



NW RFCA

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

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 4 | 2021

WINTER EDITION

INFRASTRUCTURE



In this Issue: Special Feature on Altcar Training Camp, The Cadets and The Estate, Meet another member of the team, Seasonal Trends and much more...

Lee Delaney - Head of Infrastructure

Continued from page 1

If I'm being slightly political, we may pause to think about the impact of tinkering with this business model which would inevitably allow larger corporations to have greater access at the expense of a huge number of small and flexible companies who have been able to respond to our small scale but vital needs for many years.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my whole team for the incredibly professional way they responded to the impact that the pandemic has had on our way of working. Many organisations and indeed other departments in NW RFCA have had to adapt to these challenges, but I would be surprised if any have been more capable, more efficient or more effective.

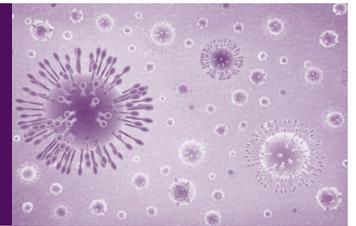
Finally on behalf of the Infrastructure Department, I would like to send you our hope that the New Year will be happy, prosperous and bring a return to more normal challenges for us all.

Lee

Lee Delaney

Head of Infrastructure

NW RFCA Corona Virus Update



At the NW RFCA, the wellbeing of our staff, visitors and stakeholders continues to be our highest priority. As the spread of the coronavirus develops and we are beginning to see a second wave, we would like to assure you of the comprehensive steps we continue to take, whilst protecting as many of our critical outputs as we reasonably can.

As per latest government advice, most of our staff will continue to work remotely where they possibly can and limiting all unnecessary travel and meetings. We are still fully contactable via email and phone. As ever, we really appreciate your continued support and we will continue to be here to support the Cadet organisations, Reserves and our wider stakeholders during these unprecedented times. We continue to follow the Public Health England advice and any further guidance issued by them in the coming days:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>



Infrastructure Quick Read

News and Numbers



Welcome to our new feature News and Numbers. This new feature is aimed at giving you a snapshot focus on Investments and Works to date!

This Year To Date We Have Invested In.....

Liverpool AFCO—Refurbishment £46k

HMS Eaglet—Redecoration of classrooms £15k

Altcar Training camp — Codes Bridge £140k

ATC—967 (Warton)Sqn - £150,000.00, 345 (Lancaster) Sqn - £150,000.00,

230 (Congleton) Sqn - £94,000.00

Reactive Maintenance -

NW RFCA initially received an allocation of £958,807.00 which is an initial increase of £147,807.00

Whilst any increase in funding is always well received it will not fully combat a declining middle aged estate. This has been clearly evident in the issues experienced with heating systems across three Army Reserve Centre's requiring boiler replacement. Combine that with a further seven sites' systems one day away from a failure.

The injection of £252k received by CRFCA allowed us to replace the boilers at Upper Chorlton Road ARC, Haldane Barracks ARC, Townsend AVE ARC, Fox Barracks ARC and Widnes ARC.

We also replaced the roof at LUOTC, Mather Avenue which had suffered complete failure with leaks in more than ten locations throughout the centre.

NW RFCA Help Desk -

For FY 19/20 we received 2545 calls. This is an increase of 189 calls compared to FY 18/19.

1 = Emergency one working day, 2 to 5 = up to 20 working days

1 100%

2 99%

3 100%

4 100%

5 100%

Statutory & Mandatory Inspections and Tests (SMIT) -

Additional Works Services - NW RFCA completed 6209 SMIT tasks in accordance with Hard FM standard tasks for FY 19/20.

5430 inspections and tests passed the requirements with 779 failed tests or inspections.

NW RFCA spent £152,008.06 from works arising from SMIT. We currently do not receive any funding for works arising from SMIT, any works required must be taken from our reactive maintenance allocation.





The Cadets and The Estate

Preparing sites for the return of F2F training across the North West

In March 2020, as the country went into a national lockdown due to the pandemic, ACF Detachments and ATC Squadrons across the North West estate closed their doors and face-to-face training (F2F) came to a halt.

As cadets and adult instructors from both organisations adapted to virtually delivering and learning their respective training syllabi, the work continued behind the scenes to ensure the cadet sites across the NW were being monitored.

For the ACF detachments, a regime was put in place to ensure intermittent monitoring of all the sites still took place and it was agreed that the county CAAs' (Cadet Administrative Assistants) Professional Support Staff employed by NW RFCA would continue to monitor their respective sites. In conjunction with the infra department's technical staff, a full on site audit took place to ensure all detachments were fully compliant.

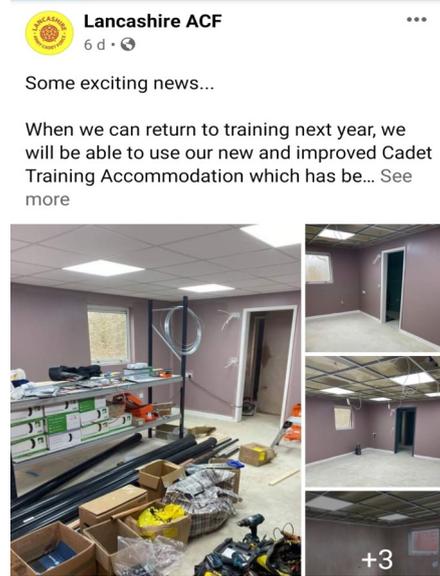
By September 2020, all of the ACF sites had been signed off as fully compliant and safe to return to the sites when their respective County HQs (following both Regional Command and Government Guidelines) gave the go-ahead for face-to-face training to resume. By October 2020, ATC sites were also signed off as compliant and safe to return to the sites when they respectively resume face-to-face training.

Added to this both the ATC and ACF have had some works ongoing during the last few months.

The Cadets and The Estate continued...

Improving Sites for Cadets across the North West

Lancashire ACF HQ, which is based at Fulwood Barracks in Preston, is currently having work done on their accommodation block and recently took to Instagram and Facebook to give everyone a sneak preview....



Added to this, Merseyside ACF recently had some of their floor, which was carpeted, replaced with a high quality vinyl sheet flooring, meaning it will be easier to keep clean and maintain.

The Air Training Corps has also had some works approved in the last few months, Appleby Squadron and Morecambe and Heysham Squadron can look forward to refurbishments, along with Blackburn and Stockport Squadrons. Works are due to start after the Christmas holidays.

Up in Preston, Inskip Cadet Centre has also had a refurb on its Voyager Block. The refurbishment means that visitors to the site will now be greeted by a fresh and modern environment!

"The refurbishment means that visitors to the site will now be greeted by a fresh and modern environment when they enter voyager block"



Inskip CC have produced a short film on the centre ...

Click here to view it



https://youtu.be/M9U4a_nLZmA

Seasonal Trends



During winter across the estate, the number of the faults reported for boilers and roofs increases. In last year's winter edition, we covered the reasons as to why these types of faults increase during this season: mainly because boilers are used more in winter due to the cold temperatures and roofs which naturally become 'weathered' over the years are subject to the harsh winter weather, rain, snow etc.

The main problem with boilers being reported as faults is that, because they are so old, finding the replacement parts is near impossible. This means that 'broken' boilers which may be broken purely down to a single part failure, often need to be replaced completely. As discussed in previous issues, funding for the replacement of entire boiler systems need to be sourced and if funding is received, then it is unfortunately not enough to cover the cost to meet all of the boiler faults reported. Where funding is sourced, this then needs to be allocated to the most urgent cases, such as where the site has been informed that the boiler is not to be used at all due to safety issues, which could potentially mean the site has to close. This in turn causes further problems down the line.

Since our article last year, there have been numerous boiler replacements which the infrastructure department has managed to source funding for. These include boiler replacements in Buildings 39 and 50 on Altcar Training Camp and moving forward funding has been received to replace the boilers at Clifton ARC.



Photo: Boiler Replacement Bldg 39, Altcar

Seasonal Trends continued....



Photo: Boiler Replacement Bldg 39, Altcar

Did You Know....

The coldest temperature ever recorded during a **UK winter** was $-27.2\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$, which has been recorded 3 times. It was twice recorded in the village of Braemar, on 11 February 1895 and again on 10 January 1982, and once in Altnaharra on 30 December 1995. Both sites are in the Scottish Highlands.

Brrr that's cold!

[Info source: www.metoffice.gov.uk](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk)

Moving onto the subject of roofs, repair works are due to be carried out on the Drill Hall Roof at Failsworth ARC, which has had significant issues with flooding this year and severely damaged the Drill Hall flooring.

Funding has been provided for extensive roof works at Clifton ARC. The site currently suffers from water ingress in various areas around the building and can no longer be repaired on a reactive basis. The works include drill hall roof overhaul, replacement parapet gutter and pointing repairs to main building, replacement flat roofing. The works are due out to tender in the new year and will be complete by FY end.

These works coincide with smaller roof repair projects such as those currently underway at Mather Avenue ARC, Alamein Barracks and extensive works to Chorley ARC which are just some examples of North West Infrastructures ongoing battle against the elements.

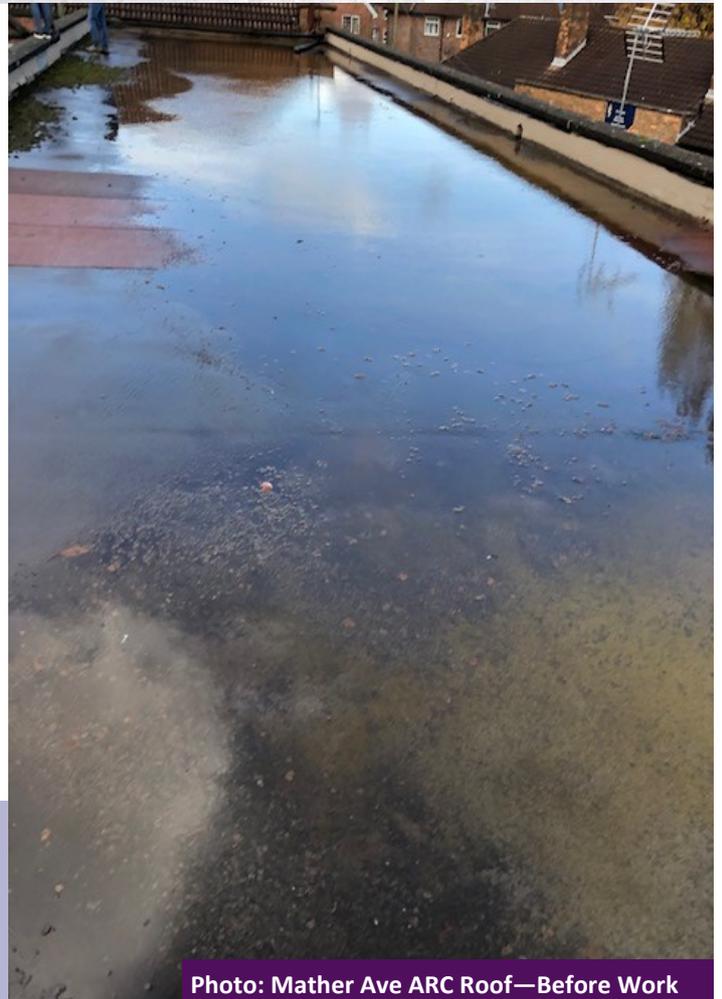


Photo: Mather Ave ARC Roof—Before Work

Did you know? There was a petition sent to parliament in 2017-2019 to change the spelling from roofs to rooves but it was rejected!

<https://petition.parliament.uk/archived/petitions/268579>

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.

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	
<u>Feedback Reporting Template</u>	
Customers should complete <u>all</u> 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

Special Feature!

Altcar Training Camp - Then and Now



Photo: From NWRFCA Archives

In July 2020 Altcar Training Camp was 161 years old (happy belated birthday, Altcar!) and although 1000s of people, including, Armed Forces, tri-service cadets and civilians pass through the main gate yearly, little is known about the history of the camp.

For those of you who have visited the Camp, you may be familiar with some of the information we cover in this article, so please be aware before reading we have only mentioned a few key timeline dates and facts from across the years for easy reading. For example did you know that Altcar Training Camp is habitat to some unique wildlife? Also did you know that it has 193 toilets?

Well, if you didn't know, then this is the article for you. So, if you have a spare 10 minutes, settle down with a brew and a biscuit and prepare to learn everything you wanted to know about Altcar but never had time to ask.

Then.....How it all began....

In **1859**, Altcar Training Camp (then known as Ballings Wharf) was owned by the then Lord Lieutenant of Sefton, The Rt. Hon (4th) Earl of Sefton, after his agent, Mr John Lathbury, had taken over the work of reclaiming the land in **1829**.

It was in **1859**, with the threatened invasion from Napoleon, that the British War Office issued a circular to all Lord -Lieutenants of the Counties, permitting the formation of voluntary rifle corps under the Act 44. It is because of this famous letter being issued on the 12th May **1859**, this is the date that is most commonly known as the official start of Altcar as a Rifle Range as this was the year of the official formation of the Volunteers. It was actually on the 28th July **1860** that The Right Honourable Earl of Sefton officially opened Hightown Rifle Range and on this day, the 1st shot was fired by him down the range (since he owned the land), using an Enfield muzzle loader, which had a .577 inches round!

The Enfield Muzzle Loader fired down the range by The Rt. Hon (4th) Earl of Sefton on 28th July 1860 used .577 rounds...



Altcar Then and Now continued.....



The year of **1865** saw Cadets fire at Altcar for the first time!

(The Army Cadet Force was established in 1859 after a number of volunteer units formed cadet companies more information on the history of this can be found at: <https://armycadets.com/about-us/our-history/>)

In **1866**, the position of Range Superintendent was created and appointed to support the volunteer corps at the camp. What is extremely fascinating about this piece of information is that all applications for the role were personally considered by Field Marshall, HRH Prince George, The Duke of Cambridge, who was not only Commander in Chief of the British Army at the time, but also cousin of Queen Victoria (Imagine being invited for an interview for the position: no pressure there then!) In present day, the Range Superintendent position is better known as Camp Commandant.

Moving forward to January **1900**, the British Government authorised a number of the volunteers for service overseas in South Africa. This was the 1st time the camp was used to train soldiers for active service overseas. Three Companies (volunteers) from the King's Regiment from across the County (which was then Lancashire as this was pre-Merseyside County boundaries being established) trained on the camp in preparation for active service overseas.

It was during this time that the targets used on the ranges, were calico targets (made from cotton) and unlike today were markers can view the scores from the butts, in the early days there were two markers one to the right of the target line and one to the left and they wore no protective clothing, which sadly ran the risk of accidents. In May **1912**, one such fatal accident happened and the camp paid the sum of £3 and 1 shilling for medical costs and funeral care for marker Guilroy who sadly lost his life after being shot whilst on marker duties.

Finally on our *then* section.....

It was on 30th July **1912** that the 620 acres of dry land and training areas (now known as the Altcar Estate) was purchased from the Earl of Sefton by the then Territorial Association for the sum of £88, 301 3 shillings and 10d, which included all fees associated with the purchase. Followed by the purchasing of 500 acres of beach (to cover the Range Danger Area) in **1913** which cost £7000.

161 years on, to find out what Altcar has to offer *now* turn to page 12....



Photo: From Altcar HQ Archives



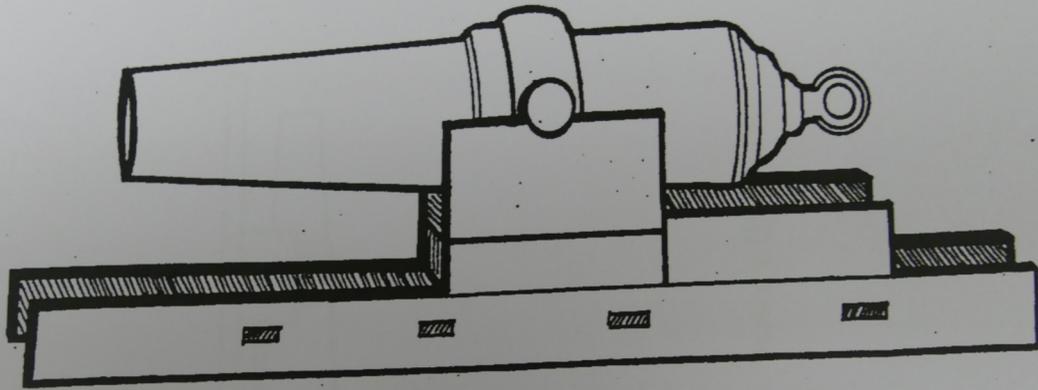
Photo: From NWRFA Archives

Altcar Then and Now continued.....



More 'Infra'mation...

Trials for the Horsfall Gun (pictured below) were carried out on the site prior to the Crimean War (1853 –1856). The gun which was bored to 13 inches and weighed 25 tonnes and fired cannon balls weighing 280lbs!



HORSEFALL 13-INCH GUN.

Photo: From Altcar HQ Archives

More 'Infra'mation...

Altcar Training Camp—A unique wildlife habitat on the Sefton Coast..

<https://www.nwrfa.org.uk/rfca/altcar-training-camp/conservation/>



Photo: From NWRFA Archives

Altcar Then and Now continued.....



Photo Credit : ATU North (with thanks to the OC of ATU (N) for use of image in this publication)

Now...

Today Altcar Training Camp, which is now managed by the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for the North West of England and The Isle of Man on behalf of the Secretary of State for Defence, has 179 buildings on it (was 178 until Alt House was built in 2020) and is home to ATU North, a platoon of C Company 4 Para, Merseyside ACF and NW RFCA HQ!

The Altcar Training Camp mission, is to provide a safe and sustainable managed training estate and range complex to support training and operational output for Regulars, Reservists and Cadets (training for cadets).

The site has 709 bed spaces and in 2019, the camp had the largest 'heads on beds' number it had ever seen, as 110k people stayed at Altcar accommodation during that year. Added to that number was the further 10k-12k people who went to use the ranges but didn't actually stay on the site.

Visitors to the site include the Tri-service Regular, Reservists and Cadets, Police and Civilian Rifle Clubs (some of whom hire buildings on the camp).

The camp has 13 ranges including a clay target range and DCCT (Dismounted Close Combat Trainer). Also, B range has 38 lanes and is the only military range in Britain with this many lanes and D Range is a 1000 yards range and is only one of three in the UK that offers this distance.

The ranges now have either myrtle frames, which have been in place for 70 years, or they are SARTS (Small Arms Range Targetry System), which have been on the range complex for six years. Rounds fired at Altcar ranges last year totalled roughly 1½ - 2 million and the de-leading (where all empty cases remaining are removed from range areas)takes place twice yearly.

Altcar Then and Now continued.....



There are (are you ready for this?) 193 toilets, 51 urinals, 91 showers and 242 basins on the Camp! The Camp has 5 bridges: the Bailey Bridge, Codes Bridge, Boulker Bridge, Pump Station bridge and a pipe bridge and over the last 20 years there have been 100,000 trees planted at Altcar.

The Commandant of Altcar Training Camp, Lieutenant Colonel Gordon Black has been in post for seven years, previous to this, Lt Col Black was the CO of Army Training Unit NW (now ATU North) and has served 37 years in the Regular and Reservist Army combined.

Working alongside the Camp Commandant, the Camp has 18 staff who work in the HQ, 8 Ministry of Defence Guards (MSGs) and 25 Aramark staff who provide the catering and cleaning. The camp is open for 365 days a year, making it one busy camp!

So, with all this in mind, next time you are visiting Altcar for the day or staying over, look around and take in for a minute the incredible history that surrounds you of this unique camp, that once was purely agricultural land.

(From the author : Thank you to Altcar Camp Commandant, Lt Col G Black for his time and providing the information for this special feature).

If you would like to read more about the History of Altcar there is a book called Altcar The Story OF A Rifle Range Lieutenant Colonel Michael Cook MBE available to buy online from Amazon in paperback.



Photo: Altcar Camp Commandant, Lt Col G Black with Cadets and CFAVS from Merseyside ACF

Photo Credit: Merseyside ACF (with thanks to CEO of Merseyside ACF for use of image in publication)

NW RFCA HQ Say Goodbye to Gladstone House



On 13th November, the HQ staff said good bye to Gladstone House and moved into the newly built NW RFCA HQ, Alt House. Whilst the majority of NW RFCA HQ staff are currently working from home at the time of this publication, the staff who have been working in the new build have quickly adapted to their surroundings.

Lee Delaney—Head of Infrastructure—said: “Gladstone House served us well for just over 2 years as a temporary base for our HQ. Although meeting space was limited, the open-plan atmosphere made the environment welcoming to all who visited. The building has now been handed back to the Camp for their utilisation and I am confident it will be a suitable venue for any unit that uses it.”

Meet The Team

Tom Ellis - Surveyor

For this issue's meet the team we asked Tom Ellis a few questions about his job, hobbies and was it true he was an Army Cadet?.....

1. What do you do? *I am a Building Surveyor for the Infrastructure Team at North West RFCA. The work involves everything from arranging emergency call outs for plumbing leaks right up to designing and project managing large scale building projects.*

2. How long have you worked at RFCA? *I have been with RFCA a little over two and a half years now, after 13 years in the construction industry working as a carpenter and squeezing in 4 years at John Moores University to study surveying.*

3. Where did you originally hear about the job for RFCA? *I was approached by Hays Recruitment Consultants, who had come across my CV online and wanted to put me forward for the role on a temporary basis to cover staff leave. I was then offered a permanent position after 12 months.*

4. Did being an Army Cadet help you at all in understanding any of your work (ie how detachments/ Counties work)? *I was a member of Deysbrook Detachment (Merseyside ACF) for around a year at the turn of the millennium, which alarmingly seems a life time ago. Coming into this role I had an appreciation for the ranking structure of the military. However the Reserve Forces have some unique positions outside the typical rank and file that I had learnt and had to get used to.*

5. What was your favourite subject as a cadet? *I would have to say Map and Compass. I recall having a particular talent for finding the right direction even when it's not always clear or obvious.*

6. Do you have any hobbies? *I was a Carpenter by trade and now class myself as part time woodworker I do enjoy making furniture and other small items from resistant materials. However, I also enjoy adventure sports such as climbing, snowboarding and kayaking when time allows.*

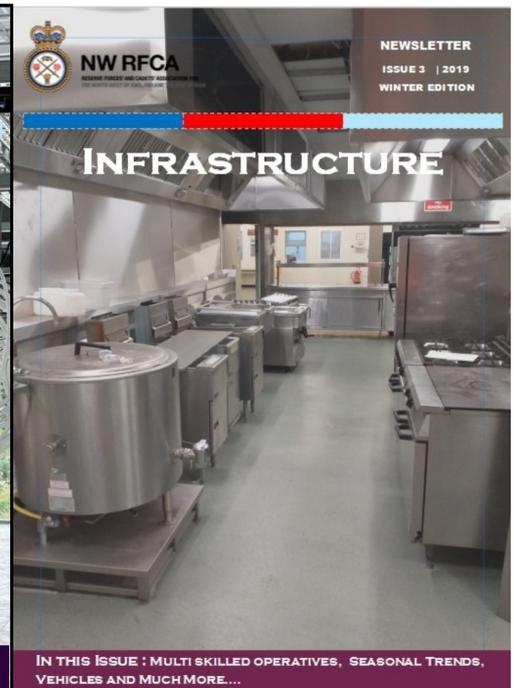
7. Anything else you would like to say? *Having spent my teenage years torn between my love for construction and an enthusiasm for all things militaria, I now find myself in the privileged position of having a career that involves both. It's a pleasure to work with the Army Reserves and to play a small part in the development of the next generation by providing and maintaining facilities for the cadets.*



Don't Miss Out!

If you have missed previous editions of our Infrastructure newsletter then don't worry you can view previous editions on the NW RFCA website under the Infrastructure section

<https://www.nwrfca.org.uk/rfca/infrastructure/>



Thank You

To All The Armed Forces...



Thank you for all you are doing in the fight against Covid 19

Infra Brain Teasers - New!

Word Search...

Can you find the 18 words listed in our Infrastructure themed Word Search?

ALT HOUSE
ALTCAR
ARC
CADET
CAMP
DETACHMENT
ELECTRICS
ESTATE

GLADSTONE HOUSE
HOLCOMBE MOOR
RANGE
RESERVIST
ROOF
SMIT
SURVEYOR
SQUADRON
TEST
TRAINING AREA

C	A	D	E	T	S	F	T	I	G	L	M
S	X	W	K	T	I	M	S	F	L	I	A
G	U	C	Q	Y	I	P	I	B	A	N	L
H	A	R	C	F	S	R	V	A	D	R	T
O	E	X	V	U	F	P	R	O	S	A	H
L	F	S	M	E	T	S	E	T	T	N	O
C	B	Q	A	W	Y	C	S	K	O	G	U
O	T	U	Y	I	D	O	E	V	N	E	S
M	Q	A	L	T	C	A	R	L	E	N	E
B	E	D	S	P	A	C	E	F	H	H	U
E	Z	R	E	K	M	B	L	G	O	E	Q
M	U	O	R	T	P	Q	X	B	U	T	L
O	D	N	X	C	A	W	T	F	S	A	C
O	P	K	A	S	O	C	B	N	E	T	K
R	O	O	F	G	M	F	H	K	W	S	Y
I	H	L	G	P	J	G	J	M	K	E	C
Q	S	C	I	R	T	C	E	L	E	V	R
R	P	Z	T	O	O	Z	G	E	Y	N	R
A	E	R	A	G	N	I	N	I	A	R	T

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

**Alt House,
Altcar Training Camp
Hightown
Liverpool
L38 7JD**

Phone: 0151-317 9514 (Infra Enquiries)

Email: nw-info@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

Generating Income for the Benefit of Reserves

