



NW RFCA

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

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 2 | 2019

INFRASTRUCTURE



IN THIS ISSUE : INFRASTRUCTURE BY NUMBERS, MEET THE TEAM, REACTIVE MAINTENANCE REVEALED AND MORE..

CONTENTS

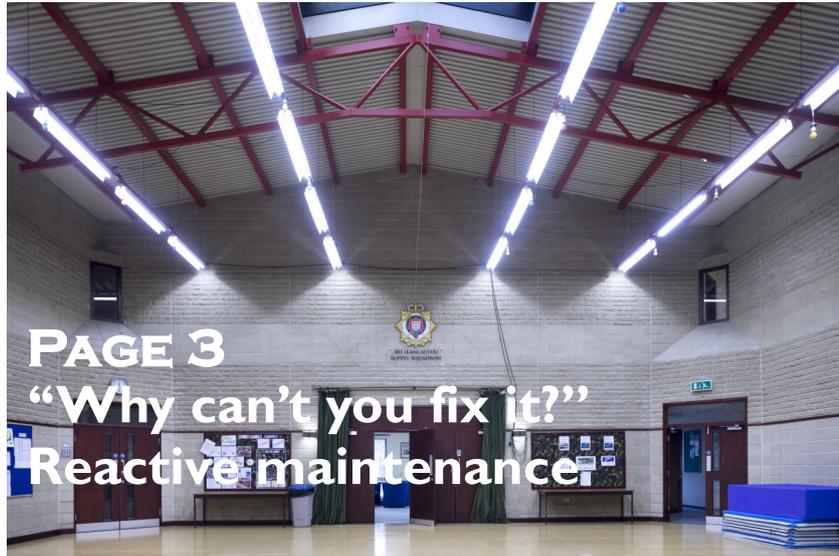


Lee Delaney
Head of Infrastructure

“Welcome to this new-look Infrastructure Newsletter. We are developing our communications output to give better and timelier advice and information about the service we offer to you – our stakeholders. We will continue to evolve the way we get the information to you with a long-term goal of using social media and the Association website in the future. This way we can target relevant news to those who are more likely to be interested in it.

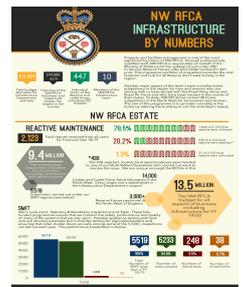
In this issue we delve a little bit into our various funding streams and the limitations surrounding them. This is probably the biggest source of confusion and annoyance and can be summed up in the calls I take asking why we can spend over £500,000 on a new cadet centre but cannot get a leaky roof fixed. We feel your pain here but we are powerless to make the choices that you sometimes ask of us because we are tasked by the single Services or the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) to carry out specific works funded by specific pots of money. We have a certain amount of influence as to how and when we spend our annual Reactive Maintenance budget but even here most of the choices we make are guided by specific priorities given to us by our funders. Hopefully you will get an insight into the process and if you have any questions, please feel free to get in touch with either myself or my leadership team of Mark Byrne and Alex Croxton and we'll talk you through it or try and get round to give you a more in-depth explanation.

I hope that you enjoy this issue with its mix of news, advice and information that should help you understand the things we do and the way we do them a little better.”



PAGE 3
“Why can't you fix it?”
Reactive maintenance

Page 9
Infra Quick Read!
Infrastructure
visually
presented in a quick and
colourful way



Page 13
Manchester UOTC
“ The added bonus to this
great scheme was
that it was completed
on time and under budget”



Page 15
Fault of the Month..
Tom (’s) Thumb



Page 14
Meet The Team!
Infrastructure Resource
Manager, Squadron Leader
Mark Byrne tells us about
his role and more..



And Much More!



Reactive Maintenance Revealed!

It seems straight forward enough your toilet seat is broken as is a light above a stairwell so you report both as faults and they will get fixed, Yes?

Not necessarily!

Reactive maintenance in its simplest forms is the aforementioned broken toilet seat and that light that doesn't work and annoying as these minor faults can be, unfortunately not all of them can be fixed in a timely fashion suitable for site users.

In fact, reactive maintenance is the most emotive subject that the infrastructure team has to deal with on a daily basis, but outside of the team little is understood about the reasoning behind the yes or no answers to fault reporting and understandably people get frustrated.

In fact, the author of this article has been on the other side (i.e. why can't they come and fix this, can't we fix it?, why, why?) before starting work for the RFCA and it was only through working in Infrastructure that the often criticised reactive maintenance process was revealed.

The aim behind this article is to try and 'demystify' the reactive maintenance process and if we're being honest, we're trying to say 'hang on a minute everyone, this isn't a case of just yes of course we can do that or here's some money to hire who you want', unfortunately, as like all fully funded organisations, every penny and every reason why it is spent is accountable.



Image: Clifton Army Reserve Centre

A good starting point to look at is how many people actually know there even is a process to fault reporting? The fault reporting process (robust process at that may we add) is how routine faults, i.e that light above the stairwell that is still broken and that broken toilet seat, are reported.

For example, does a Detachment Commander * (the person in charge of an Army Cadet Force hut/Detachment) know what happens when they report a dodgy door that just won't close properly through their chain of command? Do they need to know?

Why aren't you paying for this, why aren't you funding this?

The answer is probably yes and the reasoning behind this is that some of the frustration caused by these faults may be lessened if site users understood the process. For example, let's imagine a Detachment Commander turns up to their detachment on a Thursday evening at 1900hrs and realises that the detachment fire door lock isn't working. What does the DC do?

Well firstly they will phone their allocated CAA (Permanent HQ Staff employed by the RFCA) who will then report this information to the County QM (Quarter Master) who then informs the Maintenance Contracts Officer on the Help

* For this Example ACF, but also applicable to all sites across the Tri-Service Reserve and Cadet Estates.



Image: Bury Castle Armoury, Gtr Manchester

Desk, either by email or telephone. Due to the variability of working hours, already this process has taken time. Added to this, if you take into account that NW RFCA manages 447 individual 'Units' of the Reserves and Cadet Forces, including CEP (Cadet Expansion Programme) Schools, put simply, the phone never stops ringing and the emails keep coming. Remarkably out of 2123 faults reported from all users for the financial year 18/19, only 27 were unfunded, which meant they couldn't be actioned.

In a (very small) nutshell the reason these faults could not be actioned is because every possible avenue had been exhausted in which to find funding for the work to be done.

It is also important to point out that decisions on what work gets done or doesn't is not our decision. NW RFCA are not the decision makers on which works are funded, this, to use an old adage, is above our pay grade and our hands are tied. So when site users

see reports showing figures of £9.4 million being allocated to Infrastructure (see Infra by Numbers page 9) it is easy to understand why they may be getting irked by the fact that the aforementioned toilet seat has still not been fixed but the light bulb has. In this case, the broken light may constitute a security or safety risk but the toilet seat is only one out of many and is therefore not a priority.

Because NW RFCA are not the decision makers on which works are funded..

The Infrastructure Department's work is funded by 13 different funding allocations which are, to a greater or lesser degree, directed at specific objectives. This goes some way to explain the apparently bizarre reason why, for example, we may be funded to install a gymnasium at an Army Reserve Centre and yet not have the resources to fix a leaking roof.



Image: Kings Road, Army Reserve Centre, Manchester



Image: Altcar Training Camp, Hightown, Merseyside

It is fair to say that the range of activities that the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations deliver across the Country are not always well understood, even by those stakeholders that have significant contact with their own RFCA. Equally, the unique way in which we are funded to provide and support those activities are similarly clouded in mystery. Trying to explain the whys and wherefores of 13 different funding streams from Navy, Army, RAF and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) some of which are capital and some revenue, as well as some that are dedicated to specific groups such as the ACF or ATC or even more targeted outcomes e.g. the provision of vehicles is a challenge that we are yet to win. Basically, every fault (and not just the minor faults by the way) are directed to a focal point, the Help Desk, which is based within the Infrastructure team and from the moment the call or email comes in it is directed to the appropriate person.

So in short, although not every fault reported is fixed and we understand it is frustrating, please be assured that they are certainly not ignored and we are working on it!

More 'Infra'mation On.. Help Desk Communication!

The Help Desk operates between RFCA core hours which are 0830hrs to 1630hrs Monday to Friday (except on public holidays)



Email: nw-estatesmco@rfca.mod.uk

Customers can contact us on **0151 317 9512**

Added to This..

Did You Know..About the **NEW Feedback service?**

Customers are now able to contact the Help Desk with feedback, this could be either a compliment or a complaint (hopefully not!) and depending on what it is the Help Desk Staff will undertake the relevant action.

So next time you contact the Help desk with any issues relating to the status of an existing fault or to provide feedback more generally, don't forget to fill out the new Feedback Reporting Template.

ESTATES HELP DESK COMMUNICATION FOR RFCA VOLUNTEER ESTATE CUSTOMERS

ANNEX B

Feedback Reporting Template

Customers should complete all appropriate fields. Feedback is categorised as a Complaint or Compliment

| | |
|---|--|
| Name* | |
| Telephone Number* | |
| Email Address* | |
| Unit | |
| Site | |
| Building | |
| Description of feedback* for example: missed or no notice of appointment, incomplete works, lack of response, quality of workmanship, compliment etc. | |
| Please provide supporting documents e.g. photograph where appropriate (OPTIONAL) | |

*Compulsory field



NW RFCA INFRASTRUCTURE BY NUMBERS

£9.4M

Total budget allocation for Infrastructure Department activities

249,000 sq m

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

447

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

10

Members of the NW RFCA Infrastructure team

Property and facilities management is one of the most significant functions of 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 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 individual's needs.

NW RFCA ESTATE

REACTIVE MAINTENANCE

2,123

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

78.5%



1,666 of 2,123 fault reports were actioned

20.2%



430 of 2,123 fault reports were rejected *

1.3%



27 of 2,123 fault reports were unfunded

9.4 MILLION

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

*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.

14,000

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

5,519

Inspections carried out under our SMIT regime (see below)

3,000+

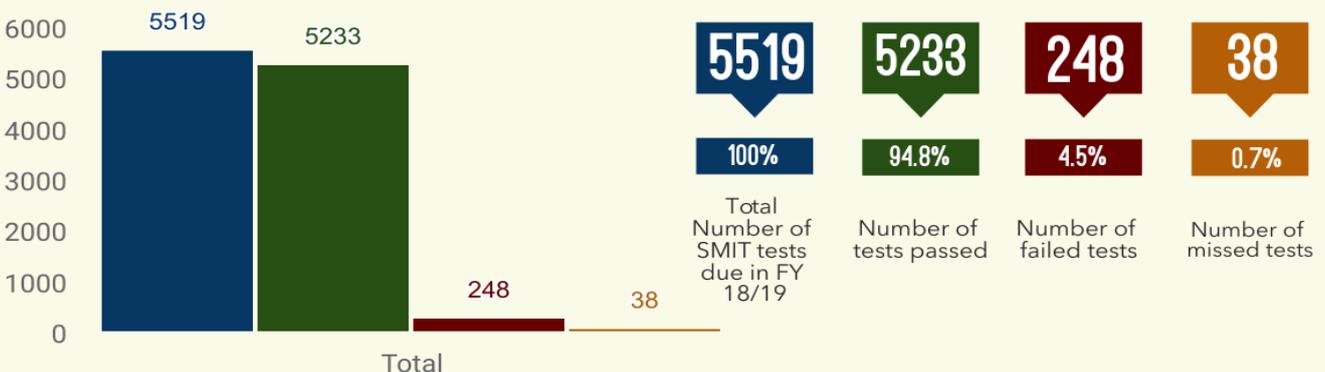
Reserve Forces personnel in the North West of England

13.5 MILLION

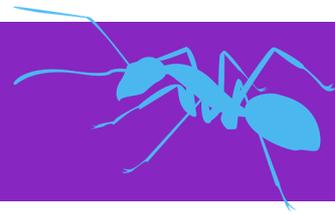
The NW RFCA budget for all aspects of business including Infrastructure for FY 19/20

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.



SEASONAL TRENDS!



Ants! During the summer season, everybody talks about ants (believe it or not). Yes it's the time of the year when ants are everywhere !

Our ever-busy help line is extra busy (if that is even possible) during this time of the year with reports of infestations of ants, whether it be in a classroom, ablutions, accommodation, or anywhere else, you name it and we've heard it. But, the ants aren't alone in their search for new accommodation!

The humble bumble bees and the not-well-liked wasps (we are not even including a picture) are also taking up space across the estate. So, the question is how do you deal with it?

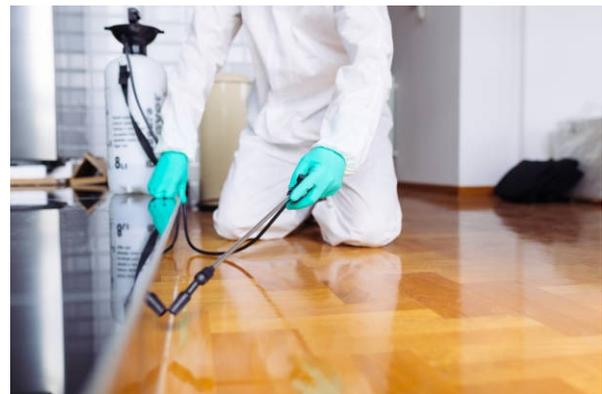
Do..

Contact the NW RFCA Helpdesk either by phone:

0151 317 9512

Or email:

nw-estatesmco@rfca.mod.uk



Don't..

Tackle it yourself, let the experts (who the Helpdesk will send in) deal with it.

Why? Well unless you're a zoologist it's pretty difficult to tell the difference between species and stings are extremely dangerous in certain circumstances.

Added to this the potential risk of anaphylactic shock, which if not treated correctly can be fatal.

So Basically **DON'T** tackle it yourself!





Giant Hogweed on the Reserve & Cadet Estate

Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) is a close relative of cow parsley originally from Southern Russia and Georgia. It can reach over 3m (10ft) in height. It is invasive and the sap can cause severe skin burns. It is widely distributed in the wild and poses a serious risk to people who are unaware of its potential for harm.

<https://www.rfc.org.uk/advice/profile?pld=458>

Is Giant Hogweed Dangerous?

In short - the sap of giant hogweed, which can be found in any part of the plant, can cause burns. It contains furocoumarin, which makes skin extremely sensitive to sunlight (phytophotodermatitis). If the sap gets onto your skin and you are then exposed to sun, your skin can blister badly and blistering can recur over months and even years. This is known as phytotoxicity.

What Should I Do If I Touch Giant Hogweed?

If you do get giant hogweed sap on your skin, be sure to wash the area thoroughly immediately, seek medical advice, and do not expose the area to sunlight for a few days.

The best way to avoid injury is to familiarise yourself with the plant. Avoid brushing through patches of giant hogweed and exposing yourself to plants which have been cut which might cause you to get sap on your skin.



White flowers on flat-topped clusters, which can be as large as 60cm (2ft) across, with all the flowers facing upwards



Tall plant with thick bristly stems that are often purple-blotched

Can reach a height of 3.5m (11.5ft) or more and has a spread of about 1-2m (3.5-7ft)

Giant hogweed is usually biennial, forming a rosette of jagged, lobed leaves in the first year before sending up a flower spike in the second year and then setting seed

True biennials only live for two years, dying after flowering, but giant hogweed does not always behave as a true biennial and some are perennial, coming up year after year

Giant hogweed has deeply divided leaves which give it a jagged appearance

ALIENS ARE AMONG US!



Not to be confused with common hogweed which is very similar-looking to giant hogweed but is much smaller. Its stems aren't blotchy like those of giant hogweed. It only reaches a maximum height of 2 metres (6ft 7 in) and the flower heads are only 20cm across. Its leaves are less jagged and more rounded at the edges

It can cause rashes and other skin complaints but reactions tend not be as severe as with the larger species



Evidence of previous year's growth in winter or early spring (above) is an indicator that plants are likely to emerge on site in following years

NW RFCA INFRAGRAPHIC

Air Cadet Refurbishments !



Cadets from ATC Squadrons throughout the region have been greeted with fresh and bright environments when they returned to their squadrons recently. As a result of a significant underspend in the Air Cadet organisation, many tired squadron headquarters were given ‘facelift’ upgrades to improve the fabric of the buildings. This included redecorations, new toilets, new kitchens, improved flooring as well as heating and lighting. In some cases refurbishments were merely redecorations, in others they included new roof systems. In all cases they were welcomed by squadrons that had not seen upgrades to their facilities since the mid-60’s.



One of the fortunate squadrons was Altrincham. Tom Ellis, NW RFCA Infrastructure Surveyor told us: “The refurbishment of 145 (Altrincham) Squadron’s cadet hut has been completed as part of an ongoing programme of modernisation between the North West RFCA and HQ Air Cadets. Altrincham now has a fresh modern look to carry it forward for generations to come.”



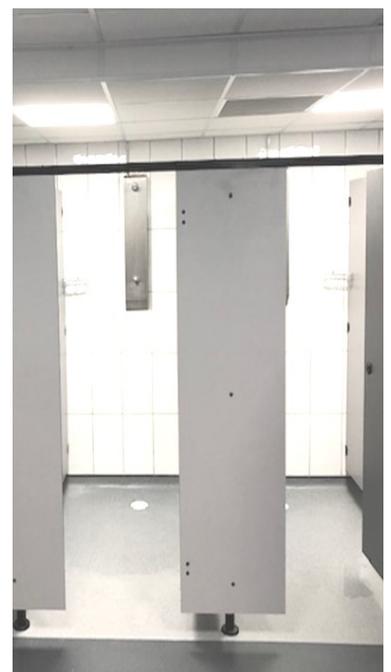
Renovation Complete!

Manchester University Barracks ablution block had a complete renovation recently. The ablution block, which required a full up-grade hadn't benefitted from any major works since the build was completed in 1994.

Head of Infrastructure Lee Delaney tells us:

“The tri-service multi cap badge centre which is home to the North West Officer Training Regiment, Greater Manchester Wing ATC & Manchester University Royal Naval Unit will greatly benefit from the new modern ablution areas. With the funding coming direct from a Navy Infrastructure underspend we have been able provide a modern, clean facility that greatly benefit the centre which is heavily used by all occupants”.

“The added bonus to this great scheme was that it was completed on time and under budget”

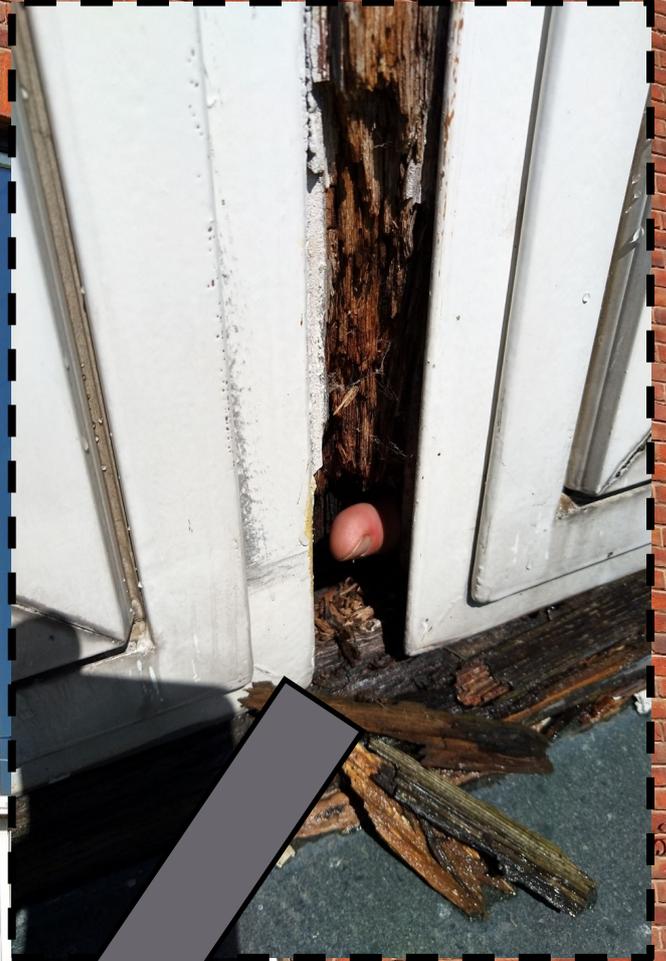


Fault of the Month!

Tom('s) Thumb

On a recent visit it was discovered that the windows at Wigan ARC had succumbed to the weather after years of faithful service!

However, RFCA contractors have been dispatched to carry out a temporary repair to the window and a PBF (Priority Based Funding) request has been made to replace the windows and exterior doors across the entire site, providing we are allocated funding, this is one of several projects we are hoping to complete within the next 12 months.



Meet the Team!

This week Infrastructure Manager—

Squadron Leader FCMI MCGI VR RAF (Retd) Mark Byrne

Squadron Leader Mark Byrne was commissioned into the Royal Air Force in January 1980 as an air traffic controller and served at RAF Brüggen, the London Air Traffic Control Centre at RAF West Drayton, RAF Brize Norton, Midland Radar (RAF North Luffenham), RAF Linton-on-Ouse, RAF Valley and as Senior Air Traffic Control Officer during 2 tours at RAF Mount Pleasant in the Falkland Islands.



Mark assumed his current role as Infrastructure Resource Manager and Deputy Head of Infrastructure at The Reserve Forces' & Cadets' Association for the North West of England & the Isle of Man (NW RFCA) in 2015. Here he has a wide ranging set of responsibilities including working with the Head of Infrastructure to deliver the new NW RFCA HQ building. He also has the lead for Soft FM (not a radio station) which includes telecommunications, vehicle fleet management, utilities, energy monitoring, grounds maintenance and waste management

Outside work, his main focus is on his family. Married to Christine, he has two daughters, Olivia (13) and Jessica (9). A keen photographer, Mark is also a really bad golfer and an ex-water-skier who still thinks he could gracefully cut through a wake on one ski; the reality is, sadly, somewhat different!

The Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association for the North West of England and the Isle of Man (NW RFCA) is the organisation which facilitates, supports and promotes the Reserve Forces of all three Armed Services and the three Cadet organisations in the region.

NW RFCA has a membership of over 150 experienced professional people interested in Defence. These include the Commanding Officers of Reserve and Cadet units in the region; selected naval, marine, military and air members who are serving or retired Reserve and Regular personnel; and, representative members from local government, universities, employers, employees and the Cadet organisations. Together, the Association Membership of NW RFCA advocates on behalf of Reservists, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers and cadets in the region, ensuring that they continue to thrive with the support of their local communities, employers and schools.



NW RFCA

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Altcar Training Camp
Hightown
Liverpool**

Phone: 0151-317 9537 (Infra Enquiries)

Email: nw-estatesgen@rfca.mod.uk



Championing the Value of Reserve Service

Promoting the Cadet Experience

Encouraging Support to the Reserves and Cadets

Providing the Best Place to Work and Train

