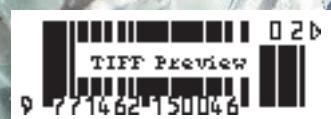


# SOLDIER

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

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British troops lay generation snowflake to rest in Estonia



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“

It's been nippy but I've been loving life

”

Cold spell – page 30

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“

We are going to give  
it our best shot

”

Soldiers target podium push – page 74



34

## Keeping pace



OPERATION Cabrit takes centre stage in this month's magazine. Turn to page 30 to find out how British troops are making the most of all Estonia has to offer in their never-ending mission to upskill.

Not content with the freezing Baltic region, our team also travelled to Northern Ireland to learn more about the stark changes to UK troops' way of life there since the conclusion of the longest continuous deployment in Service history (page 26).

If there is one thing this edition makes clear, it is the evolving nature of conflict.

Gen Sir Nicholas Carter's words on future warfare certainly bear this out too. It will be interesting to see how changes to military equipment – such as those outlined on pages 11 and 38 – keep pace with the times.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or comments on the day job then contact us using the details on page 7.

We are part of Army Media and Communication so you do not need permission to get in touch.

Enjoy the issue.

**Sarah Goldthorpe • Editor**

### Where to find *Soldier*

#### ► Printed copies

THESE are distributed to every Army site at the start of each month.

#### ► Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

ALONG with news and glimpses behind the scenes at *Soldier*, we publish a link to the latest magazine at [www.facebook.com/soldiermagazine](https://www.facebook.com/soldiermagazine) and on Twitter (@soldiermagazine).

#### ► Online

DIGITAL versions of current and past editions are available on the Army website at [www.soldiermagazine.co.uk](https://www.soldiermagazine.co.uk). Just click on the "read it now" tab.

#### ► Purchase

IF you're not in the Army you can buy *Soldier* from your high street magazine retailer or directly from us at [subs@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:subs@soldiermagazine.co.uk) (£23 for 12 issues in the UK).

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## British Army personnel celebrate Antarctic success stories

ARMY adventurers are marking a double victory after the Ice Maidens became the first all-female team to cross Antarctica on foot and a 27-year-old officer became the youngest person to reach the South Pole alone.

After 61 days on ice – pulling 80kg sledges up to 43km a day – the six Servicewomen (shown above and right) crossed the finish line at Hercules Inlet on January 20.

Expedition leader Maj Nics Wetherill (RAMC) said she was "incredibly proud" of the achievement.

She added: "The journey has had good times, bad times and great times for all concerned and each experience has made us better people."

Team member LSgt Sophie Montagne (HAC) said there had been "a flood of tears" as the mission – set up to inspire females of all ages – reached its conclusion.

Reflecting on the team's stop at the South Pole back in December, she added: "As we stepped forward and touched the famous silver globe, a lifelong dream was realised."

Lt Scott Sears (RGR, shown far right) reached the same point on Christmas Day in a privately-organised expedition to raise funds for the Gurkha Welfare Trust.

He told *Soldier* he was "very proud" to have completed the expedition.

"Doing the trip was the reward for two years of planning," he continued. "The main danger when you're on



your own is there's no one to double-check your decisions but I had a set plan and I didn't deviate from it."

The officer encountered a major setback when he ran out of food two kilometres from the end.

However, good weather meant he was able to finish without problems.

The officer later discovered that a camera bag – containing 12 SD cards filled with images and GoPro footage from the trip – had been lost in transit on his return to the UK.

Anyone with information about the whereabouts of the pictures can contact the *Soldier* editorial team via [news@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:news@soldiermagazine.co.uk)

### IN NUMBERS:



the sort of temperature, in degrees Celsius, faced by the trekkers



“A lifelong dream was realised”



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# GLOBAL SITREP

## 1. NORTHERN IRELAND

### STAYING SECURE

TROOPS heading to Northern Ireland have been reminded that they must register their intention to travel to the region with the Centralised Risk Assessment Cell.

Further details can be found on the Northern Ireland Garrison Awareness Site on DII, where travellers' details must be recorded on a form.

While the process is not mandatory for civilian MoD staff, they too are advised to complete the paperwork.

The site also gives some basic dos and don'ts for soldiers travelling to the region.



“  
This is a  
huge step  
forward  
”



## 2. FALKLAND ISLANDS

### IRISH GUARDS ON TARGET

MEMBERS of 1st Battalion, Irish Guards have been preparing to return home following a four-month deployment as the Roulement Infantry Company.

The soldiers – from Number 1 Company – embarked on a busy programme during their tenure.

Battalion spokesman WO2 Kyle Reains said: "They have been developing their core infantry skills. Their schedule has included live firing and getting out patrolling – but they have also had a chance to do some tourism activities too."

Elsewhere, Number 2 Company have been on Exercise Panther Gold in Thailand, where they embarked on a jungle exercise with the Royal Thai Army.



## 3. SUDAN

### DIRECT TO DARFUR

BRITISH Army lawyers will deliver legal training to soldiers in the Darfur region of Sudan for the first time this month.

The law of armed conflict package is already run regularly in the country's capital, Khartoum, but the lessons have never been taken to the heart of this troubled area before.

"This is a huge step forward for the Sudanese, a major boost for UK defence engagement and a really interesting opportunity for the Army lawyers," said Lt Col Lee Saunders (REME), Britain's defence attache in the country.

Sudan has long been beset by conflict, with civil war between the north and south costing more than a million lives and conflict in western Darfur displacing and killing and even greater number.



## 4. GERMANY

### NATO OUTING

SOLDIERS from 1st Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment have been honing their skills in southern Germany alongside thousands of other Nato troops.

Exercise Allied Spirit was coming to an end as this issue went to press.

Designed to improve the way troops work together on the battlefield, it saw the Brits (pictured above in 2017) take on the role of lead armoured infantry.

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## 7. IRAQ 'A HISTORIC MOMENT'

HELPING to achieve a milestone in Iraq's history should be a source of pride for members of the 2 Rifles battlegroup, their CO has said.

Speaking after the battalion's return home to Northern Ireland from Op Shader, Lt Col Neil Bellamy described the clearance of Daesh fighters around Mosul as a pivotal moment.

It was also a reflection of the hard work troops put into training the Iraqi Security Forces during the US-led mission, he added.

"Having a pitch-side seat at the moment Daesh was declared defeated was extraordinary and represented the high point of a great tour," Lt Col Bellamy said.

"Many of the soldiers were experiencing operations for the first time and had the opportunity to work with other countries in a true multinational environment."

The 2 Rifles personnel were deployed to Al Asad airbase, Anbar Province, where they were also responsible for protecting a coalition force of around 4,000.

They have now been succeeded by colleagues from The Royal Regiment of Scotland.



## 6. KOSOVO ONE YEAR MORE

THE deployment of around 30 British Army personnel – including Reservists – to Nato's Kosovo Force has been extended by another year.

The mission began as a peacekeeping operation back in the late 1990s.

It has now evolved into a body of around 4,000 troops to provide stability in the region and training for the Kosovo Security Force.

The British troops are working with Nato allies including Germany, Italy, Turkey and Poland.

The above image shows riflemen deployed to the region back in 2008.

1. NORTHERN IRELAND
2. SWEDEN
3. SUDAN
4. GERMANY
5. ESTONIA
6. KOSOVO
7. IRAQ

## 5. ESTONIA

### SAAREMAA SLOGGERS TO ENTER RECORD BOOKS

PERSONNEL on Operation Cabrit in Estonia (page 30) are gearing up for a record-breaking crossing of Europe's longest ice bridge later this month.

Exercise Alphas Iceman will see A Company, 1st Battalion, The Royal Welsh and Estonian reservists attempt to traverse 26km of frozen sea between the mainland and the island of Saaremaa (shown below) on foot, ski and snow shoe.

If successful, they will be the first group to have completed the route using human power alone.

Elsewhere some 300 personnel from the 1 Royal Welsh battlegroup (shown inset) and the Estonian Scouts Battalion will take part in an 11-day winter training package at Soodla in the north east of the Baltic nation.





AC 64645

# DON'T SUFFER IT, SOLVE IT!



Workplace conflict can occur at any level and affects personal relationships and operational effectiveness. Mediation is an effective way to resolve conflict with independent mediators in a confidential environment. For details of how the Army Mediation Service can help you, please contact the AMS coordinator.



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\*Local call charges apply, operators will ring you back if requested

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## UP CLOSE: TES

# War games just got better

THE first sets of improved laser-based tactical engagement simulation (TES) systems have been made available to the Field Army.

Designed to be more compatible with Virtus body armour and helmets, the new equipment (shown below) retains the audio and visual feedback of the previous version but now includes a sensory response device as well.

Worn on the wrist, it silently vibrates to alert the wearer of hits, near misses or injury and provide timings for simulated medical treatment.

"We used the new wrist sensor on our CT1 and CT2 training exercises and it proved to be really beneficial during casualty serials when first responders gave first aid to those 'wounded' by the TES kit," said Sgt Paul Cook (Scots).

Thanks to the new head detector band, it can now also identify simulated shots from 360 degrees as well as those fired from above.

"Previous users will remember the cumbersome

vest that interfered with webbing and other load carrying equipment," Maj Marcus Myles (PWRR), project manager for collective training simulation at Field Army Training Branch, told *Soldier*.

"The new vest is much slimmer and lighter than it was and has done away with shoulder detectors around the bicep.

"This allows a greater freedom of movement, makes it easier to fit around webbing and body armour and reduces total weight."

Another benefit of the updated system is that it offers an improved level of interoperability with partner nations – including the US Army in Europe. It is also set to be used by British troops training with Polish and Estonian personnel as part of the enhanced forward presence (page 30).

Units that want to use the latest version of TES can find information about the bidding process on the Army Knowledge Exchange, accessible through both Defence Gateway and DII.

New sensory feedback device sits on the wrist



Head gear detects hits from 360 degrees and even from above



The kit also fits better around webbing



“  
It’s much  
slimmer and  
lighter  
”

## GOT AN ATTITUDE?

■ RESERVISTS are being asked to express views on Service life as part of the latest Army Reserve continuous attitude survey.

The document was sent to around 11,000 soldiers last month and the results will be used to shape future policy.

Those selected to take part should return the survey by March 19 and an online version is available at [www.surveys.mod.uk](http://www.surveys.mod.uk)

## ‘MIX IT UP TO MEET THREAT’

■ A COMBINATION of traditional military skills and cutting-edge technologies will be key to the Army's future success, the chief of the general staff has said.

Addressing delegates at the Royal United Services Institute in London, Gen Sir Nicholas Carter warned that warfare is changing – with social media and fake news now used as weapons.

He highlighted that Russia has upgraded its military arsenal and had the ability to disrupt communications – including GPS.

The UK needs to act, he said, if it is to deal with these threats, with beefed-up equipment, better interoperability and an effective cyberspace force all required.

He said the possibility of retaining infrastructure in Germany was being considered, particularly Rheindahlen's vehicle storage areas as well as training and ammunition stores in Sennelager, for the creation of a forward manning base.

The prospect of large-scale mobilisation is being addressed through a military project called Henry Wilson and 77 Brigade is providing the ability to compete in the "war of narratives" at a tactical level.

## NEED BROWNIE POINTS?

■ ROMANTICS can give their loved one a stylish gift this Valentine's Day while helping The Royal British Legion.

The charity's Poppy Heart jewellery collection includes drop earrings, a pendant necklace and charm bracelet featuring the iconic red flowers set in a silver heart design.

The items are available to buy at [www.poppyshop.org](http://www.poppyshop.org) with all proceeds from sales going directly to the Service charity.



## SPECIALISED SELECTION

■ TROOPS are invited to apply to join one of the new specialised infantry battalions.

The eligibility criteria is aimed mainly at personnel in Infantry units, so soldiers should consult their career management officer before inquiring.

An initial sift will be followed by an intense two-week assessment cadre.

The first one starts on March 5, with two others planned for October 2018 and May 2019.

Read [2018DIN07-16](#) for details.

## STOLL SCORES NEW DIGS

■ THOUSANDS of ex-Servicemen and women are to benefit from additional support services as part of a landmark proposal announced by Stoll.

The charity, which serves as the leading provider of supported housing for veterans in the UK, is financing the move by selling part of its existing Fulham site to Chelsea Football Club.

If the deal goes ahead it will help fund a variety of services including bespoke transition advice



for those leaving the Armed Forces and outreach programmes in the community.

It will also see state-of-the-art social housing and communal facilities built for residents at the Fulham Road base (see artist's impression above).

## FACTFILE FORCES MAIL

We might be living in a digital world, but the British Forces Post Office remains as busy as ever:

More than  
**2m**

kilos of mail  
were dispatched  
last year.

Social media means that users are sending fewer letters...



...but the growth of online shopping means more parcels than ever before are being handled



A fully assembled bike



was the strangest prohibited item someone tried to send via BFPO during 2017.



Picture: Cpl Sally Paimondo, RAF

## 'No decision' on defence cuts

**H**EADLINES revealing parts of the British Army that could be cut back as part of another security review are "pure speculation", the Ministry of Defence has said.

Last month various newspapers claimed that efforts to try and balance the UK defence budget included plans to reduce the Armed Forces by another 14,000 troops and combine units of The Parachute Regiment and the Royal Marines.

But a statement from the department said: "A whole range of options have been discussed as part of the cross-government review on how to best to protect our country.

"No decisions have been taken and any talk of an outcome is speculation."

An update to 2015's Strategic Defence and Security Review is due to be published later this year.

It will look at all aspects of the UK's security capability.

Speaking about the project in Parliament last November, Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said: "When you see our Armed Forces and everything they do, and the commitment with which they give themselves to it, you cannot be anything other than awed by it.

"I will do everything I can to deliver for them."

## Home James

EXAMPLES of how next-generation kit can be paired with a logistic support package have been shown at a summit in Warminster.

The event, at the Army's Land Warfare Centre, provided an insight into how Lockheed Martin's Joint Asset Management and Engineering Solutions (James) can help to keep equipment in shape.

James allows users from across all Services to check information such as status and availability of kit anywhere in the world – including vehicle mileage and ammunition fired.

### IN NUMBERS:

**1.5 million**  
Bits of kit on the system

**15 million**  
Transactions per month

**28,000**  
Users of James



# A Major wanted to understand the consequences of leaving after 16 or 20 years' reckonable service



*“Many, many thanks for such a comprehensive and rapid response; the detail is exactly what I needed and is far more positive than I had anticipated. I am extremely grateful for your guidance and recognise you are a very busy team, so thank you. We are most fortunate to have access to the services the Society provides.”*

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# FEARLESS FUNDRAISING



## On the pull

A BIG-hearted NCO has been on the pull for good causes in a wacky take on the Three Peaks Challenge. Cpl Ben Turner (Int Corps) climbed the combined 11,182ft height of the tallest mountains in Britain – Snowdon, Scarfell Pike and Ben Nevis – on a 20ft rope. He completed the mission at an indoor ice climbing centre, in Scotland, in 11hr 43min.



## Night owls needed

COMBAT Stress is looking for people to join its team for this year's Nightrider moonlit cycle ride in London. The event will be held on June 9 and features routes of 50 and 100 kilometres. For further information on taking part visit [www.combatstress.org.uk/nightrider](http://www.combatstress.org.uk/nightrider)

**Tell us about your daring charity feats** [news@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:news@soldiermagazine.co.uk)

## SOMETHING SPECIAL



THE work of elite soldiers is being recognised in the National Army Museum's first major exhibition since it was refurbished last year. *Special Forces – Out of the Shadows* looks at the skills required of troops in these units as well as some historic operations. A number of exhibits and interactive activities also feature. Visit [www.nam.ac.uk](http://www.nam.ac.uk) for more details.

# What would they have done?

“It changed the way I read history”

ARMY education officers found themselves facing the same dilemmas as historic military figures when they embarked on a new kind of workshop.

Historian Alexander Falbo took the troops from the Adjutant General's Corps (Educational and Training Services) through the so-called case method project on a recent visit to Strensall Barracks in York.

The technique, which has already proven successful with American soldiers, takes a historical situation and puts students in the lead characters' roles at critical decision points.

The idea is that it teaches critical thinking skills as part of their continuous professional development.

Falbo, a resident expert at the United States Marines Corps



University, said it allowed personnel to consider their actions in unfamiliar encounters.

He told *Soldier*: "It encourages them to be decisive and to test each other's ideas.

"One of the measures of success is when they are still arguing with each other afterwards outside the lecture theatre."

The expert added that the scenarios had to be completely accurate, with sound research carried out. The project can be changed to suit different settings, from an informal conversation to large-scale events, and at the end participants are told what action the real figure took.

"As much as anything else, this has changed the way I read history," Falbo continued. "I cannot pick up a book now without asking questions about how decisions were made."

Picture: Imperial War Museum

## Flying high

■ ADVENTUROUS training in Cyprus has been given a lift by the arrival of a new aircraft.

A Cessna 208 has been purchased by the Cyprus Combined Services Parachute Club. It will provide more flights per day and allow personnel to jump from greater altitudes



than the outgoing aircraft – a 40-year-old Britten-Norman Islander, which could transport a maximum of nine people to a maximum ceiling of 11,000ft.

The Cessna can hold up to 15 and climbs to 13,000ft.

The \$1.3 million airframe was funded by various charities and trusts, and will be used by the club at weekends and Adventurous Training Group (Army) on weekdays.



Picture: Freepik

# Army teens turn backs on uni

QUESTIONS are being raised over why young people brought up in military households are less likely to go to university than their civilian counterparts.

Research by the University of Winchester has found that 40 per cent fewer Forces students whose grades make them eligible take this route.

This is despite figures suggesting most parents want their children to go on studying.

The Office for Fair Access now recognises those from Service families as an under-represented group.

Meanwhile, the Army Families Federation (AFF) has conducted its own survey into why so many decide against university, the results of which are due shortly.

AFF spokeswoman Lucy Scott said concerns of running up debts could be among the reasons why students

opt out.

She told *Soldier*: "They may not see it as value for money or might just want to go out to work."

"But one figure from our survey shows 78 per cent of parents would like their children to go to university, so we need to find out what's going on."

Ed Harris, senior education officer at the Upavon-based Directorate of Children and Young People, agreed the reasons were unclear.

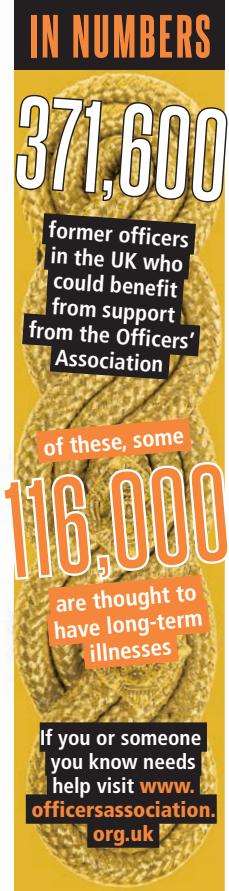
He added that universities currently spend just over a quarter of their budgets supporting under-represented groups so candidates should flag up their military backgrounds in their personal statements.

"Students can speak about the high level skills they have had to develop to thrive in any context or location while adapting to a broad range of situations," he said.



## TRANSGENDER ICON

THE National Portrait Gallery in London has acquired this striking image of the first transgender soldier to embark on front-line service. Ammunition technician WO2 Deborah Penny (RLC) was captured by photographer Rory Lewis as part of his *Soldiery* project. The senior NCO was one of nearly 280 personnel from the Service who appeared in front of his lens. A selection of the pictures are being shown in an exhibition at London's National Army Museum, which is running until February 7.



## SPINE LINE COMPETITION



**WIN**  
tickets to the National Homebuilding and Renovating Show

RECKON you know your stuff when it comes to the world of physical fitness? Then last month's spine line clues would have been a walkover.

(Kai) Greene, (Phil) Heath, (James "Flex") Lewis and (Ryan) Terry are all the names of high-profile bodybuilders.

This month we have teamed up with the National Homebuilding and Renovating Show ([www.homebuildingshow.co.uk/national](http://www.homebuildingshow.co.uk/national)) to offer five readers a pair of tickets to the event at the NEC Birmingham on March 22-25.

With around 500 exhibitors, free seminars and masterclasses, this roadshow is a must for anyone looking to improve their home this year.

Experts are on-hand to offer advice about everything from security systems to ways of funding new projects.

To be in with a chance of scooping a pair of day passes, tell us what links the words on the side of this issue. Send your answers to the usual address or [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk) by February 28.



Top pictures: Colin Poole and Richard Godby

## SCOUSE SUPPORT

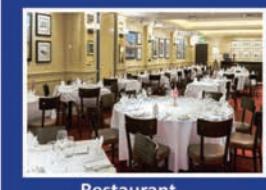
A WEBSITE has been launched for personnel leaving the Forces in the Liverpool area.

The city council set up the initiative to help members of the military community find information on accommodation and jobs, as well as on other local services.

For more information log on to [www.serviceleaversliverpool.co.uk](http://www.serviceleaversliverpool.co.uk)



Accommodation



Restaurant

## The Premier Armed Forces Club

Think London think Union Jack Club

Your Military ID is all you need  
Non - Commissioned Veterans  
of HM Armed Forces are  
invited to apply for  
membership at  
[www.ujclub.co.uk](http://www.ujclub.co.uk)  
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Free Gym when staying



Events in London



Super Fast Free Wi-Fi



Special Offers



Espresso Bar



Like minded people



Bars



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## FLY A SPITFIRE! AT BIGGIN HILL



Flying experiences  
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Spitfire hangar  
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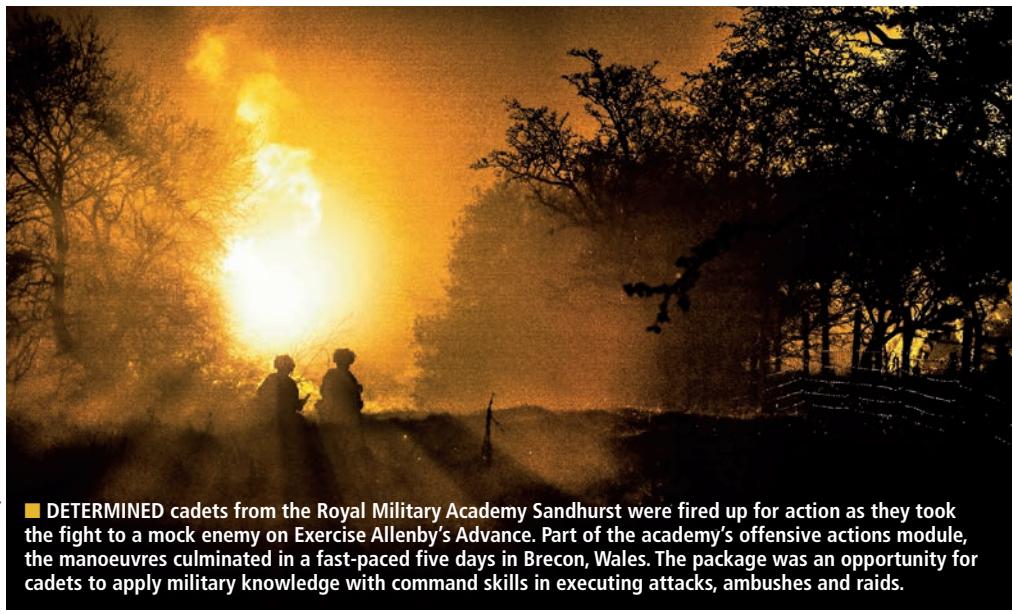
Visit: [www.flyaspitfire.com](http://www.flyaspitfire.com)

Telephone: 01959 576 767

Photo: ©2015 John M. Dibbs



A personal view from  
Sara Baade, Chief  
Executive of the Army  
Families Federation...



Picture: Bob Murray Kerr, RA

■ DETERMINED cadets from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst were fired up for action as they took the fight to a mock enemy on Exercise Allenby's Advance. Part of the academy's offensive actions module, the manoeuvres culminated in a fast-paced five days in Brecon, Wales. The package was an opportunity for cadets to apply military knowledge with command skills in executing attacks, ambushes and raids.



'Come back...'

## Ex-soldiers offered £10,000 to fill specialist trades

FORMER Regulars who fancy trading civvy street for a life back in uniform are being offered an attractive reason to do so – with a cash windfall of thousands of pounds.

Troops from a range of trades can claim a £10,000 rejoin bounty if they return as part of an Army initiative to plug skills gaps in specialist areas.

But personnel must give a minimum of two years' Regular service, while officers need to commit to three.

The scheme launches on April 1 and individuals who left before January 3 – including musicians, drivers and armourers – are on the hit list.

Military chiefs claim rejoinders are of increasing importance and stress the bounty is being offered to those from trades "that cannot be addressed by other manning levers".

Maj Alistair Smith (RDG) from the Directorate of Army Manning said

more flexibility was needed in the way troops are retained and the bounty could offer significant savings.

He added: "The rationale is that it is far cheaper to bring experienced soldiers back on-board than to recruit and train people from scratch.

"But I would stress this scheme is an addition to – rather than replacement for – recruiting.

"There are a number of specialist cohorts and trades that qualify for the payment. They are undermanned and, historically, those who leave tend not to come back."

Maj Smith also said aspirations of younger people were changing – with many not choosing a job for life – and the Army needed to be flexible to them leaving and returning in future.

The rejoin bounty is budgeted for the next two financial years with an assessment expected in 2020.

## POWER TO THE FAMILIES

WHEN we quizzed families about the Army offer recently, nearly two thirds said they thought it had declined since they entered the military fold.

Many felt that policy changes were driven by financial implication rather than potential benefit. And our research also revealed a general lack of awareness of the measures in place to support Service families, such as the schools admissions code or help with healthcare waiting lists.

AFF's focus for 2018 will therefore be ensuring that troops and their loved ones have more information on what is available to them.

We'll be exploring one issue per month, hearing what families have to say and giving them the chance to approach us with specific queries.

The project will cover things like employment, housing, work/life balance, money and allowances, and I strongly encourage everyone to engage.

With major housing changes on the horizon, it has never been more important for us to be able to find help. And part of my organisation's role is to discover whether that help is fit for purpose.

Look out for more updates and make sure you get your voice heard.

With budgets squeezed surely this is madness

Clothing kerfuffle

TALKBACK  
PAGE 49



[www.aff.org.uk](http://www.aff.org.uk)





# THE BIG PICTURE

River Thames, Central London

## FINAL FLIGHT

AFTER almost 40 years of service the Army's Lynx helicopter has taken to the skies for the final time. With Wildcat now acting as its replacement the Army Air Corps embarked on a farewell tour from RAF Odiham, flying five of the remaining assets to significant sites in its history before culminating in an impressive air "procession" along the River Thames.

Picture: Cpl Mark Larner, RLC

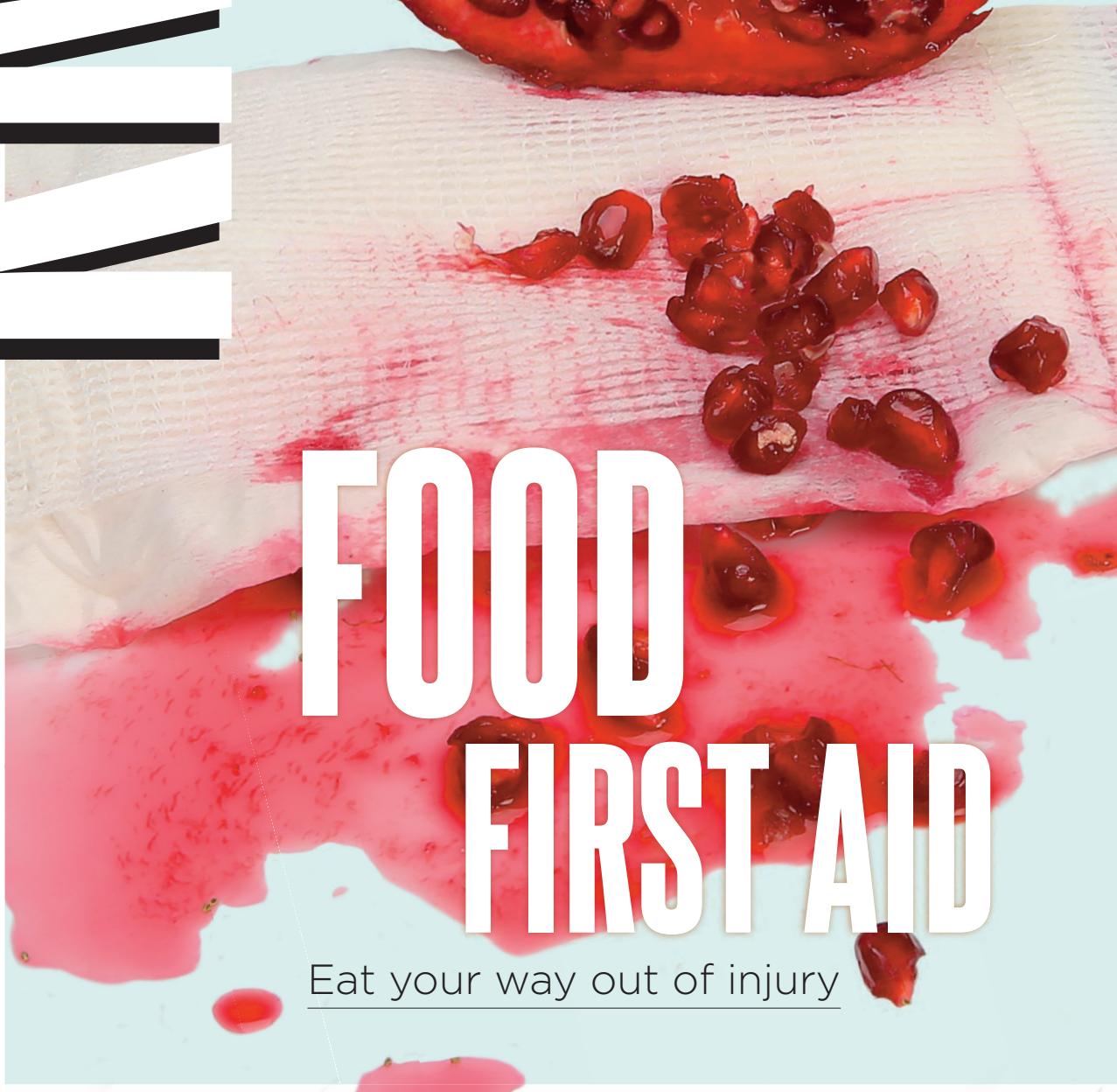
NEED TO  
KNOW

NUTRITION / HEALTH / CASH / EXPERIENCE

KNOW  
IT ALL

# FOOD FIRST AID

Eat your way out of injury



► IT sounds bizarre, but if you're not eating enough of the right grub you could be more likely to get injured on the battlefield.

It's all down to your muscles (or lack of them in some cases). Without enough energy they go into what is called a "catabolic state". Essentially, this means the muscle tissue itself starts to get broken down into fuel.

The result is a body more prone to injury, and less able to recover when it does get knocked about. Here are a few things you can do to avoid the problem. To find out more read the Defence Nutrition Advisory Service personal nutrition guide.

## Scoff your five a day

► Fruit and veg are an essential part of any healthy diet, helping to promote the body's healing.

## Endure oily fish

► It might not be everyone's top menu choice, but salmon, fresh tuna, mackerel, sardines, trout and herring are high in omega-3 fats, which have anti-inflammatory properties.

## Eat calcium

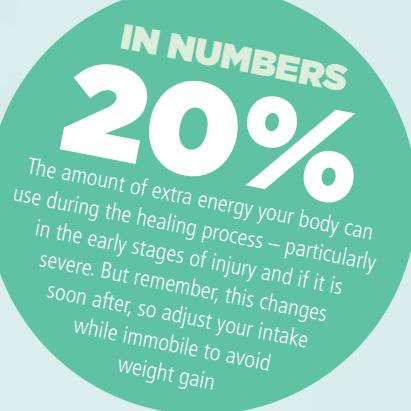
► Personnel with poor bone quality are more likely to suffer with stress fractures, and you need 1,000mg per day. Dairy products and green leafy veg are two good sources.

## Get enough carbs

► This fuels training and helps to optimise recovering between your sessions. Read the Defence Nutrition and Advisory Service factsheet SEN1 for more detailed guidance.

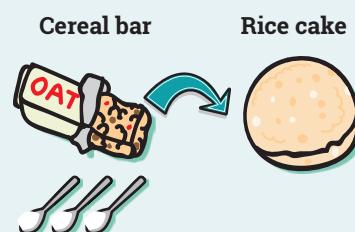
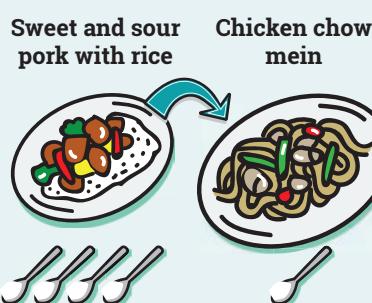
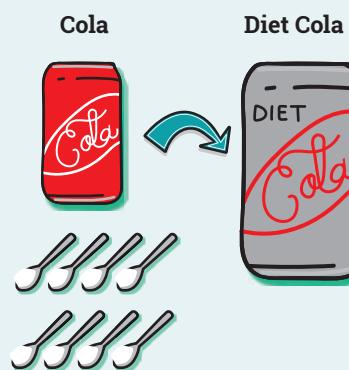
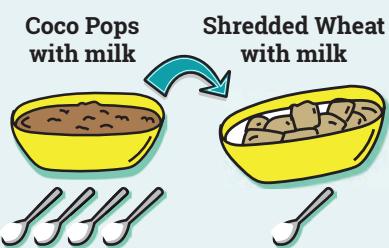
## Don't forget zinc

► This essential trace element is also involved in wound healing, and foods that are rich in it include meat, seafood, sunflower seeds and almonds.



## QUICK SWITCHES

► Worried about your intake of the sugary stuff? Almost all of us are eating too much. Try these simple swaps to reduce your risk of obesity, heart disease and cancer...



# Stress head

Is worry taking its toll on you?

► A bit of stress is normal – not least in the world of soldiering. And while a bit of it can help to push you through something difficult, too much can take its toll.

Symptoms aren't just mental, either. Feeling worried can give you headaches, stop you sleeping and make you more susceptible to problems like depression, heart disease and alcohol dependence.

Here are some of the tell-tale signs that it might be time to take action:

## Emotionally you may feel...

- Irritable or wound-up
- Overwhelmed
- Anxious or fearful

## Mentally you may...

- Have racing thoughts
- Worry constantly
- Find it hard to concentrate
- Struggle to make decisions

## Physically you may suffer with...

- Headaches
- Muscle tension or pain
- Dizziness
- Sleep problems
- Feeling tired all the time
- Eating too much or too little

## Things you may find yourself doing when you're feeling stressed

- Drinking or smoking more
- Snapping at people
- Avoiding certain things or individuals

## STRESS-BUSTERS

Give yourself a break, and try one of these



### Exercise

It won't make your problems disappear, but going for a run is great for clearing your head. Read *Soldier's* January magazine for hints and tips on how to get more active.



### Connect with people

Tell your mate, partner, family, padre, doc or welfare officer how you're feeling. They are there to help, and the Army can offer advice.



### Give back

Research shows helping others builds resilience. You could try community work or even smaller things like buying a mate a coffee or stopping to make small talk.



### Breathe

A few calming breathing techniques can make a big difference. Visit <https://apps.beta.nhs.uk> for some relaxation and mindfulness apps that you can carry around on your smartphone.

# Insurance intel



## Car costs getting you down? Read on for tips on cutting back

With under-25s paying as much as £1,400 a year for insurance, owning your own set of wheels is an expensive business. Here are a few things you can try to make sure it doesn't take any more of your pay packet than it has to:



**1**

Add a named driver



**2**  
Don't auto-renew



**3**  
The more you pimp your ride, the more you pay



**4**  
Beware paying monthly



**5**  
Keep the car in a garage or driveway



**6**  
Add a voluntary excess

Car insurance is all about risk and sometimes you get a better deal if you add someone else to the policy. Remember it must be someone who would reasonably drive the car.

Loyalty is expensive, so note down your renewal date in the diary and shop around before signing up to the same policy again. You might be surprised by the alternative deals.

Consider how badly you want those spoilers, and make sure you tell your insurer about any upgrades otherwise the policy could end up being made invalid.

This form of payment is like a high-interest loan. It is cheaper to pay upfront for the whole thing if you can afford to do so.

This can bring the cost down based on the fact the vehicle is probably safer here than on a road.

If you can afford to cough-up £100 or so in the event of a claim, adding an excess to your policy makes it cheaper.

For free and impartial money advice visit [www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk](http://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk)

### ARMY COMMUTE

Are you invalidating your insurance?

POLICE in West Yorkshire came under fire last year after they seized the car of a driver whose insurance didn't cover the commute to work.

Heavy-handed or not, it showed how important it is to have the correct cover.

And according to Forces insurance specialist Keith Frampton, this can be overlooked by serving soldiers.

Insurance companies usually offer a choice between "social, domestic and pleasure" – which means no cover to and from work – or "social, domestic and pleasure including commuting".

"Some soldiers living adjacent to their military base will have selected the first type of cover, thinking that a brisk walk or cycle trip will do the job," said Frampton.

"But horrendous weather may make the journey by car the better option, so commuting cover should still be selected.

"Often this is available at no extra cost, but you'd be wiser to select it from the outset or at renewal as admin charges can be added if you do it mid-term."

As well as commuting (which means to one usual place of business), Service personnel visiting more than one military base need to select the "class one business use" category. This type of cover is also required if you want to claim expenses on the JPA system.

# 'I am completely powerless'

For six months the career of WO1 Kev Hughes (AGC (MPS)) has been on hold to be at the bedside of his three-year-old daughter Esme, who is being kept alive by a mechanical heart at Great Ormond Street Hospital while she awaits a transplant. Here, the Serviceman talks to *Soldier* about the agony of holding out for that lifesaving phone call... and why troops should talk to their loved ones about organ donation today



“

PEOPLE always ask my partner Lisa and I how we cope. But there's no other option, we have to cope.

When Esme was a baby we found out she had a heart murmur, which turned out to be severe aortic stenosis.

Despite two procedures she developed dilated cardiomyopathy, which means the left side won't pump blood.

She began to get more poorly, and when she was connected up to the ECMO [a device that acts like an artificial lung outside the body] it took me a week to be able to speak.

I've served in Iraq, Afghanistan, Northern Ireland and Kosovo, but nothing equips you for seeing your daughter lying there like that.

I started suffering badly with anxiety, and I wish I'd spoken up about how I was feeling sooner because when you do it's a weight off your shoulders.

Luckily with Lisa and I, when one of us is down the other is stronger.

I've met other families at Great Ormond Street, and we have seen another little girl with a heart like Esme's pass away.

It is hard seeing all the poorly children as

you end up feeling other people's emotions as well.

Esme is amazing. Some of the treatments she has undergone have been firsts for the UK, and she surprises us at every turn.

At the moment she is learning to walk again. You see the agony on her face when she is doing physiotherapy, but she doesn't give up.

Everything I have done in my life, and in the military, has seen me take charge of my own destiny.

But with this I am completely powerless. I'm having to put my faith in the doctors, and at first that wasn't easy.

I remember shaking one surgeon's hand, and begging him to bring Esme back to us. You just want to get something into their heads to tell them how different and special your child is.

Unfortunately, we don't know what's around the corner for Esme.

But this has definitely made us appreciate life, so when she comes home we are going to live to the full.

Sometimes you have one of those days



## IN NUMBERS

There are currently **6,472** people awaiting a transplant in the UK and last year nearly **500** people died waiting

### Save a life – speak up

Families get the final say on whether their loved one's organs can be donated. If you would like to help someone like Esme after you die, tell your family. If you don't, you could leave them guessing what you would have wanted or it might come as a surprise that you have registered as a donor and they may say no.

To find out more visit [www.organdonation.nhs.uk](http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk)

where the kids want to go to the park but you can't be bothered or have other things to do.

But now we won't put off things like that.

This has taught me to appreciate what you have whilst you still do.

Great Ormond Street has given our daughter a chance to make it to transplant, and we are so grateful, but we don't sit there and expect everything to come to us.

You have to get up and fight. So we have entered a couple of marathons now, and raised quite a bit of money for Esme's different heart hospitals.

Getting into this world of organ donations has been eye-opening.

In Wales everyone is automatically on the organ donor list, and now England is looking to go the same way.

But families can overrule this, so it's important people talk about what they would want to happen.

I believe that if you're willing to receive an

organ, you have to be willing to give one.

But in order for Esme to get a heart, another family's has to give the ultimate gift.

Lisa finds that very hard, knowing that someone has to go through that.

I look at it differently – my mind is just on Esme at the moment. But once she's got a heart of course I will start thinking about the donor family.

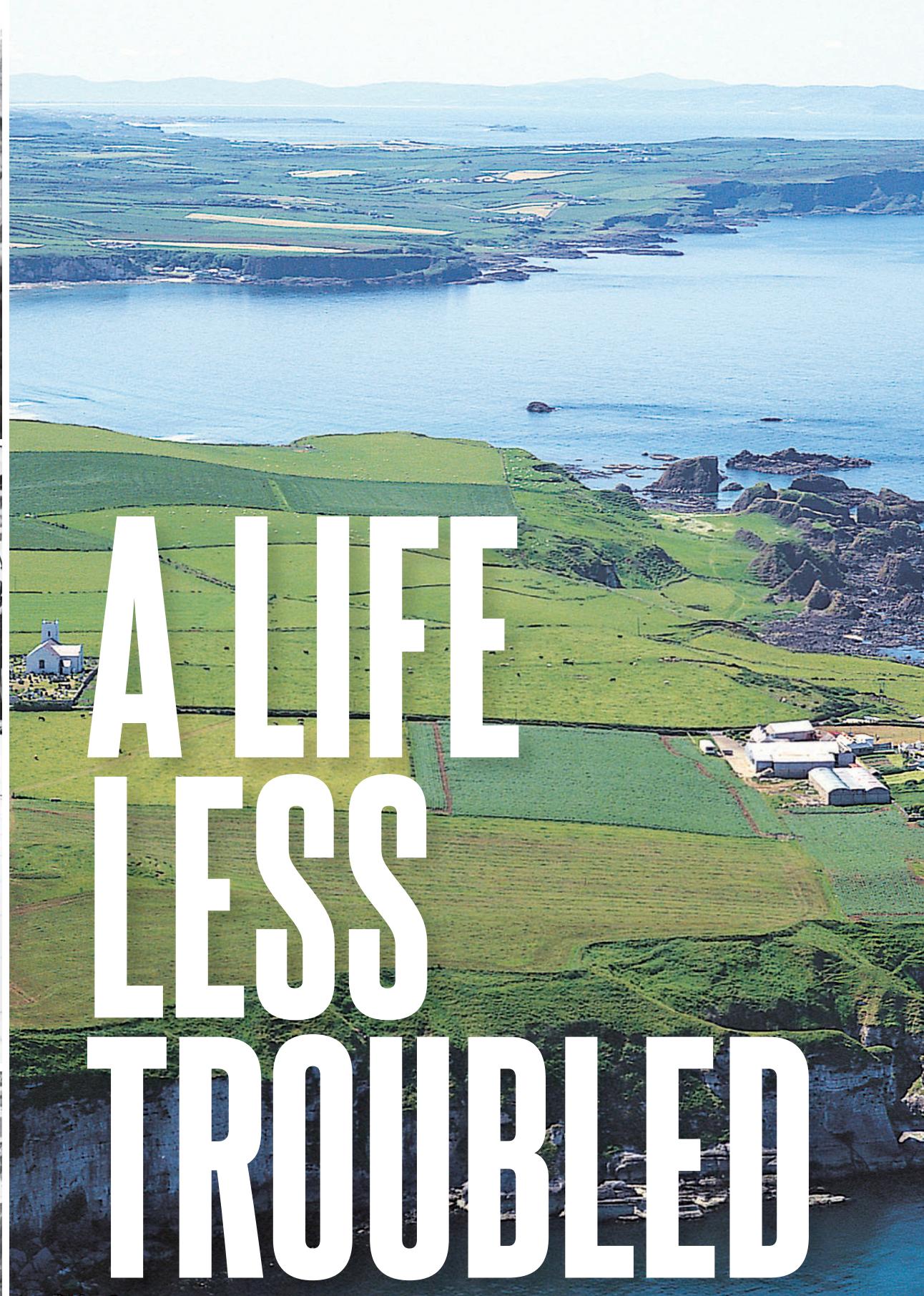
The help and support I've had from the Army through all this has been second-to-none; I couldn't have asked for any more.

The messages of support I've received from random people has been amazing.

But the pressure is constant: when Esme is having a good day so are we, when she's having a bad day so are we.

She is at the top of the organ donation list, but she has been for months now.

Every morning I wake up at 0400 thinking, 'is today the day?' ■



A place once blighted by violence is  
now a launch pad for worldwide ops



66  
I was amazed  
to see such a  
difference  
99

**Left:** Operation Banner, the British Army's longest continuous military campaign, ran from 1969 to 2007. **Main picture:** An aerial view of Ballintoy harbour and village, County Antrim. **Overleaf:** Members of 2 Rifles train on Ballykinler beach

**W**ITH the bright winter sunshine and dark blue sky evaporating as the 737 descends, the view outside the windows is replaced by a vague sketch of rolling fields and lakes – the gradual appearance of Northern Ireland through the clouds.

The aircraft shakes off the turbulence and banks around as it loses altitude carrying a mixture of families, tourists and those on business as they prepare for arrival. Belfast is a popular destination for them all; a cosmopolitan and flourishing city.

But generations of troops have also seen this view; for decades it was their first glimpse of the backdrop to an often difficult operational tour. And as wheels rumble across the runway and cabin doors are opened, departing passengers tread the path of soldiers past.

Belfast International Airport was once shared with RAF Aldergrove – where countless tours to the country began and ended.

But the military aircraft have long gone. Now the tailfins of civilian airlines and panels advertising holidays and duty-free shopping are testament to significant change.

Only the breath-sucking wind and pelting sleet remain a constant. So much is now different, but the erratic weather refuses to compromise.

Northern Ireland was the focus of Operation Banner – a counter-terrorism campaign that lasted some 40 years. It drew to a close just over a decade ago.

Since then the political initiatives underpinning the peace process have continued to gather pace and now the violence that defined The Troubles era has long gone.

There is no evidence of military infrastructure that once existed. Some relics of times past can be seen on the tourist trails around the old flashpoint areas, but you have to look carefully. Northern Ireland is no longer the focus of operations – it is the home of 38 (Irish) Brigade.

Many of those now serving here are too young to remember a time any different. But veterans of Op Banner are struck by the transformation.

Richard Dorney, a former soldier with 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards, was astonished when he visited the region for the first time since the last of his six deployments more than 20 years ago.

"It was extraordinary to see normal





police officers on the streets, and a Northern Ireland without patrolling soldiers, sangers and the anti-rocket mesh," the retired lieutenant colonel admitted. "I was amazed to see such a massive change.

"Many of my generation went on to serve challenging tours in Afghanistan and Iraq. But my time as a young soldier in Northern Ireland when I first went there in 1978 had a real impact on me – I was young at the time and it was the first time I had ever seen conflict."

The journey from a violent past to today's position of ongoing normalisation has been extraordinary. Author and counter-terrorism analyst Andy Oppenheimer – who has written widely on Irish history – said the achievement of bringing stability to the north should not be underestimated, particularly given the situation that had previously existed.

The Banner campaign claimed the lives of more than 650 troops and nearly 300 police officers. In the 1970s and 80s, a bombing campaign carried out by the Provisional IRA on the UK mainland targeted venues including the Conservative Party conference at Brighton's Grand Hotel and Downing Street as well as the Harrods department store in London.

"Every day, every week there was violence – if there had been a threat level in times past then it would have probably been at critical much of the time," Oppenheimer emphasised.

"Bombs were indiscriminate and killed and injured innocent people while places were perpetually being evacuated for fear of terrorist attack.

"There were new devices all the time and ways to counter them would have to be found."

While highlighting that the past – and its victims – must not be forgotten, Oppenheimer believed that the "great strides" made towards peace were now being cemented, and that future generations would continue to build upon them.

The Army is certainly playing its part in helping peace as it continues to settle in the region. Far from patrolling, the boots of soldiers now only pound the shops and tourist hotspots. There is a great deal to enjoy in one of the most beautiful places in the British Isles. A troubled era has long passed into history.

The troops here are part of a new story.

This is a region on a journey but the future is brighter and a return to the past is now unthinkable.

Personnel are continuing to build strong relationships with the civilian communities in which they now live and work – life has changed for the better in a place that has much to offer. ■

# HEADING HOME

Northern Ireland is a welcome sight to troops returning from ops

**A**S coaches full of returning soldiers continue to arrive through the gates of Thiepval Barracks in Lisburn there is satisfaction among commanders of a job well done.

Having completed a six-month tour of Iraq – where they have been providing force protection and training the Middle Eastern country's security forces battling Daesh – troops from 2nd Battalion, The Rifles are confident that they have made a difference in theatre.

During their tenure on Op Shader in Anbar province they have witnessed successes against terrorists and contributed to the ongoing United States-led action in the region.

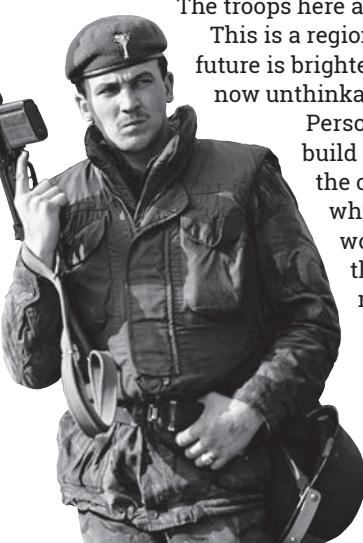
Of equal significance, however, is the home to which they are returning. In the not-too-distant past, Lisburn was a place where troops were deployed during the years of the Northern Ireland Troubles. Now it is a springboard from which they embark on overseas operations.

"We live here now, in the same way as in Aldershot, Catterick or Tidworth," said Brig Jonathan Swift, commander of 38 (Irish) Brigade – the formation of which 2 Rifles is a part.

"Our role is not to operate within Northern Ireland but outside as an adaptive force."

"The Rifles, for example, have been on a successful tour but this is only one example – we have also had units deploying to Africa to assist with counter poaching activities."

With a mix of Regular and Reserve units, Northern Ireland is a useful location to launch operations. While there is an underlying threat from terrorism – troops are fully briefed on this – the environment is a comfortable place to live while offering





**Above:** A thriving Belfast is a highly popular downtime destination  
Picture: Mike Weston

excellent preparation for deployment.

Ballykinler and Magilligan have well-equipped exercise areas while the surrounding environment – with lakes and mountains – provides opportunities for adventurous training.

"In terms of threat, there are areas in any place that you would avoid, and here is no different," Brig Swift – who took up his latest post late last year – continued. "We need to make sure our soldiers stay safe although this is not hard to do.

"We are very well looked after here – in terms of leisure activities we are near Belfast and the Antrim coast and Mountains of Mourne are just a short distance away."

For the soldiers returning from Iraq, Northern Ireland has become a posting of choice. Lt Col Neil Bellamy, (pictured below) CO of 2 Rifles, said Thiepval Barracks was a welcoming sight after six months away.

"It is fantastic to come back to Lisburn following our deploying on Op Shader," he added. "I have been in command of the battalion for three years and we have never felt like visitors.

"I'm due to move on shortly and it has been a real privilege to be here with The Rifles."

The soldiers under Lt Col Bellamy's command were equally enthusiastic about living and working in Northern Ireland – and returning home after a busy period on operations.

"I have been posted here for four-and-a-half years now and there is a lot to see and do in your spare time," said Capt Robert Prince (Rifles). "Belfast is very close to us and is really no different to any capital city – there is quite a good nightlife there.

"From my perspective, I enjoy being in Northern Ireland – it is a good place to live."

LCpl Ben Latham was also happy to be posted to the region. "I have been here for four years now and it is not a massive drama," he added. "You hear some people complaining but I'll be coming back from leave early – I've never had any trouble."

Cpl John MacDaid said there were plenty of opportunities in Northern Ireland – but stressed that troops needed to pay attention to the security advice and act accordingly.

"The threat is still there and there are certain places that you should not go to," he highlighted. "But you are fully briefed on all this – that aside, there is plenty to do."

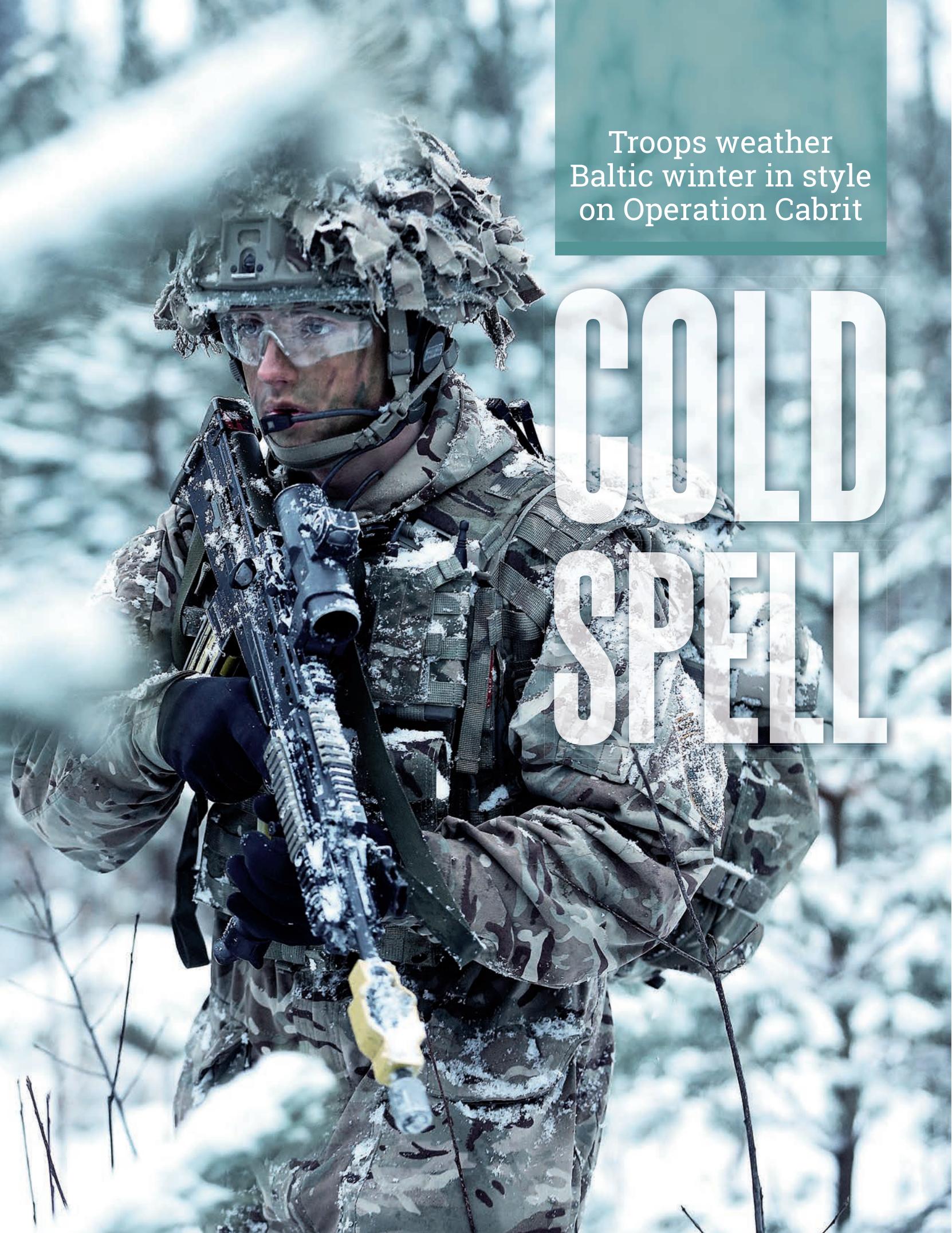
"Thiepval camp is great and you have Belfast a short distance away – the only real issue for me is that the weather in Northern Ireland can sometimes be a bit inclement."

It has been a decade since the end of Op Banner – the British Army's longest continuous operation. Some 20 years have passed since the Good Friday Agreement provided the political basis for a new and more peaceful era in the region.

Northern Ireland has passed many milestones. The path to peace has not been easy, and there have been difficulties and setbacks along the way. But the shift in the Army's presence here is a clear indication of the huge progress already made.

Once this place was a deployment – a tour where troops could expect trouble. Now it is a home and a place of opportunity as well as a welcome sight to personnel returning from operations. ■





Troops weather  
Baltic winter in style  
on Operation Cabrit

# COLD SPELL



**N**O news is good news, as the saying goes.

And in the case of a politically and militarily delicate deployment such as Operation Cabrit, perhaps that phrase rings truer than ever.

It is a little under a year since British personnel first arrived in Estonia as part of Nato's enhanced forward presence in the region and troops from 1st Battalion, The Royal Welsh have spent the past three months settling into the routine of their stint heading up the 800-strong multinational battlegroup.

Soldier dropped in on several locations around the country to get a flavour of what a tour to the Baltic state entails.

First stop: Cabrit HQ in Tallinn, where the man in charge, Col Giles Harris, explained that the mission defies any neat definitions.

"This is both a deterrence and reassurance operation, so you can quantify success by how little action is seen," he said.

"We spent the first six or seven months trying to compare it to previous deployments but it's not like Iraq or Afghanistan – or even Germany in the old days.

"There's a whole new edge to it; it is novel and unique.

"It has that mix of real-life threat and very challenging training, the like of which the troops won't have done before."

This assessment was quickly borne in nearby Tapa, the main base for the battlegroup.

At first glance the schedule is not unlike it would be back on home soil. There are core skills to maintain, MATTs to tick off and range packages to complete, interspersed with the odd community engagement task.

However, the environment is far from routine and the Baltic winter is not for the faint-hearted.

Laying any myths about generation snowflake well and truly to rest, members of D Company's mortar platoon completed an 11-day stretch in the field in temperatures as low as -15 degrees Celsius.

**It has that mix of real-life threat and challenging training**

Fus Jonathon Hamill described how a Royal Marine-led cold weather operators' course had equipped him and his team to withstand the conditions – and to put any inhibitions aside in the name of survival.

"We did some escape and evasion training where we had to kill a chicken and make some broth," said the 20-year-old.

"We also built a shelter to protect us from the wind and slept in it with just our bivvy bags.

"The fire had to be kept going all night. We put brushwood on the floor to insulate us from the ground and we spooned – a lot.

"It was pretty much spoon or die."

Nocturnal activities aside, the troops also rehearsed what to do in the event of a fall into icy water, camouflage techniques and how to cover the tracks left in the snow by their feet and vehicles.

Fus Hamill said his issued cold-weather clothing had helped to make the experience bearable.

"The kit works for me," he added.

"It doesn't keep you warm if you just stand there – you do have to actually move and generate some body heat.

"But if you do the drills correctly it will do the job." 



## IN NUMBERS

**300**  
number of vehicles  
belonging to the 1 Royal  
Welsh Battlegroup, including  
Challengers from the King's  
Royal Hussars

**800**  
personnel making  
up the multinational  
contingent



**Cool customers:** British and Estonian troops mount a joint attack on an empty apartment block in the village of Varstu



"It's been nippy but I've been loving life."

Elsewhere in the southern village of Varstu, not far from the Latvian border, members of A Company were conducting urban drills alongside their Estonian colleagues – watched by a crowd of curious locals and excited schoolchildren.

UK-based training doesn't usually involve an audience but here civilian life continued as normal while the two nations mounted a joint attack on a deserted block of flats in the middle of a housing estate.

According to Cpl Joseph Jones, the facility added an extra level of realism to that offered by basic stone structures at the likes of Copehill Down. He explained: "The really good thing with this particular building is that the remnants of what was in there to make it a home are still there – furniture, debris on the floor, curtains, window panes. We don't have that back in the UK.

"It adds complexity and risk. We have to be aware of the obstacles and actually move things out of the way, to check all the corners and make sure we're fully clear."

Reflecting on the unusual style of operational tour, the 32-year-old said it brought back memories of the Falkland Islands.

"I went down there a few years ago as part of the Roulement Infantry Company and this is similar to that because there is a credible threat but you go out on exercises and do real patrols to reassure the local people," he continued.

"And although we're not out here mending fences as perhaps you would in the Falklands, just being seen like this achieves that same aim of supporting and reassuring the population."

For the Estonian troops too the joint training was a good opportunity to hone their skills alongside counterparts equipped with platforms such as Warrior.



It was pretty  
much spoon or die

“

"It's important because we haven't exercised with armoured vehicles before so it's good experience for us to fight against a unit with that capability," commented Lt Semjon Malinovski.

"We usually imitate it with trucks but it's not the same as having it for real."

"On the soldiers' level it's positive because they will take the experience home and share it with their family."

"Our defence is based on good relationships with allies."

In fact, British military relations with Estonia date back to 1918, when the Royal Navy helped the fledgling state secure its independence.

One hundred years on, alliances are as important as ever and later this month

UK personnel – and a newly arrived contingent of Danish troops – will celebrate the country's centenary alongside their hosts.

Op Cabrit may be an unconventional mission, but with the festivities taking place against a backdrop of uncertainty, those deployed on Nato's north-easternmost flank can be sure their presence is welcome. ■

# COMBAT KINGS!

Guards adopt close-quarter drills to boost aggression levels





66

IT'S MORE  
OF A MENTAL  
EXERCISE  
99

Report: Richard Long Illustrations: Tudor Morgan and Maddie Marchment

WHOOSH!

**C**ONTROLLED aggression is a key component of an effective soldier. So when this important trait was perceived to be dwindling among certain personnel from the Grenadier Guards those in charge wasted no time in upping the intensity levels. For the past year the regiment has been engaged in close-quarter combat training – an activity that sees troops mastering martial arts moves under the watchful eye of an expert instructor – and the results have been impressive.





"This all came about after the commanding officer and I went to watch an exercise in Albania," WO1 Martin Howlin, regimental sergeant major of 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards, told *Soldier*.

"We were chatting about a dry attack that we felt lacked aggression and started discussing ways we could help the blokes improve on that, and then channel it in the right way."

"So we looked at martial arts. I knew a civilian instructor who has been doing this for years; he loves the military lifestyle and was the perfect man for the job."

A two-week trial followed and with the students posting positive feedback the sessions have become a regular fixture at the unit's home in Lille Barracks, Aldershot.

Operating under the guidance of instructor Neil Webster (pictured left), of the Epsom-based Kung Fu and Tai Chi Academy, the focus has been on developing technical skills rather than simply striking a punchbag.

They have progressed from learning basic punches and holds to thwarting a potential knife attack while dressed in full combat kit (see overleaf).

The training has been delivered at a busy time for the Grenadier Guards.

In 2017 they formed part of a high readiness joint task force with personnel from Albania, Latvia and the Netherlands, which saw them tackle a series of challenging overseas exercises.

And this year they will have companies deploy to South Sudan, Afghanistan and Iraq.

"We are not doing this to enhance our capability; it is more of a mental exercise," WO1 Howlin explained. "It is learning about how to build aggression and turn it on when needed."

"This training has helped to create a particularly effective battalion. It has also given the guys something different to do that is fun and builds team spirit and confidence."

"Having an activity to focus on and enjoy adds to the variety on offer in the Army, and can only help with retention."

After being offered the opportunity to work with the soldiers Webster had to tailor his training to the students he was working with, as his usual civilian approach would not be appropriate in this setting.

"I really had to give it some thought and it has been a learning curve," he said.

"The end result is that these guys may actually have to kill someone and that is obviously very different to working with members of the public."

"The focus has been on developing power, how to strike properly, hit hard and look for effective targets."

"One of the key things is not to remain static so we have concentrated on footwork and keeping balanced."

Instead of learning set techniques we have created a method that covers all eventualities.

"I've been getting some really nice feedback. It is fun, good for team cohesion and a very useful activity."

"Who knows, one day they may have to use this for real." ■



# Training talk

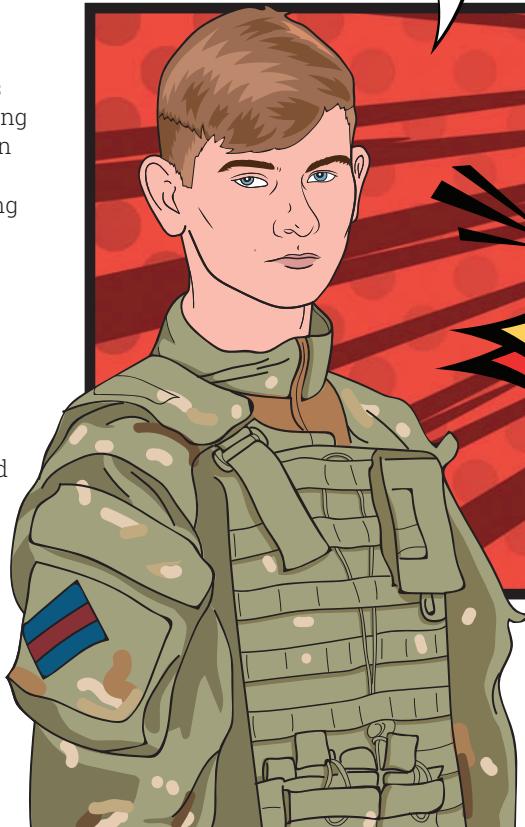
Troops from the Grenadier Guards share their thoughts on the close-quarter approach...



It's good to be tackling a new skill. We started by learning how to throw a punch and from there it has evolved into manipulating the body and how to repel a knife attack.

**It has been great for team cohesion.**

Gdsm Richard Halliburton



## **Mentally and physically, it is something different.**

Many of these guys come from different sporting backgrounds – boxing, karate or other martial arts – and this can only help in a combat role.

LSgt Kane Peters

## **These guys are at the peak of their training**

when it comes to weapon systems, tactics and fieldcraft, but hand-to-hand combat is something we don't do that much. This is a way for them to focus their aggression and build discipline; they love it.

Maj Rupert King-Evans

## **At the start I was sceptical but we are enjoying it and want to carry on.**

It's better than being stuck in a classroom!

Gdsm Tom Dell

**THUD!**





# WARRIOR EVOLUTION

Next generation of Army workhorse is  
readied for trials

**W**HEN the first incarnation of the Warrior armoured vehicle rolled off the production line in the late 1980s it soon proved its mettle during the Gulf War.

Since then it has gone on to earn the respect of generations of troops on worldwide ops – from the peacekeeping roles in Bosnia to high-intensity action in Afghanistan.

But times have changed since this platform first saw action some three decades ago.

And an example of how its next generation might look, unveiled by defence contractor Lockheed Martin, is now being readied for reliability trials as part of the MoD's Warrior capability sustainment project.

The blueprint for the new asset boasts a host of refinements – including a potent 40mm cannon, enhanced comms and uprated protection.

Defence chiefs envisage that these will equip the vehicle for the next phase of its working life.

Capt Tony Dale (pictured below right, Lancs), who has been assisting with the initiative as part of the Armoured Trials and Development Unit, said the changes reflected the future environments in which it could operate – as well as comfort and safety upgrades.

He added: "The original Warrior dates back some 30 years and we have learned a great deal about the platform since then – particularly through operations.

"On paper, the asset represents a huge increase in performance overall – but at this stage we are still talking about a demonstration vehicle and trials will begin this year." ■

66

We are still talking  
about a demo  
vehicle and trials  
will begin this year

99



Report: Cliff Caswell Pictures: Graeme Main

## EVALUATION STATION

Soldiers are assisting Lockheed Martin with the contractor's **initial trials** of the vehicle at Bovington in Dorset – **eight of them** have now been delivered. All variants are represented – the **520 version**, which carries dismounted infantry, **521 command vehicle, 521 observation post vehicle, and 522 and 533**, used by REME to back up ops.

8

demo  
vehicles  
delivered

## IN NUMBERS:



1,500

effective range of new weapon, in metres

30

years Warrior has  
been in service





## IMPROVED ENVIRONMENT

The original Warrior had to be retrofitted with an environmental control system as the extreme temperatures of Iraq and Afghanistan began to bite. But the new demonstration vehicle features a system fitted as standard, making life more comfortable for all on-board – and keeping them fit to fight in the toughest weather conditions.



## KNOWLEDGE IS POWER

The original Warrior features limited communications between the crew and the infantry dismounts. But the new incarnation features a visual display unit in the back, giving troops real-time updates on the situation as they advance on a target.

## DOWN THE HATCH

The new turret is at the heart of the upgraded vehicle – and is a potential game changer. Crews are better protected by a beefed-up armour package and improved seating. With more comfortable conditions for troops at the sharp end of operating the vehicle, the turret is also stabilised – enabling its cannon to be fired on the move.

## FULLY LOADED

A key feature of the Warrior's new incarnation is the 40mm CT40 cannon that replaces the existing 30mm Rarden. Gunners will find it offers higher rates of fire, greater range, enhanced accuracy and more penetrating power than the existing kit. It can also be elevated to a greater degree than its predecessor – a potential lifesaver in urban environments.

Ammunition choices are also expanded and potentially include an airburst round for the first time – enemy troops behind cover will be vulnerable to the Warrior's reach. High explosive and armour piercing rounds are also in the arsenal.



## TRACKED CHANGES

**The Warrior capability sustainment project introduces a raft of refinements to the platform. Soldier was given a sneak peek...**

## TOP GEAR

Although the new platform's top speed is broadly similar to its original counterpart's, an improved transmission system makes for a more efficient overall performance.

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# A grape move

## Battlefield find leads to fruitful business for NCO

Interview: Cliff Caswell Pictures: Peter Davies and WO2 Fred Donnison, Rifles

**W**HEN WO2 Fred Donnison (Rifles) headed to Greece on a battlefield tour he never imagined that it would mark the start of life after his long Army service.

The senior soldier and keen military history enthusiast had been visiting Thermopylae to see the place where the famous 300 Spartans clashed with the Persians and where the British fought the Germans during the Second World War.

But having arrived at the region, WO2 Donnison fell in love with the local food and wine and he was soon raising a glass to the launch of a new business.

In his firm, Guarding Thermopylae, he created a partnership with local vineyards and a farm to bring the produce to outlets in the UK.

And the Serviceman is looking to develop the venture when he retires from his final role as regimental operations support warrant officer with 3 Military Intelligence Battalion in the coming months.

"I very much used to be a beer drinker, but when I was introduced to the wine out in Greece I was converted," the senior NCO explained during an event promoting the venture at the Honourable Artillery Company HQ in central London.

"The local produce was very special, and I was somebody that already liked Greek food.

"The area is also beautiful.

"I first arrived at night and all I could see was lights – it could have been anywhere.

"But when the sun came up the green countryside, mountains and Aegean Sea were lit up; it was an extraordinarily beautiful place."

Setting up the business, however, was to prove a challenge and WO2 Donnison drew heavily on skills forged in decades of military service.

Having started his career in 3rd Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets in 1979 he went on to serve more than 20 years with the unit in Cyprus, the Balkans and Northern Ireland before signing up once again on full-time Reserve service.

"You pick up a lot of knowledge in the Army," he continued.

"The MoD operates a global network and it taught me the logistics of how to move goods from A to B in difficult circumstances and harsh climates, keeping them in perfect condition.

"As much as anything, though, the military teaches you to be confident in basic skills such as speaking to people – and to have the balls to go out and take a chance on something.

"I have put a lot of time and money into this project and it is a risk."

Importing in limited volumes, WO2 Donnison is firmly focused on the likes of military messes and high-end hotels as the target market for the produce.

"This wine is never going to be in competition with the likes of Tesco, which is a different market entirely," he added.

"It is produced organically, using traditional methods and with all of the grapes cut by hand.

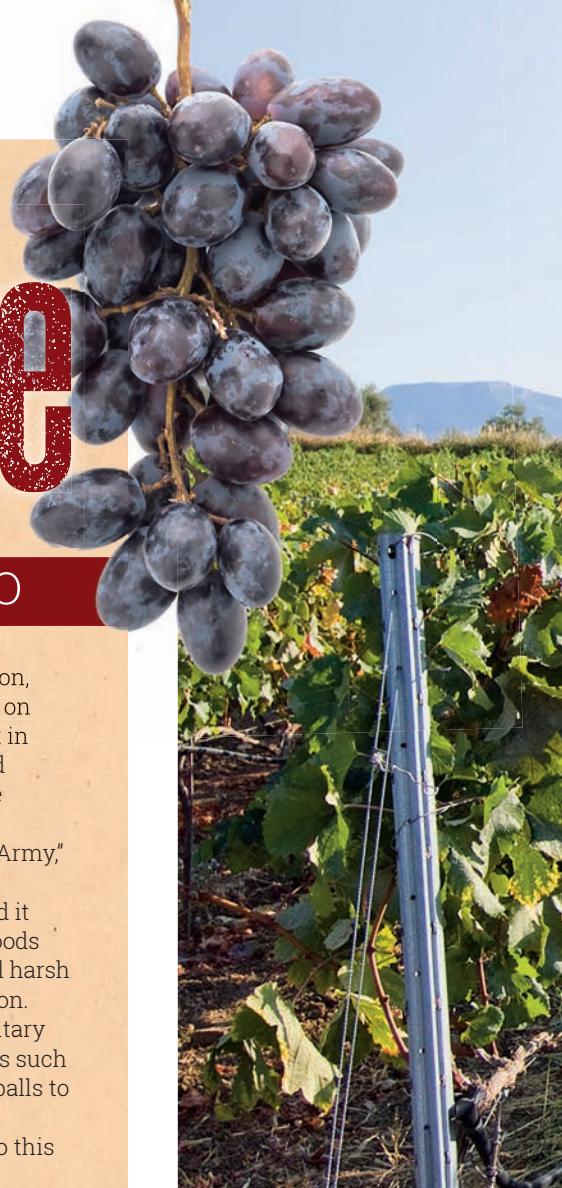
"It will be available in low volumes.

"But I think that the British are very open minded when it comes to wine – the public will try offerings from all over the world and seem willing to taste something different."

WO2 Donnison said he was looking forward to retirement and his new civvy street venture – as well as seeing the fruits of his work develop in future.

"I never wanted to follow a traditional pathway like private security work when I left the Army," he said with a smile.

"With this business the only bosses I have are clients, and importantly I get to choose them." ■



**Battlefield bottle:**  
Thermopylae's  
landscape has a  
rich military history





“  
When I was introduced to the  
wine in Greece I was converted  
”



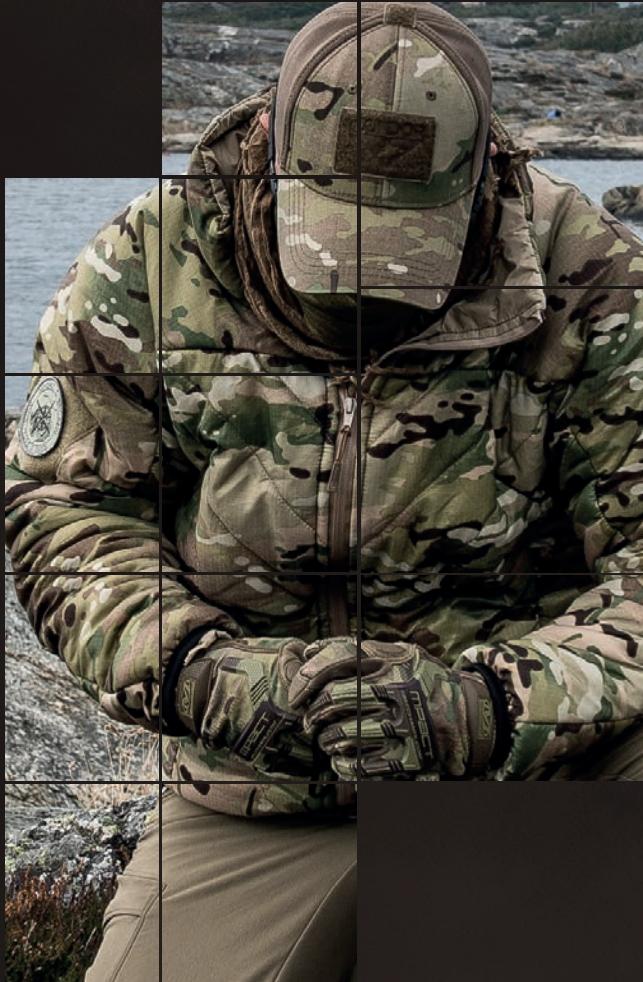
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# **Believe it or not Maj Gen Bill O'Leary – the new Deputy Commander Field Army and joint head of the Reserve – has a lot in common with soldiers. An engineer by profession, he joined the territorials as a craftsman and has now held every rank except WO1. Here, he spills the beans on Reserve life...**

## **Why did CGS pick you for this job?**

I'd like to think he sees me as a people person. I like nothing better than getting out and talking to soldiers. I think I can relate to them.

## **We receive lots of letters from Reservists, usually about lack of parity with Regulars. What do you say?**

I read *Soldier* regularly and I've seen many of those. Some have valid points but I can't promise we'll solve all their problems. What it does highlight is the importance of participating in the Reserve continuous attitude survey (page 11) so their voices can inform policy.

## **How do you feel about this sort of negative feedback from Reservists?**

Saddened if their concerns stem from our communications not working properly, and I acknowledge that some do. We have been levelling the playing field as best we can and Reserve conditions of service have improved. There will, unfortunately, always be limitations to what we can achieve because of budgets, but we've done great things in recent years. For example, we now receive a pro rata pension for our service and a day's paid leave for every ten days we serve. There are also more opportunities for sport and adventurous training.

## **So how will you improve comms?**

Obviously the chain of command remains essential but I'm also aiming to communicate regularly via Defence Connect. CGS's briefing team is another essential route.

## **Any other priorities?**

I want to champion the wider use of Reserves. We don't have to use full mobilisation, we can use Reserve service days for things like flood work or even terrorist incidents. One of my goals is to create more flexibility in how we are used.

## **But isn't that expensive?**

There is a belief that the Army pays double if Regulars could have filled the roles, but there is a price for deploying those personnel too so the net cost of a Reservist is actually far less than many think. A great deal of work is being done on determining the true amount. Supporting the Regulars is hugely positive for recruitment and retention; this is why we join.

## **Speaking of which, the current recruitment campaign is proving controversial...**

A brigadier said to me recently, "I keep hearing about the 'belonging' campaign but I haven't seen a single advert". I told him that's because he's not the target audience. As CGS said at the Army conference, this is part of a long-term campaign. We've done well in building Reserve numbers in recent years and the proof is in the pudding.

## **And how's that 'pudding' looking?**

We're on course to have 30,100 soldiers by April 2019 but it's not just about numbers. We need to turn manning into trained capability.

## **Many Reservists bring amazing skills to the table – do you know what you**

## **have at your disposal?**

One ambition I have is to create a new database. We don't capture the civilian expertise of our people very well and JPA can't be used, although that would be ideal. In my last post at the Army Personnel Centre we started cataloguing the experience of those Reservists between posts. It meant we could trawl the directory for certain proficiencies across cap badges. For example, we needed a CO for a Reserve field hospital so we used the list to find Col Damian Griffin, an infantryman and former 7 Rifles commander who is a professor of trauma and orthopaedic surgery. We need that capability.

## **What one piece of advice would you give troops?**

Get all you can out of the Reserve experience as well as the training and education on offer. It's boosted my confidence hugely in my civilian role when I occasionally have to conduct presentations to the board directors of huge companies.



Interview: Steven Muncey Picture: Cpl Mark Larner, RIC

# **'It's not just about numbers'**



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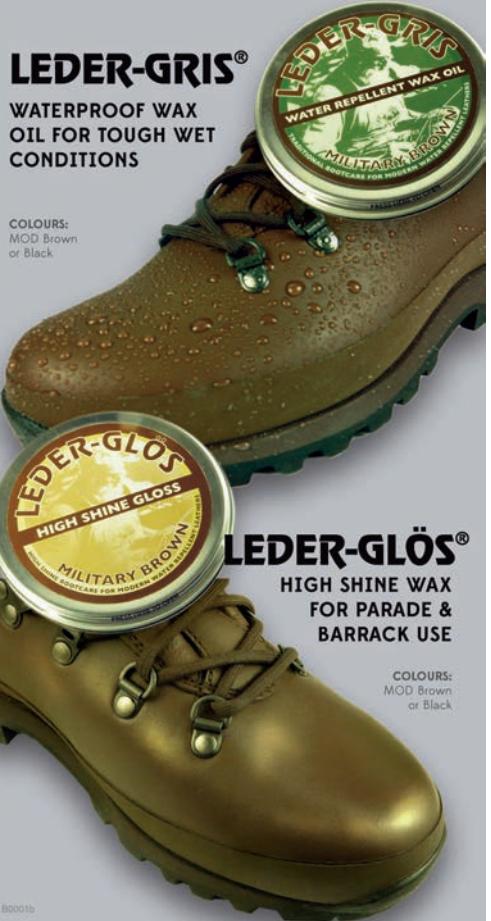
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## 'Don't sublet our housing'

AM worried about a Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) project to sublet Service family accommodation (SFA) on the private market.

While it might seem financially attractive to offset the costs of the disastrous contract the MoD signed up to when they sold off the SFA estate in 1996, there are risks for our personnel.

The move could create "bed-blocking", where soldiers are denied access to housing.

Short-term lets could be extended so what is deemed adequate surplus for the Army one month might not be the next.

There's a risk, too, that DIO will bulklet properties to local councils, leading to mixed estates with council tenants and potential social and crime problems.

Resources may also be diverted from military to civilian properties in order to make them more attractive for lucrative commercial lets to the general public.

I hope the Army watches this initiative like a hawk because I fear it will negatively impact Service personnel somehow regardless of DIO assurances.

— Name and address supplied

**Richard Sewter, Assistant Head, Accommodation Plans and Requirements, DIO, responds:** We are subletting surplus SFA simply because we have too many empty houses in certain locations.

In deciding whether to do this, first we consult the local station commander or commanding officer to take into account any potential unit increases in manning and whether there are opportunities to use the properties for Service personnel who might need them.

For example, someone may want

to live in a house rather than a block if they have weekend access to their children.

We would only sublet if the alternative would be just to leave the property standing empty.

In the vast majority of cases, DIO rents out to the general public on a rolling six-month basis.

After the initial period a tenancy can be terminated by giving two months' notice so this does give us a great deal of flexibility.

The MoD has been dealing with surplus housing in this way for about ten years and the legal processes for regaining possession and negating "bed-blockers" are clear and not particularly onerous.

Conversely, leaving houses empty increases the chance of squatters which is far more of a risk.

Also, we will not be giving priority to civilians for income generation or any other reason.

Military personnel have protected rights regarding access to family housing and these are enshrined in your terms and conditions and wider personnel policy.

DIO, as part of the MoD, cannot rent to the public at the expense of Servicemen and women so military families will not lose out as a consequence of subletting.

On the contrary, the income generated by private sector lets can be reinvested in the defence estate rather than our limited resources being drained by properties standing empty and deteriorating further.

I hope this gives you some reassurance for the future.

There are real risks for personnel

YOUR letters provide an insight into the issues at the top of soldiers' agendas... but please be brief. Emails must include your name and location (although we won't publish them if you ask us not to). We reserve the right to accept or reject letters, and to edit for length, clarity or style. Before you write to us with a problem, you should first have tried to get an answer via your own chain of command.

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## RANT OF THE MONTH

Get it off your chest and on social media



[www.facebook.com/soldiermagazine](http://www.facebook.com/soldiermagazine)

**The Lynx helicopter's farewell flight around the country (page 18) caused a whirl of comments on Facebook...**



**Sandra West**  
Farewell, you served us well.



**Michael Long**  
Many a trip in one of those in the Falklands. Tough old lady.



**Paul Thompson**  
Awesome chopper, flew in them many times, especially with 3 Regiment, Army Air Corps.



**Jo Melling**  
I thought it was strange when my 2 year old and I heard them coming. We stood outside and watched them change formation from our back garden. Soo sad to see them go but lovely to witness them one more time.



**Adrian Russell**  
Gazelle, Lynx, Chinook, Puma and Sea King, rode them all, hedge-hopping in a Puma or a Lynx in Northern Ireland was brill.



**Steven Breach**  
38 years on and I still prick up my ears at the sound of a Lynx, unmistakable. Used to cabby me about Fermanagh, the only way to travel.



## Bike scheme needs to get rolling

**T**HE Department for Transport (DfT) runs a buy-back scheme that allows employees to purchase a bicycle for their daily commute.

Operated through a salary sacrifice plan, individuals effectively rent a bike from their employer at first, with the opportunity to take full ownership after a specific payment period.

Depending on where the kit is rented from, the scheme provides savings of up to 40 per cent compared with retail prices.

As such, it is an extremely attractive offer that is supported across the private and public sectors. Indeed, other government departments have signed up to the scheme to pass the benefits on to their employees.

Noting that our people are our principal asset, should the MoD not be doing the same, especially as increased financial controls have been delegated to the top level budget holders?

I've been told ministers considered joining but decided against it. – **Name and address supplied**

**Col John Oldroyd, Remuneration Policy, Personnel Directorate, responds:** You are correct to say the cycle to work scheme has previously been considered by the MoD but was rejected because alternative and more advantageous systems are in place the Armed Forces

A DfT-style offering would be expensive, requiring a significant

capital outlay to buy the bikes initially and then maintain and manage them during the period they are hired out for.

If the individual decides not to purchase the bike outright, provision must then be made for its purchase or disposal.

The MoD, instead, encourages Servicemen and women to cycle to work through the home to duty allowance (HTD).

An internal review of 2016 claimants found that just over 200 Army personnel benefited from claiming HTD; currently the rate is set at £0.15 per mile, with the individual contributing the first three miles, which would see someone with a five-mile commute from their accommodation receiving £131.40 tax-free per year.

The DfT cycle to work scheme is a non-taxable benefit, like HTD, so you would not be entitled to claim both at the same time.

Neither would a soldier be allowed to switch back to HTD – in a case, for instance, where he or she became injured and had to start driving to work – until the hire period was complete.

As personnel would also be spending part of their income to hire the bicycle before tax is paid, they would effectively be paid less, which impacts on pensions.

**“**  
The MoD rejected the idea  
**”**



**Learning the ropes:**  
Phase one recruits at Catterick get to grips with the basics

## Rejoiner rues pitching up again

JOINED the Army in September 2004 and left in August 2009 but re-enlisted in March this year.

I'm currently on a phase two training course at Lyneham and feel aggrieved at the recruiting process.

When I was going through it initially I was told I had to complete phase one as I'd been out of the Service for so long.

I was also informed that I had to start on basic recruit pay and that I'd lost all of my 500 longer separation allowance (LSA) days accrued from my previous time in the Army.

To top it all off, I've just found out they have revised the rules so that soldiers rejoining up to ten years after leaving now only have to complete a medical.

— Name and address supplied

**Maj Ali Smith, S02 Soldier Policy, Department of Manning (Army), responds:** In order to make the rejoin process as efficient as possible, previously trained ex-regular soldiers are separated into three bands: those who have been a civilian for less than six years (A), personnel who left six to ten years ago and reached a minimum rank of substantive corporal (B) and all others (C).

The minimum medical and training requirement is different for each status, but individuals are also looked at on a case-by-case basis to determine what is the

most appropriate band and how to provide the best result for the Army.

Similarly, seniority and pay are assessed by the Army Personnel Centre, taking into consideration a soldier's previous service, including whether they have incurred any skill fade, the level of experience within the trade they have to offer, and any knowledge, skills and experience gained since they last served.

You would have been classed as a category C rejoiner.

Your initial service and a break of more than seven years has created a significant retraining requirement. It would have been decided that your skill fade was such that you were required to undertake phase one training again and return to recruit levels of pay.

Those rejoining the Army with a shorter break and/or higher previous rank require less retraining to become fully employable.

As for retaining LSA days accrued in previous service, the tri-Service policy is laid down in **JSP 752**: "Personnel re-entering the Services after a break that does not exceed four years may count former qualifying separation for the purpose of LSA eligibility."

Your break surpassed the prescribed limit, hence you are unfortunately not able to retain the LSA days you had accrued.

**“ Surely this is madness”**

## RAGE AT RAG TRADE

● I RECENTLY learned that Army-issued clothing that's been worn cannot be reissued but must be thrown away or sold as surplus.

So a pair of trousers worn once, washed and returned because they are the wrong size cannot be reused.

With budgets being squeezed surely this is madness. Hopefully I've been misinformed. — Name and address supplied

**Col Neil Llewellyn, Assistant Head of Logistic Support, Army Headquarters, replies:** Every effort is made to ensure that the supply chain operates in the most cost-effective manner while maintaining capability in the field.

Items are returned to stores for a wide variety of reasons.

Clothing will be categorised according to its intended use so, for example, "next to skin" items are not returned to stock because of health risk factors.

While at first glance it may seem logical to reissue clothing, the viability of this process depends on the economic value of an item versus the cost of restoring it to stock condition.

Returned clothing needs to be categorised, assessed for damage, cleaned, repackaged and relabelled, which uses resources.

This burden needs to be carefully considered and, ultimately, many items are not cost-effective to refurbish because the work required to bring them up to a condition where they can be reissued is more expensive than their disposal.

What might seem madness at first glance is in fact the best value for money for the taxpayer – not to mention the fact that the British Army cannot be accused of issuing second-hand clothing items.

The final element of this process should also be considered; previously-issued clothing is often reduced to rags which the Army either uses for a wide variety of tasks or is sold to offset the cost of future purchases.

The process is therefore quite clever and logical and has been passed down to us by our predecessors who had developed the supply chain.

# Queen Ethelburga's - Girls and Boys

Thorpe Underwood, York. YO26 9SS. Tel: 01423 333 330 Email: [info@QE.org](mailto:info@QE.org). [www.QE.org](http://www.QE.org)

→ **Your parental termly contribution is only £925**

This extremely low, termly, parental contribution means we rank as one of the most competitively priced schools for UK Forces. Childcare Vouchers also accepted.

→ **QE College is league table ranked as the 3rd best UK boarding school for academic results, our Faculty is 5th.**

We accept a broad ability range. As one parent said "QE can turn a youngster into well above average academically and have them also turn out as happy and well-rounded." 95% of Year 13 go to University with majority to Oxbridge, Ivy League or Russell Group universities.

→ **Our boarding facilities are the best in Europe.  
No one else even comes close.**

All bedrooms have private bathroom plus phone, voice mail, large plasma TV/DVD player + gaming port (on timer), a Sony PS3, fridge, microwave, trouser press and hot drinks facilities. House staff are friendly and caring.

→ **A vast amount of fun filled activities and trips out.**

100+ weekly non-sports and sports activities = fun packed weekends.

→ **£30m Sports Village with 7 Astro-Turfs  
+ 250,000 sq feet of indoor facilities**

QE is a UK leading school for Sport so it is not surprising that...

QE - North Yorks County Academy Centre in Partnership England Netball

QE is the Pennine Pumas Training Centre for England Hockey

QE is the Regional Performance Coaching Centre for England Basketball

QE is a Nationally recognised Performance Training Centre for Elite Rugby

QE Cricket Academy - Official partner of Yorkshire County Cricket Club

→ **More British Forces children than any other boarding school - because we care.**

We understand the needs of service families with staff who are married to serving members of the Forces. With years of experience in ensuring our 380 Forces children settle well, are confident and successful.

Dedicated, professional, friendly and helpful staff go the "extra mile" to ensure your child is happy and doing well. We have Forces families from all over the UK. Easy to get to by road, rail and air.

→ **£100m invested in new facilities in the last 8 years.**

Why choose an independent school education if you qualify for CEA?

Other Schools Results		
5	QE College	85%
17	Faculty of QE	77%
68	Christ's Hospital Sch	57%
81	Monmouth School	55%
	Cheltenham College	55%
85	Bromsgrove School	54%
	Dauntsey's School	50%
	Dean Close School	49%
114	Kingswood School	48%
143	Kingham Hill School	45%
	Monkton Combe	42%
	Gordon's School	36%
	King's School Bruton	34%
	Welbeck College	34%
239	King's Coll Taunton	31%
	Stamford School	30%
	Millfield School	25%
	Barnard Castle School	21%
271	Licensed Vict Ascot	16%

If you made a list, the same reasons would keep appearing. We think the list might include: happy children, top ten academics a personalised approach, top quality teachers with specialised expertise, good discipline, latest technology and superb facilities, excellent pastoral care, amazing sport, first class boarding accommodation, diverse experience, small classes, university success, excellent career prospects and first class confidence and self assurance. If you want the best for your child, and to stand a chance of achieving most of this list, we believe you would need to pick one of the top 10 UK Independent boarding schools as ranked by the Daily Telegraph. BUT, most importantly of all, we unashamedly also offer TLC - tender, loving care!



UK's Top 20 Independent Schools 2017 - % A\*/A A-Level (Daily Telegraph)

Ranking of Schools taking boarders

Nationally Ranking all type schools		
		% A* / A A-Level
1	1	Cardiff Sixth Form College 91%
	2	Perse School, Cambridge 87%
2	3	Westminster School, London 86%
	4	King's College School (KCS) 86%
3	5	Queen Ethelburga's College 85%
	6	Guildford Girls High School 85%
4	7	Concord College, Shrewsbury 84%
	8	City of London Girls School 84%
	9	Haberdashers' Aske's Boys 84%
10	10	St John's College, Cardiff 83%
11	11	King Edward's Birmingham, Magdalen College, Oxford 82%
12	12	North London Collegiate Sch 80%
13	13	Royal Grammar, Guildford 79%
14	14	Alleyne's School, Dulwich 78%
15	15	Haberdashers' Aske's Girls 77%
16	16	Faculty Queen Ethelburga's 77%
5	17	Faculty Queen Ethelburga's 77%
6	18	Brighton College, Brighton 76%
7	19	St Mary's School Ascot, Ascot 75%
20	20	Hampton School, Hampton 73%



## Commonwealth leave takes flight

THE new rules on domiciled collective leave and its substitute have come as a complete shock to me and have been implemented with little education.

My understanding is that the policy has changed significantly so that Commonwealth soldiers who have become naturalised UK citizens are no longer eligible for a free return ticket to their home country and/or extra holiday.

When I signed up, one of the key motivators was the guaranteed bonus of having a flight and extra days or simply the extra days (dependent on marital status) to return home.

Like many Commonwealth soldiers, the decision to become naturalised was done mainly to remove travel restrictions as a result of visa issues (yes, dependent on where we go, such personnel are still required to obtain a visa), when being deployed on tasks and to spare us embarrassment at borders.

It is my view that current Commonwealth troops should have been given grandfather rights and the travel incentive in their contractual agreement should be honoured.

Why was this incentive removed and why the secrecy in the change of the JSP?

I would hate to think the MoD has reverted to the 1960s where the sentiments were “do your time, help us out while you’re in, but don’t stay”.

I don’t believe that Commonwealth soldiers should be penalised for upward mobility. – **SSgt David Vitalis, RLC**

**Col Nathan Sempala-Ntege, Assistant Head, Personal Services, responds:**  
Firstly, let me be quite clear that the Army values the significant contribution across a wide range of roles made by foreign and

### Commonwealth soldiers and officers.

There are some conditions of service which recognise their specific circumstances, one of which is domiciled collective leave.

The purpose of it is to allow personnel who join from outside of the UK or Irish Republic to return to their home country at public expense for specified periods.

To authorise a request for this, the chain of command must be satisfied that the soldier meets a number of eligibility criteria, including that their home is still in the country from which they joined.

After five years’ residency foreign and Commonwealth Armed Forces personnel have the opportunity to apply for British citizenship.

Once they are naturalised, these soldiers are considered to have made Britain their home, even if they retain dual nationality.

Therefore, certain conditions of service, such as eligibility for this type of leave, no longer apply.

It became apparent that the policy was not always being applied consistently across the Forces and in some instances personnel were being granted it after they had gained citizenship.

This was judged to be unfair and not in keeping with its intent.

**JSP 760**, chapter nine was amended to provide clearer guidance about how to determine whether such troops have made their home in Britain.

This amendment may not have reached all those who need to be aware so we’ll ensure it’s highlighted to the chain of command.

“Why was this incentive removed?”

## RESERVE MEDALS IN THE FIRING LINE

● I WAS interested to read your article in the August 2017 edition entitled “Medal Mistake” in which the writer asked about the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal criteria.

I was even more intrigued to read the response of Lt Col Kestrel Simson in which he states that recognition for long and distinguished military service for full-time Reserve service (FTRS) personnel is under review.

Could I please ask what the current considerations are and how these may affect serving FTRS soldiers and officers? – **Name and address supplied**

**Lt Col (retd) Kestrel Simson, Ceremonial and Operational and Service Awards, Army Headquarters, replies:** While it has been acknowledged that there should be some form of medallic recognition for all personnel on FTRS and additional duties commitments with long service in uniform, exactly what should be given to them is, I’m afraid, still to be decided.

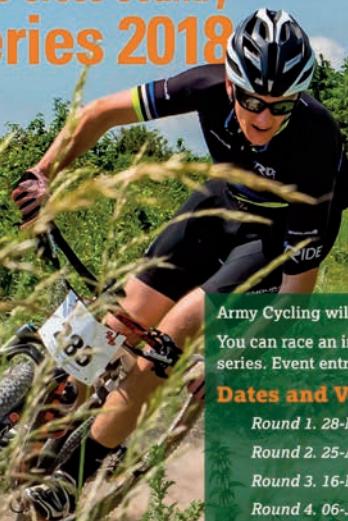
The Volunteer Reserves Service Medal, recognising ten years’ qualifying service in the Army Reserve, is available for FTRS officers and soldiers who come from the Volunteer Reserves, but Regular Reserves are not eligible for that or any other award.



**Looking ahead:** These Reservists at Grantham are just starting out – will they receive a medal for sticking around?

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Round 3. 16-May-18 Cannock Chase

Round 4. 06-Jun-18 Colchester

Round 5. 27-Jun-18 Sandhurst/Minley

Army Championship. 18-Jul-18 Tidworth

Army Endurance Race. 12-Sep-18 Minley



ONLINE ENTRY. Follow the QR code or visit [www.armycycling.org](http://www.armycycling.org) for more information. POC James.Cooper431@mod.gov.uk

- TWITTER - ACMTBCX Race Series @ArmyMTBCXSeries
- FACEBOOK - Army Cycling Union (Members Only)
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### APPOINTMENTS

**Maj Gen Rupert Jones** appointed Assistant Chief of the General Staff, replacing **Maj Gen Nicholas Welch**

**Maj Gen Bill O'Leary** appointed Deputy Commander Field Army, replacing **Maj Gen Simon Brooks-Ward**

### COMPETITIONS

**Spine line winner:** Pete Walker, Senior Storekeeper Op Account, Mission Training & Mobilisation centre (individual), Chetwynd Barracks, Chilwell, Nottingham.

### DIRECTORY

**ABF The Soldiers' Charity:**  
0845 241 4820

**Armed Forces Buddhist Society:**  
Chaplain 020 7414 3411  
[www.afbs-uk.org](http://www.afbs-uk.org)

**Armed Forces Christian Union:**  
01252 311221; [www.afcu.org.uk](http://www.afcu.org.uk)

**Armed Forces Muslim Association:**  
Chaplain 020 7414 3252;  
[www.afma.org.uk](http://www.afma.org.uk)

**Armed Services Advice Project:**  
0808 800 1007;  
[www.adviceasap.org.uk](http://www.adviceasap.org.uk)

**Army Families Federation:**  
01264 382324; mil 94391 2324;  
[www.aff.org.uk](http://www.aff.org.uk)

**Army LGBT Forum:**  
[www.armylgbt.org.uk](http://www.armylgbt.org.uk);  
chair@armylgbt.org.uk

**Army Libraries:** 01252 340094

**Army Ornithological Society:**  
[www.armybirding.org.uk](http://www.armybirding.org.uk)

**Army Welfare Service:**  
01904 882053;  
[www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support](http://www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support)

**Big White Wall:**  
[www.bigwhitewall.com](http://www.bigwhitewall.com)

**Blesma, The Limbless Veterans:**  
020 8590 1124;  
[www.blesma.org](http://www.blesma.org)

**Blind Veterans UK:**  
(formerly St Dunstan's)  
020 7723 5021;  
[www.blindveterans.org.uk](http://www.blindveterans.org.uk)

**Care After Combat:**  
[www.careaftercombat.org](http://www.careaftercombat.org)

**Career Transition Partnership:**  
020 7469 6661

### Children's Education Advisory Service:

01980 618244;  
[dcyp-ceas-enquiries@mod.uk](mailto:dcyp-ceas-enquiries@mod.uk)

### Combat Stress:

01372 841600;  
[www.combatstress.org.uk](http://www.combatstress.org.uk)

### Defence Humanists:

[www.defencehumanists.org.uk](http://www.defencehumanists.org.uk)

### Erskine:

0141 814 4569;  
[www.erskine.org.uk](http://www.erskine.org.uk)

### Family Escort Service:

020 7463 9249

### Felix Fund – the bomb disposal charity:

07713 752901  
[www.felixfund.org.uk](http://www.felixfund.org.uk)

### Forcesline:

UK – 0800 731 4880; Germany – 0800 1827 395; Cyprus – 080 91065; Falklands – #6111; from operational theatres – Paradigm Services \*201; from anywhere in the world (CSL operator will call back) – 0044 1980 630854

### Forces Pension Society:

020 7820 9988

### Help for Heroes:

0845 673 1760 or 01980 846 459;  
[www.helpforheroes.org.uk](http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk)

### Heroes Welcome:

[www.heroeswelcome.co.uk](http://www.heroeswelcome.co.uk)

### HighGround:

[www.highground-uk.org.uk](http://www.highground-uk.org.uk)

### Joint Service Housing Advice Office:

01252 787574

### Medal Office:

94561 3600 or 0141 224 3600

### Mutual Support (multiple sclerosis group):

[www.mutualsupport.org.uk](http://www.mutualsupport.org.uk)

### National Ex-Services Association:

[www.nesa.org.uk](http://www.nesa.org.uk)

### National Gulf Veterans' and Families' Association Office:

24-hour helpline 0845 257 4853;  
[www.ngvfa.org.uk](http://www.ngvfa.org.uk)

### Poppyscotland:

0131 557 2782;  
[www.poppyscotland.org.uk](http://www.poppyscotland.org.uk)

### Regular Forces' Employment Association:

0121 236 0058;

[www.rfea.org.uk](http://www.rfea.org.uk)

### Remount:

01451 850 341;  
[www.remount.net](http://www.remount.net)

### Royal British Legion:

0808 802 8080;

[www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk)

### Royal British Legion Scotland:

0131 550 1583;

[www.legionscotland.org.uk](http://www.legionscotland.org.uk)

### RBL Industries Vocational Assessment Centre:

01622 795900; [www.rbli.co.uk](http://www.rbli.co.uk)

### Scottish Veterans' Residences:

0131 556 0091;

[www.svronline.org](http://www.svronline.org)

### Single Persons Accommodation Centre for the Ex-Services:

01748 833797;

[www.spaces.org.uk](http://www.spaces.org.uk)

### SSAFA:

0845 1300 975;

[www.ssafa.org.uk](http://www.ssafa.org.uk)

### Stoll:

020 7385 2110; [info@stoll.org.uk](mailto:info@stoll.org.uk);  
[www.stoll.org.uk](http://www.stoll.org.uk)

### The Not Forgotten Association:

020 7730 2400

[www.nfassociation.org](http://www.nfassociation.org)

### The Poppy Factory:

020 8940 3305;

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### The Royal Star & Garter Homes:

020 8481 7676;

[www.starandgarter.org](http://www.starandgarter.org)

### The Veterans Charity:

01753 653772;

[info@veteranscharity.org.uk](mailto:info@veteranscharity.org.uk)

### Troop Aid:

0121 711 7215 or 07734 384260

### uk4u Thanks!:

01798 812081; [www.uk4u.org](http://www.uk4u.org)

### Veterans Welfare Service:

0808 1914 218 (from the UK);

0044 1253 866043 (from overseas)

[www.gov.uk/government/groups/veterans-welfare-service](http://www.gov.uk/government/groups/veterans-welfare-service)

### INTELLIGENCE

The following Army Briefing Notes, Defence Internal Briefs and Defence Information Notices can be found online at [www.armynet.mod.uk](http://www.armynet.mod.uk)

**ABN 14/18:** Definition for Army Regular and Army Reserve trained strength

**ABN 13/18:** The Army higher education pathway update 2 – registration of interest

**ABN 12/18:** Launch of the Defence Security Handbook

**ABN 11/18:** JPA preference flags

**ABN 10/18:** Army Parents' Network launch

**ABN 09/18:** Armed Forces weight management policy

**ABN 08/18:** National recruiting campaign

**ABN 07/18:** Applications for pardons and return of medals – Turing's Law

**ABN 06/18:** 2018 Army Reserve continuous attitude survey

**ABN 04/18:** Career management boarding manual v1.4

**ABN 03/18:** Introduction of the Regular Army rejoin bounty

**ABN 01/18:** Army manning priority policy

**ABN 140/17:** Performance management evaluation survey

**ABN 139/17:** Removal of the civil service initial sift tool and introduction of new sift tools

**ABN 138/17:** Changes to Regular Army officer commissioning regulations

**DIN 2018DIN01-014:** The Firm in Sword of Peace Awards 2016 – results

**DIN 2018DIN01-013:** The Firm in Sword of Peace Awards Competition 2017

**DIN 2018DIN01-011:** Tax-free childcare scheme for eligible working parents (Service personnel)

**DIN 2018DIN01-010:** Purchasing added pension or buying an effective pension age

**DIN 2018DIN01-008:** MoD NHS/Agenda for Change grades – submission of form 1720A performance appraisal development report for 2017 reporting year

**DIN 2018DIN01-007:** The automation of medic incremental progression

**DIN 2018DIN01-006:** Anthrax vaccination policy

**DIN 2018DIN01-005:** Operational deployment allowance

**DIN 2018DIN01-004:** Defence augmentation policy

**DIN 2018DIN01-003:** Recent changes to the state pension

**DIN 2018DIN01-002:** The Cadet Forces Commission

**DIN 2018DIN01-001:** Employment of general duties medical officers

**DIN 2018DIN04-010:** Identify friend or foe mode five platform identification numbers

**DIN 2018DIN04-009:** Planned withdrawal of support and disposal of obsolete items from artillery system project team

**DIN 2018DIN04-008:** The process for the tasking of deployed air movements support

**DIN 2018DIN04-007:** Urgent capability requirements

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**DIN 2018DIN04-006:** Aircrew in-ear communication devices

**DIN 2018DIN04-005:** Declaration of obsolescence A0 Plotter NSN:7025-99-741-3098

**DIN 2018DIN04-004:** Firemark fire extinguishers to replace current Chubb fire extinguishers

**DIN 2018DIN04-003:** Change of order process for batteries currently procured through contract number MEDGS/00310 with Carwood Motor Units Ltd

**DIN 2018DIN04-002:** Amendments to operational medical modules contents – June to November 2017

**DIN 2018DIN04-001:** The management of TacCIS HQ equipment on James and MJDI

**DIN 2018DIN05-004:** Use of SHA-1 in MoD

**DIN 2018DIN05-002:** Records management – the 20-year rule

**DIN 2018DIN05-001:** Publication of MoD configuration management a functional framework for acquisition

**DIN 2018DIN06-007:** Contracting commercial diving services

**DIN 2018DIN06-006:** Radioactive substances annual holdings return for year ending December 2017

**DIN 2018DIN06-005:** New

regulations introduced to implement the EU basic safety standards directive 2013/59/Euratom

**DIN 2018DIN06-004:** Phase down of fluorinated greenhouse gases

**DIN 2018DIN06-003:** Ionising radiation regulations 2017

**DIN 2018DIN06-002:** Publication of DSA02 DLSR movement and transport safety regulations and DSA03 DLSR MTSR defence codes of practice

**DIN 2018DIN06-001:** JSP 800, vol 4b, ed 2, detail of latest amendments

**DIN 2017DIN06-027:** Emergency pollution response service

**DIN 2018DIN07-017:** Exercise Arctic Express 2018

**DIN 2018DIN07-016:** Joining instructions and training requirements for the specialised infantry assessment cadre

**DIN 2018DIN07-015:** Joint Intelligence Training Group training courses for training year April 1, 2018 until March 31, 2019

**DIN 2018DIN07-013:** Defence chemical biological radiological and nuclear centre course schedule training year 2018/19

**DIN 2018DIN07-012:** Joint Information Activities Group training provision 2018/19

**DIN 2018DIN07-011:** Application instructions for defence anaesthesia simulation course, surgical

training Denmark, medical device decontamination operator and pre-deployment courses

**DIN 2018DIN07-006:** Unit welfare officer training courses 2018/19

**DIN 2018DIN07-005:** Unit custody staff course, unit custody staff refresher course and operational detention course

**DIN 2018DIN07-004:** Highland Express

**DIN 2018DIN07-003:** Refund of farrier professional body fees

**DIN 2018DIN07-002:** Temporary landing zone safety officer course dates 2018

**DIN 2018DIN07-001:** Core recovery events for wounded, injured and sick Service personnel

**DIN 2017DIN07-140:** Units wishing to conduct training/trials/exercises/sport in Cyprus

**DIN 2018DIN08-001:** Claims for loss of, or damage to, personal property (regulation claims)

**DIN 2017DIN08-006:** Joint Services Command and Staff College international student charging regime and allowances

**DIN 2017DIN08-005:** Insurance arrangements for charging activities (income generation and repayment)

**DIN 2017DIN08-004:** Non-entitled cash casual meal charge for financial year 2017/18

**DIN 2017DIN08-003:** Non-entitled

accommodation rates

**DIN 2017DIN08-002:** Provision of ad hoc clothing including corporate/team identity clothing

**DIN 2017DIN08-001:** 2016/17 Annual report and accounts – closure of feeders

**DIN 2018DIN10-004:** Inter-Services Paragliding Championships 2018

**DIN 2018DIN10-002:** Basic gliding courses at the Army Gliding Club, Upavon

**DIN 2018DIN10-001:** Army Rifle Association target shooting courses January to December 2018



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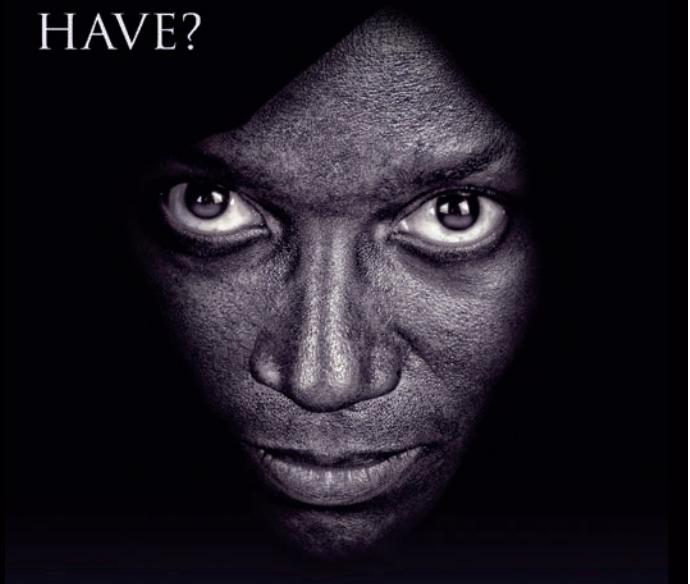
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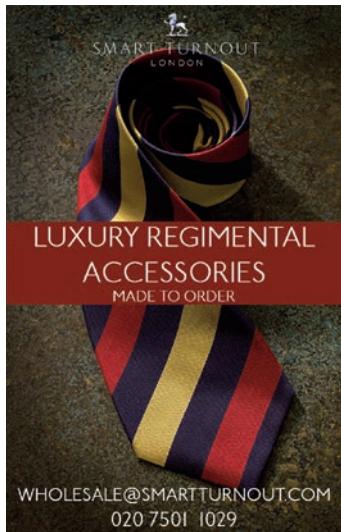
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## ARMY SPORTS LOTTERY

### 9 December 2017

1st Prize (£10,000): Cpl L Webb, 5 Rifles, Salisbury. 2nd Prize (£5,000): Bdr G Tucker, ATFC(W), Winchester. 3rd Prize (£4,000): Maj S Tinlin, CTT (SW), 43 Bde, Tidworth. 4th Prize (£2,000): Pte D Cook, ARTD RG RR, Powys. 5th Prize (£1,000): Maj A Laycock, HQ170 (Infra Sp) Engr Gp, Chilwell. 15 Consolation prizes (£200 each): Capt G Parnell, 35 Engr Regt, BFPO 22. Capt I Wells, 22 Signal Regt, Beaconsfield; SSgt A Warren, 101 Engr Regt (EOD), Nr Saffron Walden; Sgt P Godfrey, 53 Bty, 5 Regt RA Wksp, Richmond; Sgt Ryn De-Bique, 243 Sqn, 10 Signal Regt, Andover; Cpl B Williams, 57 Trg Sqn RE, 3 RSME, Camberley; Cpl A Gammack, HQ 1 Armd Inf Bde, Tidworth; Capt V Hurst, 2 Para, Colchester; Spr D Swyers-O'Brien, 24 Cdo Engr Regt, Barnstable; LCpl B Bell, 400 Tp RLC, Catterick Garrison; LCpl C Kalibwanji, C Sqn, QRH, BFPO 16; Pte C Graham, D Coy, 3 Scots, Ardersier; Pte C McKenzie, 91 Sqn, 27 Regt RLC, Aldershot; Cpl A Miller, DMRC, Epsom; WO2 M

Llewellyn-Jones, 29 Regt RLC, South Cerney.

### 16 December 2017

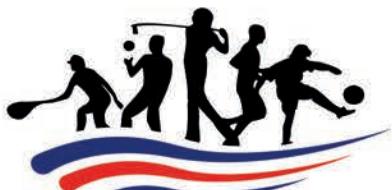
1st Prize (£10,000): Sgt L Ireland, MoD A Block, London. 2nd Prize (£5,000): Cpl D Williams, Army Foundation College, Harrogate. 3rd Prize (£4,000): OCdt A May, 509 STRE, 65 Wks Gp, Chilwell. 4th Prize (£2,000): Cpl J Bennett, JSSU (Ch), Cheltenham. 5th Prize (£1,000): Sgt M Farnan, 1 Rifles, Chepstow. 15 Consolation prizes (£200 each): Capt L Richardson, HQ SG SMG, Lichfield; Sgt P Carr, RMAS, Camberley; CSgt B Martin, B Coy, 1 SG, Aldershot; SSgt A Philpotts, 11 Signal Regt, DSCIS, Blandford Forum; Name withheld, RAF St Athan, Vale of Glamorgan; Bdr D Hyde, A Bty, 1 RHA, Tidworth; Maj I Thomas ICSCM, Defence Academy, Shrivenham; LCpl J Cuffe, 14 Signal Regt (EW), Haverfordwest; Sig A Gurung, 217 Sqn, 22 Signal Regt, Beaconsfield; Lt A Rolfe, 95 Sqn, 9 Regt RLC, Chippenham; Pte M Bates, 91 Sqn, 27 Regt RLC, Aldershot; Rfn L Bunting, A Coy, 5 Rifles, Salisbury; Pte J Simons, 3 RSME Regt, Camberley; Maj R Willcocks, MTMC, Chilwell; SSgt T Hannaford, HQ 29 EOD & Search Gp, Saffron Walden.

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### 30 December 2017

1st Prize (£10,000): LCpl M Pawson, 68 Sqn, 7 TLR RLC, Cottesmore. 2nd Prize (£5,000): LCpl S Donkin, 3 AAC Wksp REME, Ipswich. 3rd Prize (£4,000): Gnr J Qeva, 24 Bty, 14 Regt RA, Salisbury. 4th Prize (£2,000): SSgt A Maguire, 212 Fd Hosp, Sheffield. 5th Prize (£1,000): Capt N Aitken, 7 Regt RLC LAD REME, Cottesmore. 15 Consolation prizes (£200 each): SSgt A Gartshore, 421 Sqn, 11 EOD Regt RLC, Didcot; Capt R Maynard, 7 Para RHA, Colchester; SSgt W Vasey, QEMHC, DPHC Wessex, Tidworth; SSgt A Biggin, 4 RMP, Aldershot; Cpl D Swain, Egypt Sqn, RTR, Tidworth; Sgt D Roche, 256 Sqn, 30 Signal Regt LAD, Nuneaton; Cpl Mv Koroiyadi, DIO SDT Kenya, BFPO 10; LCpl M Kent, Gibraltar PC Tp RLC, BFPO 52; Sgt K Cameron, 1 Signal Regt, Stafford; Cpl S Lang, MPGS, Bovington, Wareham; Name withheld, HQ Hereford Garrison; Capt D Ward, Sp Coy, 1 RRF, Tidworth; Pte J Evans, 66 Sqn, 9 TLR RLC, Chippenham; Lt Col M Smith, HQ ARTD, Pewsey; Maj S Ferguson, SVC Adviser, Islamabad, BFPO 747.



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# REVIEWS

TOP GEAR

## WORKOUT WEAR

**Athletics ace casts her eye over the latest kit**

WITH more and more clothing items and accessories flooding the fitness market it seems as though there is an endless supply of options when it comes to catering for your needs.

Here, Army athlete and England cross-country runner Capt Lauren Hall (REME) gives her verdict on some of the latest contenders from the world of women's training kit...



**P61**

BOOKS

**P63**

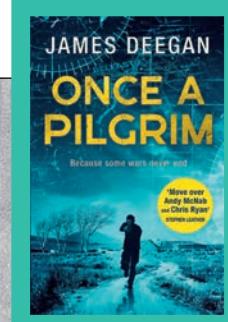
MOVIES

**P64**

MUSIC

**P66**

GAMES



FALLS ROAD

## PICK OF THE MONTH:

## ONCE A PILGRIM

Paratrooper turned author pens  
Special Forces thriller



★★★★★ Maximum support air control  
DeltaPad sports bra, Anita

THE thing I like most about this is the stylish design, which is something you don't typically see in a sports bra that provides a good level of support. For that reason, I mainly used it during high intensity sessions. The bra also has a foam cup that doubles up as protection for activities such as battle PT. The material is a mesh-like fabric which reduces the sweat build-up that can be particularly uncomfortable. This bra is the perfect all-rounder for PT sessions in the day job or workouts in your spare time.

★★★★★ Thermal hoodie, ACAI Activewear

DURING the winter months I wear a second layer over my training top to stay warm throughout, especially during cool downs after big sessions, so this hoodie was a welcome addition to my kit. The sleeves easily slide up if you get too hot and there are two zip pockets either side for storage of keys, phones and other items. This also acts as a great general wear garment, such as to and from the gym, as it boasts a relaxed look and is extremely comfortable.

★★★★★ Ironman compression leggings,  
ACAI Activewear

THESE tights double up as workout clothing and a compression piece to aid recovery. They are lightweight and boast a simple plain black design so they could also be worn as part of your PT kit. My favourite part is the pocket on the right leg, which is really useful for storing things on long runs outside of camp. It is made from the same material as the leggings and that means there is limited movement of items. The garment is also seam free to reduce chaffage on the skin and that is something I found most useful while clocking up the winter miles on Salisbury Plain.

► IF Amazon's bestseller lists are anything to go by, military fiction is a lucrative business.

The likes of Andy McNab, Chris Ryan and Lee Child have earned themselves a loyal fan base with tales of modern-day derring-do, but now a newcomer to the genre is hoping for a slice of the action.

*Once a Pilgrim* is the debut novel by former paratrooper and elite soldier James Deegan.

With 22 years in the Army and tours of Northern Ireland, the Balkans, Africa, Iraq and Afghanistan – not to mention a Military Cross – to his name, the retired regimental sergeant major certainly has the pedigree to back up his words.

Talking to *Soldier* shortly before

the book launch he was confident his experiences would lend the story a dose of realism.

"I think it's as authentic as you'll get," he told *Soldier*.

"Some thrillers are completely implausible but I want readers to be wondering 'how real is this?'"

"Actually, when the book went to the MoD [any title on military matters must be cleared by the department prior to publication] they queried whether it was all fictional, so I suppose that was a good sign."

The plot follows Special Forces veteran John Carr, a steely-eyed killer and ladies' man, whose murky past in Belfast comes back to haunt him.



## BOOKS



When a police enquiry into historic allegations leads to his address being leaked to his old enemies, he must take matters into his own hands to protect his family.

"The legal investigations into British troops who served in Northern Ireland is prominent in the papers so I thought it would make an interesting story," explained Deegan.

"With Carr I tried to create a character who is human – he's fallible.

"He's not a crook or a criminal but if you cross him he won't hesitate to do whatever it takes."

Having left the Army in 2007, Deegan – not his real name – was originally approached to write his autobiography, however he was keen to avoid the McNab-style fame that would bring.

Now 51, he works for a major international security company, but looks back fondly on Service life.

"I miss the camaraderie and being part of something special – you don't get the same esprit de corps in the business world.

"I don't miss what I would have been doing had I stayed on as a late-entry officer, though" he said.

"I had a good run for my money but it was time to leave."

With a sequel in the pipeline it seems Deegan's third career as an author is a viable prospect.

Billed – fairly accurately it transpires – as a literary version of *Patriot Games* meets *Taken*, *Once a Pilgrim* rattles along at breakneck speed.

It assumes a certain level of military knowledge and so avoids talking down to the reader or getting bogged down in lengthy descriptions of tactics or kit.

If you like your fiction fast-paced, with plenty of violence and sex thrown into the mix, then you're onto a winner with this offering. ■

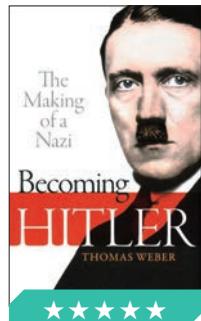
INTERVIEW: BECKY CLARK, SOLDIER

### VERDICT:

A heart-pounding military yarn, with the ring of truth



### BOOK RELEASES

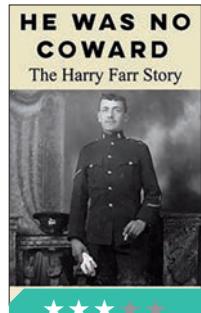


**Becoming Hitler**  
by Thomas Weber

A HEAVYWEIGHT book in every sense, this title explains clearly how Hitler evolved to become a

manipulative and cunning political operator whose narcissism and desire to stand out drove him to expound ever more extreme ideas. The final paragraph is a warning we should all note: "Whether one day there will be a new age of tyrants will not only depend on our vigilance against future Hitlers... it will be determined by our willingness to protect and mend the fabric of liberal democracy, of our own age of globalisation before conditions become such that demagogues of the worst kind will flourish."

**Mark Hainge, ex-RE**



**He Was No Coward**  
The Harry Farr Story  
by Janet Booth and James White

BRITISH Army military executions during the Great War remain a contentious topic almost a century after the Armistice in 1918. This book is in effect a case study of Harry Farr, a North London soldier who served in 2nd Battalion, The West Yorkshire Regiment and was shot for cowardice in 1916. The story is a personal account of his descendants' efforts to ascertain the facts and their subsequent campaign to secure his exoneration. As such it offers an insight into a thorny subject and the events that led to a pardon for the majority of the 306 Servicemen who were executed.

**Mike Peters, ex-AAC**



## PICK OF THE MONTH:

## LAST FLAG FLYING

**Cranston and Carell embark on bittersweet road trip**

► A GRIEVING father seeks out his old Vietnam buddies to help him bury his son killed in action in Iraq.

That's the premise behind **Richard Linklater's** low-key but thoughtful drama, *Last Flag Flying*.

Unassuming family man and former Navy medic, Larry "Doc" Shepherd (**Steve Carell** – *The Office*, *Foxcatcher*), has lost his wife and only child in the space of a year.

Thirty years since he last saw his comrades Sal Nealon (**Bryan Cranston** – *Breaking Bad*, *Malcolm in the Middle*) and Richard Mueller (**Laurence Fishburne** – *The Matrix*, *Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice*) he looks them up and asks them to accompany him to Arlington Cemetery for the funeral.

At the repatriation Doc learns that the circumstances of his son's death were less glorious than the authorities first claimed, so he decides to forego a military burial and take the casket back home to New Hampshire.

The three veterans embark on a

**VERDICT:**  
An understated but touching drama about the ripples caused by war  
★★★★★

road trip up the East Coast, reminiscing along the way about their wartime experiences, and how their guilt over an incident towards the end of their tour shaped their lives.

Cranston is on typically good form as impulsive alcoholic, Sal, while Fishburne's character Mueller has found God and become a somewhat humourless preacher.

The two struggle to reconnect and have very different ideas about how to best help the unfortunate Doc, portrayed movingly by Carell, who combines his usual air of meek haplessness with a sense of quietly contained anguish.

Despite the melancholy vibe, it's not all downbeat and there are some genuine moments of comedy (mainly delivered by Cranston) as the three friends rediscover common ground.

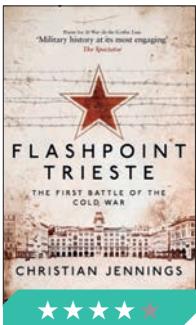
This is a bit of a strange film in that not much actually happens – even though the running time is more than two hours.

But the protagonists' reflections raise some interesting questions about laying the ghosts of the past to rest, comradeship and the nature of grief.

There are a few annoying clichés of the American military variety thrown in but on the whole it avoids mawkishness and moralising.

*Last Flag Flying* stops short of being wildly entertaining – it's more of a slow burner. However, thanks to its cast there are some memorable moments that should stick with viewers after the credits have rolled. ■

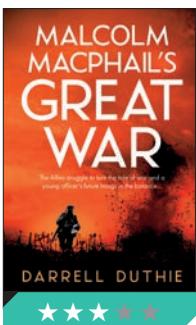
REVIEW: BECKY CLARK, SOLDIER



**Flashpoint  
Trieste**  
by Christian  
Jennings

THIS book examines the city of Trieste at the end of the Second World War and the beginning of the Cold War. Due to its geographical location on the borders of Italy, Austria and Yugoslavia the city was fought over by advancing Russian forces, communist partisans, and the Allies. The title shows the lives of 12 different men and women from varied backgrounds and nationalities during this period. It is written in a journalistic style and is very readable and highly informative as well as being full of historical detail with a good range of images and mapping. Fully recommended.

**Robert Shaw, ex-RLC**



**Malcolm  
MacPhail's  
Great War**  
by Darrell  
Duthie

THE concept of trench warfare and the accompanying mud during the First World War

is a prominent theme in this very readable work of "faction". Malcolm MacPhail is a Canadian intelligence officer who finds himself extracted from his headquarters location and plunged into the stalemate of the Western Front. There his disdain for the senior officers committing many thousands of young men to their certain demise in and around Ypres does him no favours. The friction between HQ politics and the front line resonates throughout this tale. All in all, it is an enjoyable read.

**Sqn Ldr Paul Merry, RAF**



## DVD/DIGITAL RELEASES



### Batman: Gotham by Gaslight

Out now

WITH an animated Jack the Ripper roaming Victorian Gotham City, who can save the pseudo-cockney street walkers? Batman – obviously. And with Alfred and his band of cheeky ruffians, plus all the other main characters – Harvey Dent, Commissioner Gordon et al – what is there not to like? The answer is everything. There is no reason to watch this truly awful offering. Save your money and spend your time doing absolutely anything else.

**Cpl Scott Roberts, Rifles**

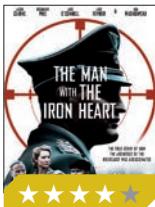


### Battle of Algiers

Out now

THIS restored masterpiece from director **Gillo Pontecorvo** has lost none of its impact five decades after it was first released. A gritty snapshot of the insurgency in French occupied Algeria during the 1950s, it pulls no punches in laying bare the brutality that unfolded in the postcolonial period following the Second World War. This 4K restoration features a host of worthwhile extras, including interviews with former insurgents. Well shot, authentic and balanced, the *Battle of Algiers* remains one of the great movies of world cinema.

**Cliff Caswell, Soldier**



### The Man with the Iron Heart

Out now

BASED on the brilliant novel *HHhH* by **Laurent Binet**, *The Man with the Iron Heart* stars **Jason Clarke**, **Rosamund Pike** and *Boardwalk Empire's* **Stephen Graham**. The film recounts the real life Operation Anthropoid, the audacious mission to kill Reinhard Heydrich. Having seen other movies, and read books about Operation Anthropoid, I particularly enjoyed the character study of Heydrich and his family life. I'd highly recommend this to anyone with an interest in Second World War operations.

**Cpl Adam Jackson, Para**

## MUSIC



### PICK OF THE MONTH:

## MARCHING TO A TUNE

### Optimism washes over Brighton collective's fifth studio effort

► SINCE bursting onto the scene with energy-driven debut offering *Thunder, Lightning, Strike* Brighton-based outfit **The Go! Team** have become famed for their big sound and big tunes.

So when frontman **Ian Parton** effectively disbanded the group to forge his own path alongside a collective of Soundcloud singers in 2015, it seemed as though a change in direction was afoot.

The result – indie-inspired offering *The Scene Between* – boasted a stripped back, more tranquil feel that was positively received but now, three years later, a certain degree of familiarity has returned.

*Semicircle* is packed with trademark hip-hop beats, guitars, cheerleader-esque chants and samples, while also incorporating the multi-instrumental approach of a full marching band.

"I like the swing and toughness

of marching bands, the physicality of feeling a beater walloping a bass drum," Parton explained.

"But I wanted to reclaim them from patriotic or sporty associations. That was the kick-off for this record."

The artist also crossed the pond to work with the **Detroit Youth Choir** as part of his quest for vocal support.

He added: "I've always had a thing for gang vocals and group singing, particularly the roughness of community choirs.

"Normally they might be singing show tunes but I like the idea of getting people to do something they wouldn't normally do."



## VERDICT:

The Go! Team doing what they do best



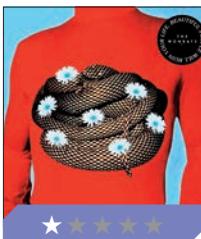
## MUSIC RELEASES



**Unleash the Love**  
by Mike Love

THIS is the latest release from legendary Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee, Grammy winner and co-founder of **The Beach Boys**, **Mike Love**. As a double album it features 13 brand new tracks as well as 12 re-recordings of his band's classic numbers, including *California Girls*, *Help Me Rhonda* and *Good Vibrations*. The original material ranges from rock and gospel to R'n'B and pop and celebrates the singer's connection to the teachings of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and his journey to find personal love and peace. It all sounds very deep and a bit hippy, but with a legend like Mike Love pulling the strings you just know it's going to be a belter. The deep and meaningful message works well and the anthems from the past seal the deal.

**Rodge Taply, ex-RE**



**Beautiful People Will Ruin Your Life**  
by The Wombats

WITH the modern British indie rock box bursting at the seams, what certainly isn't needed is another dreary album from a band ten years past their best and with less personality than **Liam Gallagher's** eyebrow. But that's what we have here. *Single Lemon to a Knife Fight* could be an ode to the group themselves, while the next best thing – *I Only Wear Black* – has more than a hint of a student union anthem. They even attempt a psychedelic nod to **The Beatles'** songs of the late 60s on *Dip You in Honey* but it's a move that falls flat. Essentially, this album is little more than a total waste of time and you'll be advised to steer clear.

**Cpl Scott Roberts, Rifles**

"I like making things happen that wouldn't otherwise happen. It's always a gamble but in this case it paid off."

The album starts in characteristic style with *May Day*, where Morse code beats and repetitive spelling of the track's name underpin an almost Motown vibe.

Parton's admiration for the marching band comes to the fore on standout offering *Semicircle Song*, which acts an optimistic, youthful breath of fresh air.

More familiarity is found on *She's Got Guns*, where the returning **Ninja** resumes rapping responsibilities, while *All the Way Live* is another high point that bears more than a passing

resemblance to the group's earlier sound.

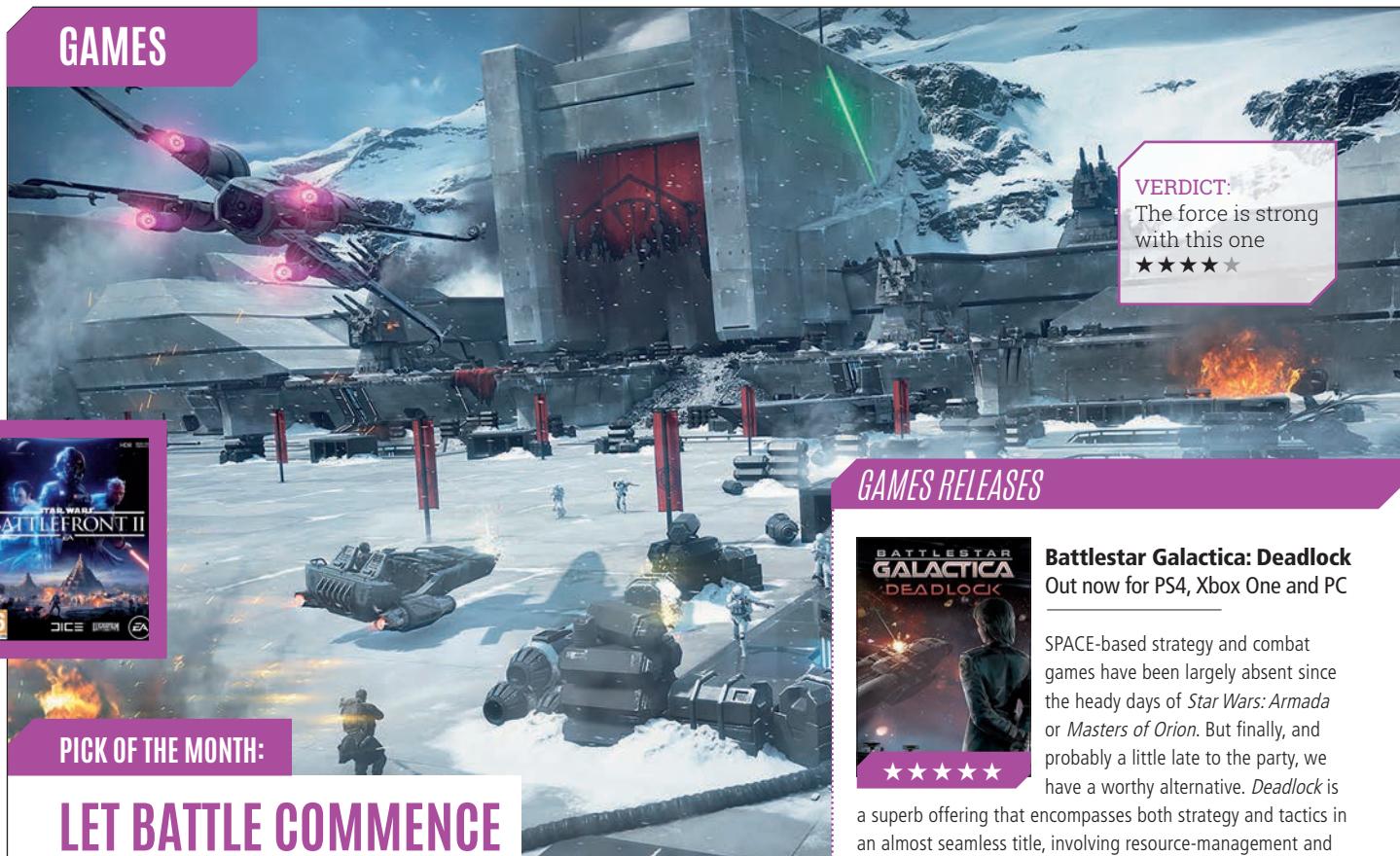
Although there is plenty to enjoy there are some lows as well, particularly in tiresome instrumentals *Chico's Radical Decade* and *Tangerine/Satsuma/Clementine* that add little to the flow of the record.

It also seems as if the intensity levels have dipped slightly, meaning it never really hits full gear.

That said *Semicircle* is still a decent offering and is the perfect tonic for anyone seeking some light and joy as the winter grind continues. ■

REVIEW: RICHARD LONG, SOLDIER

## GAMES



**VERDICT:**  
The force is strong with this one  
★★★★★



### PICK OF THE MONTH:

## LET BATTLE COMMENCE

Intergalactic adventures await in Star Wars spin-off

► THE previous *Star Wars Battlefront* game was hugely popular and it is easy to see why – blasters, lightsabers and the ability to use the Force were all very appealing.

But of course the main draw was always the multiplayer option as the campaign, if you can call it that, was largely absent.

The follow-up is equally attractive and exciting. However, it boasts a far bigger fictional canvas this time – stretching from prequels such as *The Phantom Menace* and *Attack of the Clones* to the more recent *Force Awakens*. In addition there is also a full campaign.

Unusually, the viewpoint is from the Empire, which I'll admit is a nice diversion from the usual Rebel perspective. But I won't spoil the outcome here.

The multiplayer needs to be on point and for the most part it is. Although the controversy of the loot boxes – which essentially enabled players to pay to win – was a sore spot for the release, EA have now more or less ironed out the creases.

Having said that, the reward and promotion system in *Battlefront 2* is not as straightforward as the first title and seems to provide additional awards and perks at a snail's pace when you first start out, although it does pick up.

The gameplay is almost identical to its predecessor so it's fairly smooth and very entertaining. And visually it is stunning. Vast planets provide jaw-dropping backdrops, as do the star-studded ones when taking to the vacuum of space in a Tie-fighter or X-Wing.

In essence *Star Wars Battlefront 2* is your typical shooter with your typical rewards and promotions but it happens to be packaged in one of the most popular and successful film franchises of all time.

While the game can be frustrating and maddening at times it will certainly do a good job of bringing an interactive universe into your living room.

And this often means you'll overlook some of the more frustrating elements in favour of hurtling around Starkiller Base with a lightsaber in hand. ■

REVIEW: DAVID McDougall, CIVVY

### GAMES RELEASES

#### **Battlestar Galactica: Deadlock**

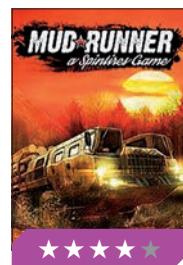
Out now for PS4, Xbox One and PC



★★★★★

SPACE-based strategy and combat games have been largely absent since the heady days of *Star Wars: Armada* or *Masters of Orion*. But finally, and probably a little late to the party, we have a worthy alternative. *Deadlock* is a superb offering that encompasses both strategy and tactics in an almost seamless title, involving resource-management and a superb turn-based combat system that encourages forward thinking, organisation and sometimes a little daring. Combat revolves around setting your movement and orders before each turn and then seeing them play out. It's the full-on armchair general experience as you issue out orders and direction, trying to anticipate your opponent and then seeing how it plays out, turn by turn – all the way from darting swarms of fighters to the imposing and powerful capital ships. And the bonus? It's wonderfully wrapped in a *Battlestar Galactica* suit.

David McDougall, civvy



#### **Spintires: MudRunner**

Out now for PS4, Xbox One and PC

THOUGH it might boast a roster of unusual vehicles, *Spintires* isn't for those seeking a *Mad Max*-like experience involving smashing into opponents or something akin to *Forza Horizon*, where you race to the finish. No, this is a game firmly focused on technical perfection. Well, if you're keen to traverse a muddy track, that is. The main aim is to complete multiple tasks, all of which involve utilising numerous vehicles to carry or tow a load to a defined destination along routes that are more than just unsuitable for anything that doesn't have four-wheel drive. This isn't rallying, this is getting from A to B without getting stuck. It's about knowing the limits of your machine and using that to get through terrain that wouldn't be out of place in the Somme. This game is intriguing and addictive but probably not for everyone.

David McDougall, civvy

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# SOLDIER SPORT



## GOING FOR GOLD »

PISTOL shooter Sgt Sam Gowin (RA) is among a handful of Army athletes to be selected for the Commonwealth Games. Read more about their hopes for the Gold Coast showpiece on pages 76-77...



# AIMING FOR SUCCESS

## ARCHERS LAUNCH RECRUITING CAMPAIGN AS SPORT LOOKS FOR NEW DIRECTION IN 2018

ARMY archers are setting their sights on an intake of new talent as they look to expand their set-up for the 2018 campaign.

Availability issues, coupled with the logistical challenge of having members scattered across the country, saw the soldiers struggle for consistency last year and those charged with running the Service sport are adopting a fresh outlook as they seek an upturn in fortunes.

While the immediate focus is on attracting newcomers to the fold, they are also considering plans to create regional bases so sharpshooters can meet and train together ahead of the various competitions that form the basis of hectic indoor and outdoor seasons.

"The main event we aim for is the national championships, which fall in early December," WO1 Jason McCoubrey (AGC (RMP), pictured left), Army team captain and outgoing secretary, told *SoldierSport*.

"But a lack of preparation and training beforehand really cost us last year.

"We rarely get together as a full squad as we have people posted right across the UK. When it comes to organising a weekend of shooting, and when everyone is available, it proves to be a difficult task.

"So we are looking at different ways of doing things and want to create a main hub in Aldershot but it all comes down to kit – whoever has the equipment is where we have to go.

"We need to have interested people based in various Army locations to make the idea of regional centres work."

Archery has yet to receive full sporting status from the Army Sport Control Board, which means it lacks the funding afforded to other disciplines within the Service.

However, the organisation currently has around 30 archers on its books and McCoubrey was quick to stress that athletes of all abilities are more than welcome.

Novices are advised to contact their local clubs and sign up for taster sessions before developing their skills in the Army fold.

The senior NCO added: "They may not think they are good enough to make the squad but if they can pick up a bow and shoot we are happy for them to come along.

"We can then teach them from there.

"It all comes down to confidence – once they have that in place they can start to build scores.

"Most archery clubs will have equipment for beginners to use.

"We need to get more soldiers into those local clubs, which is where they'll build the confidence levels needed for our bigger contests.

"But every competition also has a novice section so you don't need to be an amazing shot to get involved."

Another key fixture on the calendar is the Army Outdoor Championships in June, with the Inter-Services following from there.

Honours have been spread among the three Services in recent times and, after a brief spell of Army dominance, the Royal Air Force are now the team to beat.

One of those hoping to



**"IF THEY  
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WE ARE  
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FOR  
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ALONG"**

feature prominently in both competitions as 2018 progresses is Sgt Craig Cherrie (RLC, pictured left).

The Aldershot-based chef has a background in football and contact sports but after completing a beginners course at his local club, Farnham Archers, in March last year he was immediately hooked on the pursuit.

"I progressed quickly through the different distances and by the time I reached 60 metres I had become quite good," the soldier explained.

"I then reached out to the Army team and competed at the indoor championships in October, where I finished in third place.

"I was really chuffed with that result.

"We need to push the message out there and get more people involved.

"It is a brilliant organisation. There are some really good archers of all ages; there are wounded veterans and guys who have competed at the Invictus Games as well, so there is a great mix.

"As soon as I did that first course I knew this was the direction I wanted to go in.

"I have got 15 years left in the Service so I know I can progress within the association."

Personnel looking to get involved in the sport should visit the Archery GB website ([www.archerygb.org](http://www.archerygb.org)) for more information on local clubs, beginners courses and basic kit and equipment. ■



## NUMBERS ON THE UP

THE Army Individual Squash Championships in Winchester served to highlight the sport's growth among the ranks.

The competition attracted 120 entries across the various categories, with more than 250 matches played in the space of three days.

"Last year we had around 150 players involved, so we are a little down on that, but we are doing much better compared to the seasons before," explained Lt Col Yvette Ashman (AGC (SPS)), chairman of the Army Squash and Rackets Association.

"We have especially seen a lot of new faces in the novice category, where people who do not necessarily play at corps or Army level are coming along to have a go."

"We need to get new blood in. Four or five years ago the ladies made a real effort to grow their team and on the back of that they have been very successful."

"That has made the other squads open their eyes."

Army and Armed Forces number one Capt Sam Miller (RA) claimed the men's title, with Maj Elaine Radcliffe (RAMC) taking the women's crown.



# PARTNERS IN PROGRESS



**"THIS  
HAS  
BEEN A  
SEMINAL  
YEAR  
FOR US"**

THE Army squash set-up is targeting significant progress in the coming years after agreeing a formal relationship with England's national governing body.

Signed under the Armed Forces Covenant, the deal will see ten players embark on a year-long programme of bespoke training and mentoring with some of the top coaches in the country.

In return, the Service will deliver leadership and team building courses for the finest academy prospects in the England Squash system.

"The aim of the partnership is to increase participation and develop more talent for the Army," Lt Col Yvette Ashman (AGC (SPS)), chairman of the Army Squash and Rackets Association, told *SoldierSport*.

"It will not necessarily be our top players who take part but is aimed more at those with the potential to go on and play for one of our four representative teams in the future."

"It is about improving so we can have long-term success at elite level."

The application window closes later this month and

the training cycle for the ten successful candidates will start in May.

The initiative is among a raft of changes that have been introduced to encourage a growth in the sport.

With participation on the rise there is now an equal focus on the men's and women's senior squads, as well as the masters and under-25s.

"It used to be all about the men's team," explained Maj Gen Tyrone Urch, the organisation's president. "But over the past couple of years there has been a focus on raising the standard of all four groups."

"On our recent tour to San Francisco we had two or three players from each team and that meant the juniors could learn from the seniors and the men from the women. It worked really well."

"This has been a seminal year for us. Having that understanding with England Squash means we will get specialist training of the highest standard."

"I can't think of many Army sports that have such a close relationship with a national governing body." ■



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Pictures: Mike Varey, Elite Pix

# SOLDIERS TARGET PODIUM PUSH

THE Army will have two representatives on the bobsleigh track at this month's Winter Olympics after LSgt Lamin Deen (Gren Gds) and Pte Nick Gleeson (Para) were selected for Team GB.

Pilot Deen will lead one of two four-man crews at the Pyeongchang showpiece in what will be his second Games campaign and the soldier is being tipped as an outside medal bet in some quarters.

He claimed a silver medal at the World Cup event in the Canadian resort of Whistler in December and the squad as a whole have secured a further six top-ten finishes in the competition this season.

"I'm overwhelmed," Deen (pictured) told *SoldierSport* after the line-up was confirmed.

"Last time I was a little like

a rabbit in the headlights just taking it all in but this time we are going there to compete.

"We've been working on a lot of combinations to test our equipment and set-ups. There have been some mixed results but we feel we are ready to push for a medal.

"We are racing against the same people we have raced throughout the year and we know we can beat them.

"Now we face them at a neutral venue, which will really help us.

"The more runs you have down a track the more you find out how to tackle it.

"The Germans, on a home track, will find half a second on you but there won't be that advantage now."

Brakeman Gleeson's call comes after just two years in



**"WE ARE  
READY  
TO PUSH  
FOR A  
MEDAL"**

the Team GB fold.

He was recommended to the set-up by his coach at 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment and is still coming to terms with his inclusion.

"It is unreal," the Serviceman told *SoldierSport*.

"When I first saw the guys who are at world-class performance level I thought 'I can never do that', but here I am going to the Olympics.

"I'm one of the newest members of the squad and this is only my second season with Team GB.

"I'm still letting it all sink in but when we get out there we would love to finish on the podium. We have every possibility of winning a medal, there is nothing holding us back and we are going to give it our best shot." ■

Pictures: Dominic King



## TELEMARK'S TEST

THE slopes of Pralognan-la-Vanoise in France formed the backdrop for the annual Army Telemark Skiing Championships.

Around 80 soldiers took to the piste for the showdown, which began with five days of familiarisation training and tuition before progressing to the racing stages.

With icy conditions making life difficult for the athletes it was OCdt Ben Emsley (Bristol UOTC) and OCdt Ellie Thorn (Exeter UOTC) who showed the greatest consistency in the sprint and classic disciplines to emerge as the Service's overall male and female champions.

"We had a great couple of weeks that culminated with some fantastic racing," said Brig Suzanne Anderson, chair of Army Telemark. "This is a sport that is inclusive for all skiers.

"Seeing those who have had little previous experience developing to the stage where they are tackling the different aspects of Telemark and actually racing is really satisfying."

Anyone interested in getting involved should visit [www.awsa.org.uk/telemark](http://www.awsa.org.uk/telemark) or email [telemark@awsa.org.uk](mailto:telemark@awsa.org.uk)



# LIGHTFOOT LEADS THE WAY

**B**IATHLON star Sgt Amanda Lightfoot (AGC (SPS)) will make her Winter Olympic return this month after being named as Team GB's sole representative in the sport.

The soldier made her debut at the 2014 Games in Sochi – just six years after taking up the sport – and finished 71st in the 15-kilometre individual event and 75th in the 7.5-kilometre sprint.

But with further experience to her name the 30-year-old is expected to improve on her scores this time and after claiming 32nd spot in the 15-kilometre individual race at the 2017 World Championships she is well placed to succeed on the snow.

"It's absolutely amazing to be selected," Lightfoot told *SoldierSport*.

"It has been a roller coaster journey over the past four years so it is really nice to pick up my kit and officially be part of Team GB.

"The qualifying races ran up until January 21 so it has been a long wait but I'm really chuffed.

"I'm in a much better place than I was going into the last Games.

"I've got a better coaching system and training programme and have support in areas such as nutrition and psychology.

"Now it is all about doing the job on the range and hitting the targets and correct loop times. Small goals contribute to the bigger picture." ■



Picture: Marcel Laponder

"I'M IN  
A MUCH  
BETTER  
PLACE  
THAN  
I WAS  
GOING  
INTO THE  
LAST  
GAMES"



Picture: Anthony Kinsella

● A HOST of wounded veterans are vying for places at the Winter Paralympics in Pyeongchang, which get under way on March 8.

Invictus Games star Scott Meenagh (pictured), who served in 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, is hoping to compete in the Nordic skiing disciplines but faces competition from fellow ex-soldiers Steve Arnold and Terry Aherns.

Owen Pick, formerly of 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment, is in contention for the snowboarding squad, while Capt Jen Kehoe (RE) could potentially be named as a guide for the visually impaired ski team.

Team GB will finalise their line-up later this month.



# ARMY'S ELITE GEARED FOR AUSTRALIAN QUEST

**B**OXING star Cpl Alanna Nihell (RLC) is eyeing a golden return from Australia's Gold Coast following her inclusion in the Northern Ireland squad for the Commonwealth Games.

The Army team captain won a bronze medal at the Glasgow Games of 2014 and is now aiming to top the podium after a sublime run of 17 victories from 21 bouts over the past two seasons.

Such impressive form made the soldier a certainty for selection but the 32-year-old was taking nothing for granted ahead of the official announcement in early January.

As well as earning her place in a field of 13 boxers she was handed the extra bonus of being named women's team captain.

"I was confident of getting a spot as I have been performing well," Nihell told *SoldierSport*.

"I've fought against the number two and three in the world and

have held my own even though I lost. There was no real difference between us and I had forgotten how good I can be.

"The captaincy is a real honour. I've got the knowledge and experience which means the other girls look up to me. It is about leading by example and this is the pinnacle of my career."

Nihell is now based at the squad's Belfast camp and will head down under for three weeks of training and acclimatisation before the showpiece starts on April 4.

The athlete stepped up to 64kg after the last Games but has returned to her original weight for her latest medal bid.

"I feel a lot better this time round," she explained. "I trained hard over the summer and now have a nutritionist on board. Being more educated helps me hold the weight and I feel in great shape."

If Nihell is to realise her dream



**"MY  
GOAL IS  
TO WIN  
THAT  
GOLD  
MEDAL"**

of winning gold she faces a potential clash with defending champion and home favourite Shelly Watts, a boxer who beat her at the semi-final stage four years ago.

"I'm going over to her country and there's a chance we'll have to fight in her backyard," the Servicewoman added.

"I'm confident I can go there and make the final – my goal is to win that gold medal. I'll be disappointed if I don't as I believe I have a great opportunity this time."

"This is my second Games and the pressure is on me but that is something I thrive on, it brings out the best in me."

Northern Ireland have also called upon the marksmanship skills of Cpl Stuart Hill (R Irish).

The shooter will compete in the small-bore rifle three position and prone events but only found out about his inclusion when the final team

announcement was made on Facebook at the beginning of last month.

"Nobody knew who would be picked," Hill told *SoldierSport*. "I had hit the qualifying scores but it was a case of wait and see.

"I was quite shocked when I saw my name on the list. I didn't want to get my hopes up but it was a great confidence boost to see the hard work paying off.

"Now it is all about focusing on the improvements I need to make ahead of the Games."

The soldier will embark on a period of full-time training with his coach and has camps planned across the country as well as in Germany.

"I have set myself some targets and now I have to sit down with my coach and work out a way of achieving those," he added.

"I've got a few ideas but I want to keep things quiet at this stage.

"We have made some changes to my gun and firing position and things have been going well in training. Hopefully I can reproduce that in the matches."

Hill only started firing the small-bore rifle in June 2015 but believes his rapid elevation to the standard needed for the Commonwealth Games highlights the sporting prowess that exists within the Service.

He said: "This will be a great experience for me and is something to be proud of.

"It is also good news for the Army as it shows there is talent within the ranks. If soldiers are given a chance to shine they will do just that."



## GAMES IN NUMBERS

LENGTH IN DAYS OF THE GAMES - WHICH RUN FROM APRIL 4 TO 15

12

SPORTS ON THE ROSTER

23

MEDALS WON BY BOXERS FROM NORTHERN IRELAND AT THE 2014 GAMES

9

NUMBER OF TIMES CPL STUART HILL HIT THE QUALIFYING SCORE AHEAD OF BEING NAMED IN THE TEAM

2



## HOT SHOT'S NATIONAL CALL

PISTOL shooter Sgt Sam Gowin (RA) has seen his remarkable rise in the sport rewarded with a place in England's Commonwealth Games team.

The Army ace only started shooting competitively last year but after just six weeks of full-time training he caught the eye by reaching the country's minimum consideration score.

Gowin's form progressed from there and he went on to secure fourth place in the rapid-fire pistol at the Commonwealth Shooting Federation Championships – the test event ahead of April's Gold Coast showpiece.

The achievement left the national selectors with little option but to call upon his services for the Games.

"I trained hard beforehand but was still expecting to struggle," Gowin told *SoldierSport*. "Some of the best shots in the world were out there.

"Obviously, I was happy

with the result and I loved having the chance to perform in front of a big crowd, there was a great atmosphere.

"The coaches were saying it was shame I was not going to the Commonwealth Games.

"Initially I was named as first reserve but I eventually got an email to confirm I was in the team.

"It was overwhelming."

The soldier has refused to set any targets ahead of his first shot and will be opting for a considered approach on the day.

"I'm just going to stay cool and shoot like I normally do," he explained.

"If that happens it will be good enough for me.

"I'm not expecting to come away with anything but a good performance would definitely be nice."

Gowin will then target a World Cup place with a view to qualifying for the World Championships in September. His long-term goal is the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo. ■



# GAME BRIEF

**DATE:** January 17, 2018  
**COMPETITION:** Army v Cambridge University – rugby union friendly  
**VENUE:** Grange Road Stadium, Cambridge

ARMY		
Titchard-Jones	Austin	Smith
1	2	3
Bean	Smith	
4	5	
Cross	Dawson	
6	7	
Evans	Dixon (c)	
9	10	
Leathem	Davetanivalu	
12	13	
Edwards	Rokoduguni	
11	14	
Davies		
15		

**SUBS:** Brown, Dowding, Gill, Parkins, Miller, Vunivesilevu, Nacavamuto, Wilson

## COACH'S COMMENTS:

**"WE HAD A STRONG PACK AND THEY SET THE PLATFORM FOR OUR BACKS. WE SCORED SOME DAZZLING TRIES - IT WAS A GREAT DISPLAY"**



Picture: Alligin Photography

# STUDENTS SWEPT ASIDE



**T**HE Army's rugby union stars made an emphatic start to their 2018 campaign as they demolished the students of Cambridge University in a 73-10 rout.

Sig John Davetanivalu (R Signals), Bdr Pete Austin and LBdr Craig Edwards (both RA) all crossed twice as the ruthless Reds ran in ten tries against their shell-shocked rivals, with the tally being further boosted by a late penalty score.

The boot of Jake Hennessey gave the hosts an early lead but it proved to be the calm before the storm as the soldiers asserted their authority.

Davetanivalu capitalised on the strong running of Austin and Cpl Matt Dawson (Int Corps) to open his account midway through the first half before rounding off a swift cross-field move moments later.

The Army's policy of favouring attacking territory over kickable penalties reaped dividends in the 29th minute as Cpl Lewis Bean (Rifles) crashed over from a line-out and the visitors added two further efforts on the stroke of half-

time through Austin (pictured) and Capt Stu Cross (Yorks).

The onslaught continued after the break as Edwards used his searing pace to touch down in the corner and Austin capped a superb individual display as he darted to the line following a surge from the forwards.

Lcpl Chris Leathem (R Irish) rounded off a clinical break to post further points on the hour mark and the centre turned provider soon after as Edwards ran clear on the wing.

Replacement scrum half LBdr Sailasa Vunivesilevu (RA) maintained the Army's stranglehold as he jinked to the line following a prolonged spell of pressure in the Cambridge 22 before a penalty try completed the scoring at the death.

Dawson and Austin formed the spearhead of a dominant Army pack, with both forwards making impressive carries at will. The pace and clinical finishing of the backs will also have pleased head coach Capt Andy Sanger (RE), who was preparing the team for their clash with Oxford University as this issue went to press. ■

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## SPORT SHORTS



### Injury ends Roko's hopes

**R**UGBY union ace LCpl Semesa Rokoduguni (Scots DG) has been ruled out of England's Six Nations campaign following surgery on a shoulder injury.

The 30-year-old wing was forced from the field during Bath's match with Exeter in early December and was expected to be out for two months.

However, a longer recovery period is now needed and he will miss the entirety of the tournament, which starts on February 3.

Rokoduguni was recalled to the squad for the autumn internationals and impressed as he came off the bench to score in wins over Argentina and Samoa.

The Army will be hoping he returns to fitness in time for this season's Inter-Services campaign, which gets under way against the Royal Air Force on April 11.



### Sappers seal final place

**D**EFENDING champions the Royal Engineers booked their place in this season's Woolwich Cup final with a 3-1 win over the Royal Signals.

The sappers will take on the Adjutant General's Corps – who defeated the Infantry in the other semi-final – in the showpiece fixture on April 18.

In other football news, the Army women saw their hopes of Southern Counties Cup success dashed by a 3-1 loss to Kent.

# ARTISTS RAISE THEIR GAME

**B**RAZILIAN jiu-jitsu continued its upward curve in Army sporting circles at the inaugural Armed Forces, Veterans and Emergency Services Championships in Aldershot.

More than 130 competitors took to the mat for a tough day of martial arts action watched by former UFC star Roger Gracie – one of the most successful jiu-jitsu fighters of recent times.

The Brazilian ace trains a number of Service athletes and has been a keen supporter of the set-up in its formative years.

He said: "The growth in the discipline is great to see, the level is so high."

Among those taking part was blind veteran Robert Long. A former lance bombardier in the Royal Artillery, he was wounded on operations in Afghanistan in 2008.

He tried a number of sports during his recovery but jiu-jitsu was the pursuit he followed to a higher standard. Long recently won the Army Championships against able-bodied rivals.

"I was proud to be a soldier and this is a way for me to get that back," he said. "It's great to compete with these guys." ■



**"I WAS PROUD TO BE A SOLDIER AND THIS IS A WAY TO GET THAT BACK"**



● THE latest Grand Military Gold Cup Day will be staged at Sandown Park on Friday, March 9.

Armed Forces jockeys will compete in two of the six races scheduled for the day, with the remainder featuring some of the country's finest professional talent. Discounted tickets are available for personnel at [www.sandown.co.uk](http://www.sandown.co.uk) by quoting GM2018.

# MONTH IN SPORT

February's key fixtures...



**WHAT:** Inter-Services Ski Championships  
**WHEN:** February 3-10  
**WHERE:** Meribel, France  
**NEED TO KNOW:** With

the Army Championships complete the Service's top stars lock horns with their Forces rivals during the highlight of the winter sports season



**WHAT:** Inter-Services Under-23 Football Championships – Navy v Army  
**WHEN:** February 7  
**WHERE:** Portsmouth  
**NEED TO KNOW:** Back-to-back defeats last season – including a 4-2 home defeat to the Navy – saw the Army's young guns relinquish their title. The Reds will be looking for a positive start in this opening fixture



**WHAT:** Army women v England Under-20s rugby union  
**WHEN:** February 14  
**WHERE:** Army Rugby Stadium, Aldershot  
**NEED TO KNOW:** The

Servicewomen have become regular opponents for England's finest young talent and they'll be looking to avenge a 38-15 defeat in 2017

## INVICTUS IN NUMBERS

TOP SPEED,  
IN MILES PER  
HOUR, OF  
THE JAGUAR  
F-TYPE  
RACING CAR

**200**

LITRE SUPER  
CHARGED  
V8 PETROL  
ENGINE

**5**

MEMBERS  
ON THE  
TEAM –  
INCLUDING  
FOUR  
FORCES  
DRIVERS

**6**

ROUNDS  
STAGED IN  
THE 2018  
SERIES AT  
TRACKS  
SUCH AS  
BRANDS  
HATCH AND  
OULTON  
PARK

**9**



## MOTORSPORT

## INVICTUS HITS THE TRACK

**A** SELECT group of wounded, injured and sick veterans will compete in the 2018 British GT Championship as part of the newly launched Invictus Games Racing team.

The set-up – which is a collaboration between James Holder, of clothing brand Superdry, and the Invictus Games Foundation – will feature two bespoke Jaguar F-Type SVR racing cars that have been in development for more than a year.

Motorsport fanatic Holder was inspired to launch the project after watching the 2016 Invictus Games in Orlando and believes it will play a vital role in the recovery process.

He said: "This will enable ex-Servicemen and women who have experienced physical or psychological trauma to compete against each other and the rest of the top-level racing field in cars that are tailor-made for them."

The championship will

feature events at some the UK's most iconic circuits, with the opening round being held at Oulton Park on March 31.

A series of trials were held over the past six months to identify and train four Forces' drivers and the cars have been adjusted to meet their needs.

Among those taking to the track is former soldier Basil Rawlinson. He served in 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment and was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder following a tour of Afghanistan. He also suffered with degenerative discs in his back and was discharged from the Army in 2014.

"I am hugely grateful to Invictus Games Racing for giving me this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," the driver said.

"I am looking forward to the thrill of the competition and the opportunity to be part of a tight team – things that were integral to my time in The Parachute Regiment." ■



# Final Word

Pictures: Peter Davies

Interviews: Cliff Caswell



People walking too slowly. I just want to get to where I am going in reasonable time!

**Lt George Gillard, Rifles**



I tend to brush off the stresses of military life. They can be demanding but I deal with them. Bad driving, on the other hand, really annoys me. People who don't indicate are the worst – they seem to have no idea where they are going.

**Cpl Ben Latham, Rifles**



**I think some stress can be good, particularly in training. You want to be able to push the bounds of capability to get results. But you need to manage stress and get a good work-life balance.**

**Lt Tom Callard, Scots**

To be honest, I don't stress about anything. But we should look out for each other. On an operation such as Shader in Iraq you spend six months in a confined space with people and you learn about them – I think I would notice if somebody wasn't themselves.

**Rfn Jordan Hobbs, Rifles**



## On edge

*Soldier* asked troops what stresses them out in life



People who comment on military issues without any experience annoy me. They speak without having a clue about what we're doing. There seems to be an element of the population that has a skewed perception of reality.

**Cpl John MacDaid, Rifles**



You don't have the same freedom in Army life as you do on civvy street – you could look at that as a stress, but some guys need structure and I really like it. I love coming to work because of the routine we have.

**Pte Kieran Toman, Scots**

I am the adjutant in a Reserve unit and I think it's important to remember the particular stresses that these soldiers can be under. They are very dedicated people who put themselves forward for service. We need to be aware that they have a life outside the Armed Forces, and be alert to any issues that may arise from this.

**Capt Toby Hartle, RLC**

● Turn to page 22 for stress-busting tips



Elistair Safe-T Tethering Station  
& Orion drone

Level Peaks Associates are proud to partner with award-winning company Elistair; industry leaders in the design and manufacture of tethered stations for remote controlled drones.

Their innovative technologies have opened a new field of applications for drones such as persistent aerial surveillance, continuous aerial broadcasting, complex industrial inspection or traffic monitoring.

The Safe-T integrates with the Elistair patented ultra-light micro-tether, providing their Orion drone with continuous power. With its smart power management, its safety features, and its leading gram/watt ratio, Safe-T has thousands of hours of flight reliability, logged all around the globe.

Secured by a UPS safety battery, the Safe-T micro-tether is armoured with Kevlar to withstand over 1,500 Newtons of traction, and provides an unbroken and unjammable data transfer at up to 200Mb/s.



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ULTRA-LIGHT MICRO-TETHER TECHNOLOGY



PATENTED SMART WINCH SYSTEM



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UNLIMITED POWER AND DATA



PLUG & FLY CONNECTION

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The system allows for safer missions in complex scenarios, with complete protection of surrounding equipment and people. The system has been approved for tethered flights by the DGAC (French civil aviation), and has been successfully deployed by government bodies and industrial companies in over 30 countries.

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