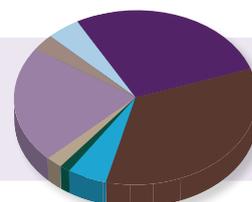
Finance

Summary of Income 2018/19



Grant in Aid	£4,275,924.59
DIO Infrastructure	£1,842,262.00
DIO Maintenance	£1,635,083.60
DE Rdel	£1,785,941.86
DE Cdel	£817,907.71
Dinfra Rdel	£131,490.56
DRM	£145,500.00
CRF Vehicles	£173,255.53
ATC Input	£513,317.00
Funding Sundry	£175,383.64
Regionally Generated Income	£778,001.25
Other (Fleet/RAuxAF/ ATC Rdel/CRF Grants)	£15,069.82

Summary of Expenditure 2018/19



Staff Costs	£3,173,502.42
Estate Management	£4,093,835.80
Capital Expenditure	£928,225.35
Adaptions to Injured Soldiers properties	£131,490.56
Reserve & Cadet Support	£378,703.06
Infrastructure (rates, rents, utilities)	£2,867,346.48
Adminstration & HR	£302,330.82
Other (I.T, Recruiting Support, Transport)	£507,725.00
Total	£12,383,159.49



Conclusion



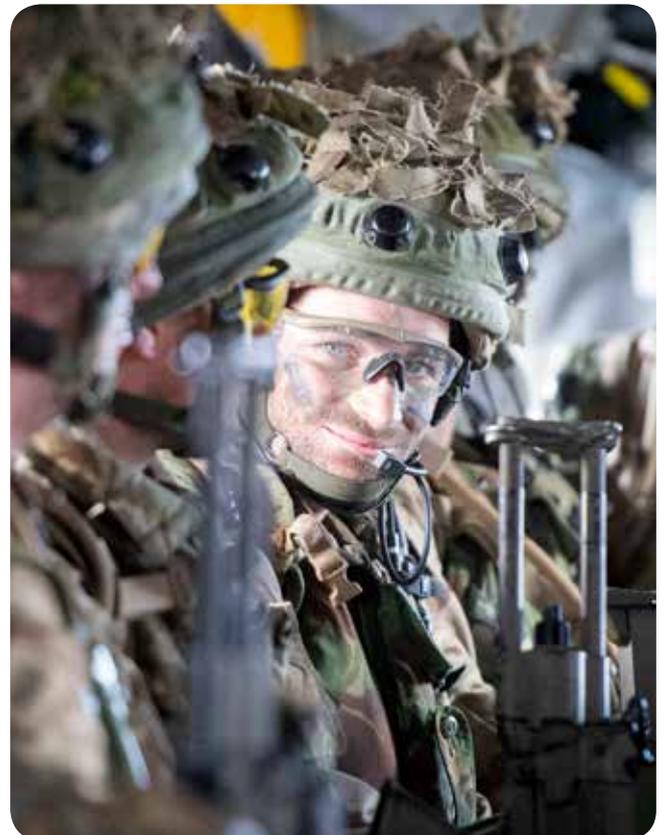
**Mr Warren Smith,
Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant
for Greater Manchester,
President NW RFCA**

**As your President and on
behalf of my Vice-Presidents,
I hope that this Chairman's**

Report has given you just a short glimpse of the wide scope of work undertaken by the salaried staff in support of and wider reserve and cadet community across the North West. The outputs, undertaken by the Association, against continued financial pressure across the MOD shows that the challenges slowly but surely can be overcome. That said, we must not be complacent; we live in an era of an old and declining volunteer estate which is going to give us many more pressures over the coming years. Defence will look at ways of undertaking business with declining funding across all outputs and our customers will, quite rightly, want a continued and improved service from us. The challenges aside, I firmly believe that we have played our part in enabling our customers to undertake their primary and secondary roles.

There has been a number of other changes in personalities over the year – from the changeover of commanding officers, officer commanding's, county commandants, wing air staff, area officers, staff in the single Service Headquarters, to the staff in NW RFCA. I welcomed last year the new senior personalities in the region – Colonel Russ Miller OBE who has almost completed one year in post as the Army Commander in the North West. We also welcome this year Colonel Rob Manuel – the senior Army reservist in the North West who is the Deputy Commander in the Army Headquarters. I know he has already made his presence felt on the board.

I make one plea to all those new in post – and especially those new to working across the reserve and cadet arena. The Chief Executive NW RFCA is very keen to have the salaried staff of the association brief the incoming “command teams” of the reserve units, tri-Service cadet organisations and their respective chains of command as well as the staff in the Army and Navy Headquarters on the outputs and structure of NW RFCA; quite simply – the more that our customers know about us, the better. Sadly, the work of the RFCA's across the country, is not as widely known as perhaps it should be and if we can help incoming staff at the beginning of their tours understand what we do and what we can do for them it will definitely be a win, win for all.



Conclusion

I would like to make a special mention of our volunteer membership. As all are aware, the RFCA's are fundamentally volunteer membership organisations. Over and above the membership identified within the Schemes of Associations (the formal mechanism by which the RFCA's are authorised to undertake their duties), NW RFCA enjoys considerable help and advice from an extended network of volunteers who collectively provide unparalleled expertise and experience. These volunteers – you who are reading this report – are the life-blood of the RFCA's and are an invaluable means by which we connect to communities, provide good value-for-money services and ultimately shape defence thinking, especially in the long term well-being of the Reserves and Cadets. In this continued period of change, opportunities and challenges, we continue to rely on you to act as ambassadors on behalf of the Ministry of Defence but more locally here in the NW – the association – for the reservists and cadets on whom we support. We will continue to keep you informed with regular updates on news and events. We will continue to rely on your local knowledge, your professional expertise and your feedback to ensure we continue to facilitate, support, promote and serve our Reservists, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers and cadets. Please keep in contact with us and if you have any questions or uncertainties we will try and give you the correct answer: this all informed network will and must stand us in good stead as we move forward.

My thanks also to my Vice-Presidents, Board members and subsidiary committee members who have all give an abundance of their own time freely to further our work in supporting those we serve; it is much appreciated and long may it continue.

Finally, as I now conclude my 5 years as your President, I am delighted to hand over the reins to Mr David Briggs, Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Cheshire. I have enjoyed my time immensely as President and I consider it as having been a real privilege as part of my role as Lord-Lieutenant. Certainly amongst my highlights continue to be my annual military awards – certificates of meritorious service along with commendations for both the reservist and cadet community and I know my fellow Vice-President's would echo my sentiments. My only plea to those in command – is please take the time in acknowledging the quite outstanding work that is undertaken in this community. Your time in writing and submitting citations and nominations can really make a difference and we should give praise where it is due and rightly earned. Lastly, as the outgoing President, I would like to add my personal thanks to all the salaried staff working in NW RFCA. Their dedication and commitment is hugely appreciated. For those that have moved on in the last year, we thank you. To those new in appointment, we wish you all the very best. All have once again stepped up to the mark during what has been yet another challenging and hugely busy year. Above all, I wish everyone all the very best for the future.





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NW RFCA

RESERVE FORCES' AND CADETS' ASSOCIATION FOR
THE NORTH WEST OF ENGLAND AND THE ISLE OF MAN



ARMED FORCES
COVENANT