



East Anglia Reserve
Forces and Cadets Association
Annual Report
2022-2023



ABOUT US

Welcome to East Anglia RFCA.
We hope you enjoy reading our Annual Report.



WHO WE ARE

East Anglia RFCA is widely recognised by its target audiences as the most valuable, knowledgeable and authoritative body in support of Reserve Forces and Cadet Organisations in East Anglia.

WHAT WE DO

Cadets and Youth

The RFCA provide the professional support staff who maintain and run the Army Cadet county HQs, the equipment and transport that Army Cadets use for their activities, and administer enquiries, new joiners and the adult volunteer membership.



In addition to raising awareness of the positive contribution of Sea Cadets, Air Cadets and Army Cadets in the region, East Anglia RFCA provides regional support for the recruitment of Army Cadet Force Adult Volunteers.

Estates

We manage and maintain over 200 Reserve Forces and Cadet sites across the region, the acquisition and disposal of land and buildings and adapting homes for injured service personnel.

Engagement

We assist the civil community, employers and local authorities with understanding the needs of Defence people and developing appropriate support and services for the region.

We also help to improve the knowledge and understanding of Reserves and Cadets within the wider community.

Members act as local ambassadors across the range of RFCA interests.

The volunteer membership of the Association is the enduring interface between the local community and the Ministry of Defence.

Volunteer Members are drawn from officers of all three services and cadet forces, representatives from local authorities, local business communities and charities. Members seek out opportunities for the promotion of the RFCA's key messages amongst influencers and those who can provide input. That they are prepared to give so freely of their time is a great testament to the high regard in which our Reserves and Cadets are held.

CHAIR

I am pleased to report that our organisation is in a resilient state because we have a most formidable team.

I think it fair to say that 2022 was a busy and eventful year. It saw the joy of COVID restrictions lifted shortly followed by the start of the devastating conflict in Ukraine. We then enjoyed the highs of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations and then so soon afterwards, the heartfelt national mourning at the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

It looks like the challenging economic climate we are facing will remain with us for the foreseeable future and with it comes the continued constraints on funding that we have dealt with for a decade or more. I am pleased to report that our organisation is in a resilient state and perfectly capable of managing the challenge that presents, as we are fortunate to have a most formidable team.

Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine has developed into a war of attrition. That war, the first in Europe for a generation, is placing all sorts of demands on the MOD in terms of supplying Ukrainian forces with weapons and support resources as well as training Ukrainian soldiers in the UK. It has also highlighted the vital importance of the Reserve Forces to the UK's security, which has reiterated the criticality of our Engagement activities in gaining the support of the various communities, including Employers, across the six counties of East Anglia.

At the time of writing there has been no confirmation on the legislative aspects of the National RFCA. That means the NDPB is no closer to being set up. Separate to that we continue, along with our fellow RFCAs, to make progress with the business improvement measures that will ensure our fitness for the future. We do so in our current legal guise. Against that backdrop, the CRFCA Board's role is emerging as the MOD's new Sponsor Board matures and adopts a 'Holding to Account' regime in its oversight of the RFCAs. That regime has led inevitably to an increasing number of 'Requests for Information' coming out of the CRFCA and our management team is dealing with them robustly, ensuring that our people are not overly distracted from delivering our MOD business as usual.

I congratulate Captain Ant Chapman RNR on being appointed Vice Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire.



MR IAN TWINLEY DL
CHAIR

We are indeed fortunate to have Association Board Members of his calibre. I also offer my thanks to Ray Wilkinson, our Chief Executive who has announced his intent to retire with effect from 1 October this year, for his contribution to the Association. I wish him well in the next stage of his life.

As my tenure as Chair of the Association Board draws to a close, I look back on my time with great fondness. My involvement with the Association goes back some 14 years when I joined the Employer Engagement Group, became its Chair, ultimately becoming the Association Chair in 2018. I thank you all for the support you have given to me during the last five years. I look forward to the AGM and the opportunity to thank many of you personally. I also wish my successor, who will be elected at the AGM, the very best of success for their tenure.

CADETS

A fresh intake of young people and adult volunteers reveals an invigorated and flourishing cadet scene.



This year has seen an impressive post-Covid bounce back as residential training for the cadets returned with a flourish.

Whilst many of the more senior cadets had moved on, the overall numbers were buoyed with a significant increase in young cadets joining. This, combined with an overall increase in Adult Instructors, albeit with some shortages in certain areas, leaves us with an invigorated and flourishing cadet scene.

Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Army Cadet Force

Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Army Cadet Force have been very active in sports over the last 12 months, taking part in regional and national ACF sports. In football, at the regionals held in Colchester, the junior girls and senior boys teams won their groups and the junior boys and senior girls took second, the junior girls and senior boys then went to Altcar for the Nationals where the senior boys took second overall. In the Regional Athletics, the girls' teams won their respective age groups and the boys teams took 3rd place, meaning 3rd place overall in the region with eleven cadets selected to attend the Nationals. With Members of Essex and Lincolnshire ACF, cadets represented the 7th Infantry Brigade and the Eastern

Region, winning three out of four age groups and winning the overall Athletics Trophy. Beds & Herts also took 1st place at the National Swimming Competition held at Grantham.

Cadets and Adult Volunteers of Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Army Cadet Force have continued to receive recognition and awards for First Aid, with 43 awarded in the last year alone.

As well as Army Cadet Charitable Trust UK awards, certificates from The Society for the Protection of Life from Fire and Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Service have all been awarded. The scenarios have been incredibly varied; from during school or cadet activities to whilst cadets and adults have been in their local towns and communities.

Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Army Cadet Force has now received 150 first aid awards since 2016 following the presentation of an ACCT UK National Praiseworthy Action award certificate to Staff Cadet Sergeant Adams-Piggott (bottom right). He carried out first aid to his father following a fall down the stairs resulting in a head wound. Due to a possible delay for the ambulance, as his mother applied pressure to the wound, he drove his father to the hospital.



CADETS

From the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee to anniversaries and awards, 2022 was a year full of celebration.



RAF Air Cadets Bedfordshire & Cambridgeshire Wing

RAF Air Cadets from across Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Wing were on parade in February 2023 to commemorate the 82nd anniversary since the formation of the Air Training Corps (ATC). Taking the salute was AVM Richard Maddison OBE MA RAF, Air Officer Commanding 22 Group, Royal Air Force.

Air Cadet volunteers from across Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire gathered at RAF Wyton to receive Cadet Forces Medals and clasps for uniformed service totalling an incredible 150 years. The ceremony was held in the Officers Mess at RAF Wyton with medals being presented by Group Captain Dave Boreham, Regional Commandant Central and East Region, in the presence of the recipients' families and friends.



Cambridgeshire Army Cadet Force

Cambridgeshire Army Cadet Force had an immensely successful 2022, recovering from the pandemic, growing their numbers and holding a very successful Annual Camp at Wretham,

Thetford. The cadets really enjoyed themselves with an action-packed programme of adventurous activities, including motorcycling, archery, clay pigeon shooting and fieldcraft.



They also held a very successful Jubilee Garden Party in July, which proved to be a great opportunity for cadets and CFAVs to bring their families to find out more about what the ACF does, and for everyone to have a great time! It was

also a nice opportunity to present some well-earned awards. In July, Ct Sgt Jack Harris scored an extraordinary sweep of victories in the National Cadet Clay Shooting Competition, resulting in him having the highest overall score in the Army Cadet Force.



CADETS

Across the region, cadets have enjoyed expeditions, outings, annual camps and once in a lifetime experiences.



RAF Air Cadets Essex Wing

In October, cadets from Essex Wing participated in a STEM Day at Olympus, where they designed, made and tested their own Endoscopes.

The cadets were challenged to meet various mechanical objectives and produce a working endoscope, putting their skills and creativity to the test. In addition, each team had to design a sales pitch and determine the build cost of their product. The cadets gained in-depth knowledge of the technology used by the market leaders and had the opportunity to develop their mechanical and electrical skills. The staff at Olympus were instrumental in making the day an interesting and educational experience for all.

Cadet Warrant Officer Brett-Hockley from 1483 Brentwood Squadron RAFAC had the opportunity to experience personal flying time in a full-motion simulator during a tour of the British Airways Heathrow Training and Engineering Centre. She was joined by fellow RAF Air Cadets and received training from British Airways pilots at the controls of a Boeing 777. The tour offered a unique and educational behind-the-scenes experience, including a slide down an inflatable emergency slide, visiting the cockpits of a Boeing 777 and 787 Dreamliner under maintenance, and engaging in conversations with pilots, engineers and industry professionals.



RAF Air Cadets Hertfordshire & Buckinghamshire Wing

Welwyn Garden City's First Mayor's Cadet Flight Sergeant Adriaans of 1166 (Welwyn Garden City) Squadron has recently been appointed as the first Mayor's Cadet of Welwyn and Hatfield Council. This honourable position has come through her dedication and consistency for the Squadron and the local community over the last four and a half years.

This appointment means FS Adriaans will assist the mayor at specific functions throughout the year and represent both the Mayor and Royal Air Force Air Cadets at her outings. She will set the standard for future Mayor Cadets to strengthen the bond between the local community and youth cadet forces.



Hertfordshire District Sea Cadet Corps

In October 2022, Hertfordshire District Sea Cadet Corps hosted a Trafalgar Day parade in Hertford. The event saw over 175 cadets from across four cadet forces on parade and the salute was taken by the Lord Lieutenant Robert Voss CBE CStJ accompanied by Admiral Sir Trevor Soar KCB OBE DL. The cadets were greeted by lots of spectators, the Massed Bands of the Royal Navy Volunteer Bands and some fantastic weather.



CADETS

Our thanks and appreciation goes to all of the wonderful Adult Volunteers that have enriched the lives of countless teens.



RAF Air Cadets Norfolk & Suffolk Wing

Dacre Sword Winning Cadet Warrant Officer Zoe Webb from 1986 (Wymondham) Sqn, Norfolk scooped the top prize in the Emerging Talent Category at the Women in Defence Awards.

Following an outstanding career within the Air Cadets which included going solo as part of the Air Cadet Flying Scheme and completing the prestigious Junior Leaders course, Zoe is now continuing to support others as a Civilian Instructor transferring to 1070 (Diss) Sqn.



Suffolk Cadets honoured the Fallen by raising £2000 to purchase a memorial for a World War 2 Bomber crew who crashed in 1941.

Whilst completing a Commonwealth War Graves project, cadets from 1331 (Stowmarket) Squadron noticed five graves with the same date on them prompting them to investigate further the circumstances of the deaths. The graves belonged to five crew members of a Wellington Bomber that crashed in 1941 so they took it upon themselves to raise the money for a permanent memorial in their memory.



Suffolk Army Cadet Force

A handful of Army Cadets from Suffolk and Cambridgeshire were fortunate enough to travel to New Delhi as part of the Indian Youth Exchange Programme. The visit was to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the country's independence and to celebrate 75 years of the founding of the Indian National Cadet Corps (NCC). This all culminated in the Republic Day Camp which lasted for 15 days, with 10 cadets from the UK and 18 other countries participating.

Cadets had the opportunity to join their Indian counterparts in celebrating their history by uniting with them in their Prime Minister's rally parade. As part of this parade the cadets performed a march past and cultural practices for the Prime Minister and the Director General of the NCC.

After five years as Commandant, Colonel Andy Smith handed the post over to Colonel Rob Simpkin in February 2023. Collectively, the gentlemen have served 61 years with the ACF and both received the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate of Meritorious Service for their dedication to the organisation.

Col Simpkin joined the ACF as a cadet in 1980 and has progressed to hold all major appointments within Suffolk Army Cadet Force including A Company Training Officer, DofE Officer, C Company Training Officer, OC A Company and Deputy Commandant.

Col Andy has now taken up post as Assistant Commandant in the rank of Major so we look forward to continuing to work with both of them.



RESERVES

From high octane adventure to meeting Royalty, Reserve units have enjoyed a welcome return to full activity and engagement schedules.



3rd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment

Exercise SteelBack Ski is 3 Royal Anglian's annual Adventure Training skiing expedition to Austria. It gives an opportunity for members of the battalion, of a variety of ranks, to gain their Ski Foundation SF1 and SF2 qualifications.

Sadly the training package was cancelled during 2020 and 2021 due to Covid-19 but when the 2022 expedition was given the green light, 26 skiers and instructors were delighted to have the opportunity to further their skiing skills and hopefully gain additional qualifications.

Summer Adventure Training was severely affected by the loss of the unit's usual Totley Camp venue which led to two events being cancelled. In September the Anglians moved to a new location, The Leslie Johnson Centre in Warslow, Peak District.

Activities on offer included mountain biking, rock climbing, hill walking, canoeing and caving. The dry summer was evident, particularly at the Tittesworth reservoir where the canoeing and paddle boarding took place and the water level was a quarter of its usual capacity. The event also focused on bringing on and encouraging new activity instructors.



6 Regiment Army Air Corps

677 Squadron, 6 AAC were invited to display once again at the Sandringham Flower Show 2022 after a three-year absence, showing off their historical roots within the Suffolk and Norfolk Yeomanry. Squadron members are invited to attend the day with their civilian employers and families as guests to enjoy a buffet lunch, entry to the show and have the opportunity to meet AAC Colonel in Chief, HRH The Prince of Wales.

This being the Queen's Platinum Jubilee meant that it also gave the opportunity for all eligible members of the Squadron to be presented their medals by the, at the time HRH The Prince of Wales, now King Charles. This was a proud day for many of the Corps reservists.



RESERVES

Reservists have benefited from a variety of training packages and deployments.



158 Regiment Royal Logistic Corps

Eight members of 158 Regiment RLC deployed to Birmingham for five weeks on Operation Unity in the summer, supporting the Commonwealth Games. Roles were varied but centred on the control of the personal search areas and ensuring the public and athletes were able to safely access the Games. Those deployed worked with all three Services, civilian security contractors, games volunteers, and civilian police officers from different forces. When off-duty, the troops were able to access and watch the games at their leisure.



In May, the regiment deployed to Cyprus for their Annual Continuous Training (ACT) Exercise. Ex Koronos Hunter was a two-week Dismounted Close Combat Training exercise designed to test the skills and drills of the regiment in the robust heat of Cyprus. The regiment conducted a second ACT in September for those who were unable to deploy in May. This ACT concentrated on trade qualifications, driver upgrades and license acquisition but there was also an opportunity to gain Range and Defence Train the Trainer qualifications.



2623 Squadron, Royal Auxillary Air Force Regiment, RAF Reserves

In November, as the culmination of their training year, the Gunners from 2623 Sqn took part in a series of exercises simulating a special forces attack on a deployed RAF asset. A patrol advancing through close country was confronted at close quarters by the enemy. Battle drills were tested and the Gunners fought on to destroy them in their patrol base. The attacks were pressed home with grenades and at the point of the bayonet! In the most realistic conditions, 2623 Sqn demonstrated the RAF Regiment at its best, fighting for control of the air, on the ground.



The days surrounding the Queen's funeral were a solemn period for all in the military. By pure coincidence, the timing of the Annual Continuous Training afforded the Sqn the privilege of contributing to this unprecedented occasion. Sqn personnel deployed to London supporting police roadblocks, assisting the public, conducting quick reaction force activities during peak periods and assisting those with accessibility needs through Westminster Hall during the lying-in-state period. During the day of the funeral, personnel lined the procession route whilst others stood-to at locations such as Horse Guards to fill gaps and marshal civilians.

RESERVES

Officer Cadets had the opportunity to travel far and wide as well as learning essential military skills.



Cambridge University Officer Training Corps

This year, CUOTC has exploited the fact we can freely travel again. They have undertaken expeditions to Spain completing a weeks rock climbing in the beautiful region of Calpe; to the French Alps to introduce Officer Cadets to the basics of skiing and the slightly trickier fundamentals of ski touring; to Chamonix on a wide variety of challenging activities including mountain biking, trekking, climbing and tackling the infamous Via Ferratas; to Corsica to continue the trekking and climbing theme; back to the French Alps to navigate the Tour de Mont Blanc circuit; as well as a few mountain trips more locally to the well-trodden mountains of Snowdonia and a deer stalking exercise in the rugged Scottish Highlands.

All of this travel has not been at the expense of green military skills. OCdts deployed on a Shooting Camp in Altcar, consistently beating other reserve teams with one OCdt collecting an AR50 shooter award. Summer Camp (ADX) was for the first time joined with East Midlands University OTC which was a fantastic opportunity to show strength in numbers on a well-structured fortnight of leadership coaching, sports, fitness, live firing, and green skills training culminating in a final exercise in Estmere Village.



Cambridge University Royal Navy Unit

Officer Cadets visited Tignes, France for the Royal Navy Ski championships. They were able to take part in all levels of skiing and snowboarding from novice to expert whilst enjoying the beautiful surroundings of the French Alps. The Royal Navy Ski championships take place every year with spaces available for URNU OCdts to take part and meet regular and reserve service personnel which gives them an excellent insight into the different types of Adventurous Training available in the Royal Navy.

There have also been several opportunities for OCdts from Cambridge to spend time at sea on Royal Navy warships, notably their affiliated Type 23 Frigate HMS Portland. OCdts were invited to sea in the south coast exercise areas where they were able to witness high speed manoeuvres and learn about the ship's capabilities. They were also able to go to sea on RFA Tideforce to see first-hand how the fleet tanker supports the Royal Navy on operations around the world.



RESERVES

A significant number of awards and Platinum Jubilee Medals were presented to our Reserves across the region.



HMS Wildfire

Royal Naval Reserve unit HMS Wildfire held its Annual Ceremonial Divisions in June 2022. The Inspecting Officer was RAdm Jude Terry Royal Navy. They were joined by Sea Cadet unit TS Renown, Merchant Taylors' School CCF and Guard members from the Hertfordshire Royal Marines Cadets units. A number of awards and Platinum Jubilee Medals were presented, before celebrating with a Jubilee Street Party for families and friends, with a superb HM Queen-inspired cake sponsored by East Anglia RFCA. A special 'Lifetime Achievement Award' was presented to CPO Ian Bartram on his retirement from the RNR after 36 years' service.



MPS Reserve Company

The Company deployed to Longmoor and Rolleston to conduct their annual camp. They spent the first two days in the field within a Harbour area conducting the Soldier First syllabus. The second phase of the training at Imber Village involved an Urban Ops training package and for the majority, this was their first look at this type of training. Finally, the third phase was a four-day range package followed by close-quarters combat shoots with carbine rifles. The Reserve Company had an eventful training exercise completing all training objectives and enjoying their time away.



No3 RAF Police (Reserves) Squadron (3PS)

Along with No2 Counter Intelligence (CI) & Security (Sy) Squadron (Sqn) and Special Investigation Branch, No3 RAF Police (Reserves) Squadron (3PS) form No 1 Police & Security Wing, part of the newly formed Air Security Force. The Sqn is tasked with providing specialist policing support to the Wing and delivering the Police & Sy Detachment to the annual Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT). The last year has been busy delivering on these tasks. The Sqn currently has 21 reservists delivering support across many of the regular units on what is termed Special Constabulary Relationship. This partners a reservist with an RAFP unit near to their home, or specialist investigation or CI where they hold that skill.

Royal International Air Tattoo 22 is the largest military air show in the world, where annually 3PS deliver the Policing & Sy effect in partnership with local and MOD police, as well as US Air Force elements. The detachment oversees the RAF Sy Force of some 600 personnel to support the safe delivery of the event to 200,000 attendees.

Following the return from RIAT 22 the Sqn celebrated its 21st Anniversary with a formal parade and Dinner. The reviewing Officer Honorary Air Cdre Dame Sara Thornton DBE QPM presented Campaign, Service and Jubilee medals.

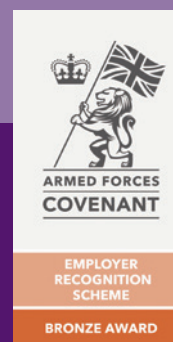
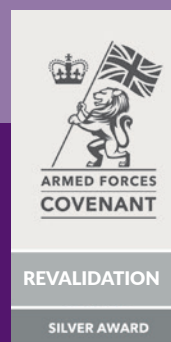
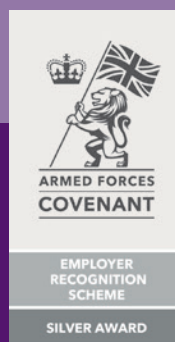
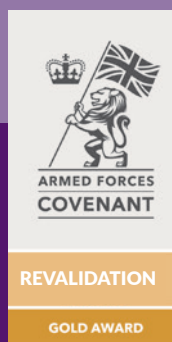
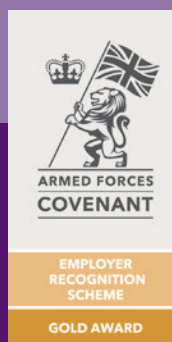
The Sqn was also subject to an OFSTED inspection of its training capability and capacity, which delivers Phase 2 to all RAFP reserves from around the UK. The Sqn was graded 'Good' in all areas and overall, and represents a major achievement.

Toward the end of the year all RAFP units were renamed in line with a major reorganisation. 3PS, although dropping the Tactical, maintained its place within the ORBAT as No 3 Sqn. The Sqn continues to play its part, delivering high levels of operational output and mobilisations.

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

The Employer Engagement team celebrate another spectacular year for supportive employers in the Employer Recognition Scheme.

EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME 2022



With the gradual return to business as usual during 2022, the Employer Engagement team were busy hosting events to welcome back our supportive employers.

One of our most spectacular events was the late Queen's Birthday Parade where we were able to host our 2020 Gold Award winners in lieu of their Gold Award presentation event. Following the Parade, we were fortunate to be able to watch the Flypast from the East India Club and capture the flight in formation celebrating Her Majesty's 70 years as head of our Nation.



2022 was a bumper year in terms of the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme.

11 employers were recognised for their Advocacy on behalf of Defence People with a Gold Award, 27 employers achieving a Silver Award for demonstrating their support and 93 starting their Partnering with Defence Journey by gaining a Bronze Award. We have always known that our employers are extremely supportive and this year was no exception.

We were extremely pleased to be able to recognise 40 employers who Revalidated their Silver Award, the majority for the second time, giving eight continuous years of support.

Morson Group successfully Revalidated their Gold Award and start their sixth year as an advocate for the Defence People Agenda.

All revalidations show a remarkable commitment, one we should all celebrate.

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

Our Employer Engagement team continue to work to establish and maintain strong, mutually-beneficial partnerships with employers in support of Defence and the Armed Forces Community.



The Royal Automobile Club was the venue for our Gold Award Presentation evening where our Gold Winners were hosted by The Defence Staff (Personnel Capability) Rear Admiral Hally, The Defence Staff (Reserve & Cadets) Major-General Marc Overton and Commandant General (RAUX) Air Vice Marshall Ranald Munro.



Our Silver Award winners were celebrated at Madingley Hall, Cambridge hosted by the Lord Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, Mrs Julie Spence OBE QPM and Col Sam Plant MBE of 7th Light Mechanised Brigade Combat Team.



The support given by employers is extremely valuable in maintaining the capability of our Reserve Forces and in assisting with the resettlement of service leavers.

It is important to recognise the support given and what better way than by inviting employers to experience the British Military's leadership. Eighty employers attended two Military Leadership events where they were given an insight to the theory of military leadership before being put through their paces on practical problem solving. As well as providing a look at military leadership, the events provided an opportunity for non-military employees to experience some of what their reservist colleagues undertake.



It's also vital that we facilitate military briefings for our employers and our VIP speaker, ACDS Major-General Marc Overton gave an update on the use of the Reserve Forces at our annual Royal Norfolk Show Reception where the employers took advantage of the opportunity to discuss their thoughts.



The Employer Engagement Team extend a sincere thank you to all military units, Reserve and Regular, for their unstinting support and commitment to us and, acknowledge without it, our efforts would not be as successful – Thank You.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement was re-invigorated with a welcome return to well attended face-to-face events and activity.

We work closely with local communities to increase the profile of our Cadet and Reserve Units and help Local Authorities understand the needs of the Armed Forces Community. We are in regular contact with many of our Local Authorities, their officers and elected members.

In the past year we have continued to deliver briefings to disseminate information on the Association's work and that of the Armed Forces Covenant. Throughout the year East Anglia RFCA attends and contributes to local Armed Forces Covenant Boards across the six counties. The initiatives and projects delivered by these groups are far reaching and benefit not only the Armed Forces community but the civil community as a whole.

Representatives of East Anglia RFCA also hosted a stand at two Army Engagement Group Presentations in St Albans and Bedford. At each, more than 100 people from the local community gained a better understanding of the Army and what it means to employ a reservist or veteran.

Many events (including the Lord Lieutenant Awards) saw a welcome return to face-to-face activity. One such event was the Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk's Annual Awards which took place in October. Certificates of Meritorious Service were awarded to Lieutenant (RN) IM Partridge – Volunteer Cadet Corps (ex Capt Suffolk ACF), Colonel AT Smith – Commandant Suffolk ACF, Sergeant M Jeffs – 677 Sqn, 6 Army Air Corps and Flight Lieutenant R Appleby – OC 2470 (Sudbury) Sqn RAF Air Cadets. Lady Clare, Countess of Euston also appointed her new Cadets at the ceremony; Cadet Staff Sergeant B Woodcock – Royal Hospital School CCF(A), Cadet Corporal E West – C Company Suffolk ACF and Cadet Warrant Officer CGJ Wilson – 2470 (Sudbury) Sqn RAF Air Cadets.



The late Queen's Platinum Jubilee year proved to be one full of Royal engagements.

Both the Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, Mr Robert Voss CBE CStJ and the Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, Mrs Helen Nellis CVO, presented Army Cadet Force adult instructors with awards at a parade organised in honour of HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Cadet instructors received a Platinum Jubilee medal for service to their community.



More than 30 cadets supported the first ever Cambridgeshire County Day, the highlight of which was a visit from their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales. The County Day was an opportunity to celebrate the best of the County, its people, businesses, charities and other organisations.



During a December visit to Luton, His Royal Highness, King Charles, took the opportunity to meet and speak with all of the Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire's Cadets who admirably assisted with the visit and formed part of the guard of honour.



COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications team works across all areas of the business to ensure our key messaging is amplified.

A small team of communication professionals deliver central support to each department in the Association. The communications priorities are aligned with the Association's main effort; as directed by the Management Plan each year.

We draw on the combined knowledge and experience of all 13 RFCAs, also collaborating with Defence and cadet organisations to deliver the best value and service to our stakeholders.

Support to the Estates team included assisting with the development of the DREAM-compliant Buildings Manual for new building projects on the Defence Estate including the new RAF Air Cadets' premises in Chelmsford. Communications also assisted with the processing of parcel of land disposals through DIO and liaising with external service providers.

The communications team's support to the cadet units included extending the reach of their social media activities and drawing on our network of online members to increase the reach of their stories highlighting their achievements and benefits. We are proud to work with media officers in the cadet forces to share their successes through our networks.

In all, the team wrote 50 articles this year. All were published on the East Anglia RFCA website, emailed to subscribers, shared on social media and the top stories are included in this report. Articles ranged from human interest stories to digests of government publications and

their impact on the Association's support to Reserves and Cadets. Our supporters, members and local influencers share these stories with their networks in talking about the benefits of working with Reserve and Cadet Forces, expanding the reach of our key messaging to audience groups who do not engage online.

In support of wider Defence and the single Services, the communications team is a key partner in campaigns and events such as Armed Forces Week, and strives in everything it does to uphold and grow the reputation of the RFCA, the Reserve Forces and the Cadet Forces in East Anglia.

The team adheres to the OASIS model for delivering campaigns, championed as a model of best practice by the Government Communications Service. Communications outputs are reviewed monthly by senior leaders, including: social media performance, website metrics and campaign evaluation.

We also monitor local and regional publications so we can report monthly to senior leaders on the Advertising Value Equivalent. This year, our media support was equivalent to a £1.395m advertising spend. Our business-as-usual practice is to routinely monitor print and digital channels as part of public relations best practice. We use multiple sources to gauge public sentiment towards the Reserve Forces and the Cadet Forces throughout the year.

Support to Engagement included a membership survey, regular newsletter, procurement of branded items such as the field teams' jackets and support to advertising vacancies in a way that promotes diversity and inclusion.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Our digital platforms continue to grow and provide a daily dialogue with key stakeholders and the wider community.

Our social media activity is governed by our social media strategy which guides our approach; setting out clear aims, objectives, tactics and how we evaluate our performance.

Our approach includes:

- A combination of scheduled and real-time content, allowing us to be both strategic and responsive, with key campaigns throughout the year including Armed Forces Week and Reserves Day.
- Our social media posts drive traffic to our website pages for more information.
- A focus on listening as well as posting, giving us insight into the topics our audiences are interested in and interacting with these conversations in real-time.
- Our monthly reporting to the senior management team includes evaluation on all the key metrics and reporting on the best performing content. We also now benchmark against other RFCAs via Hootsuite analytics.

Highlights from 2022/23 include:

- Instagram Launch - Informed by social media trends and demographic insights, we have launched an East Anglia RFCA Instagram account. We are building our audience and developing human interest content for the channel and have set clear targets for evaluating its success over a 12-month trial period.
- JVT post goes viral - We published a LinkedIn post sharing the news that Jonathan Van Tam was appointed honorary Colonel for the ACF in October. The post was served to 85k timelines, retaining good levels of engagement from individuals in UK Defence, Health and Government Departments. This is a good example of how we amplify and celebrate achievements in the cadet world, whilst raising our own profile and generating a huge amount of traffic to our website and gaining new followers.
- Human interest stories rule - Top posts over the last 12 months include cadet and adult volunteer achievements such as first aid stories, profiles on staff at East Anglia RFCA and partner organisations. We are always on the look-out for human interest stories so please drop us a line at ea-commsasst@rfca.mod.uk

Our digital channels at a glance

TWITTER



35

Average no of posts per month



3.4%

Average monthly engagement rate*



14k

Posts impressions** monthly average



3.9k

Total followers

FACEBOOK



28

Average posts per month



9.6%

Average monthly engagement rate*



6k

Posts impressions** monthly average



3.3k

Total followers

LINKEDIN



24

Average number of posts per month



6.5%

Average monthly engagement rate*



13k

Posts impressions** monthly average



498

Total followers

INSTAGRAM



6

Average number of posts per month



15%

Average monthly engagement rate*



500

Posts impressions** monthly average



108

Total followers

Across our four channels in 22/23:



950 posts



9 % average engagement rate



Posts served to 350K timelines



7906 total followers

Website performance 22/23



50 news articles published



3.8k total articles viewed



Average 1k users per month



Average 1.1k sessions a month

*impressions = the total number of times our content is served to timelines **Engagement rate = The number of interactions with our content as a %

WIDER MARKET INITIATIVES

Regionally Generated Income from our commercial wing Alternative Venues has increased by 90% in the past five years.



The past year has been one of continual growth for our commercial activity. Army Reserve Centres and a selection of cadet sites have welcomed both new and well established clients to site.

We continue to grow activity with other uniformed services in terms of first aid training, fitness testing, scenario based activities and vehicle storage. In addition to various Police and Fire Services, our partners include the National Crime Agency, Ministry of Justice, Border Force and the Home Office.

Once again Alternative Venues has outperformed target, generating an income of £393K. This activity supports the further betterment of our estate by providing modern facilities for all of our Reserve and Cadet Units; which in turn also aids recruitment and retention.

East Anglia RFCA very generously give 40% of internal hires and 10% of activity such as car parking back the lead units that support the hirings.

The remaining money goes into a central East Anglia RFCA fund which our Estates Advisory Committee and Financial Scrutiny Committee, using priorities identified by each SS, allocate to projects. RGI will have funded 13 cadet projects across the estate this year.

In order to thank our Reserve units for their support during an extraordinary year (2021-2022) in terms of

RGI across our estate, the Financial Scrutiny Committee awarded a special bonus totalling £115K to be spent on updating Army Reserve Centre facilities. We aim to create the best spaces possible in which to work and train and this award supported minor works and upgrades to ensure day-to-day life at site was improved.

Some of the enhancements and additions included:

Refurbished Ablutions	Audio Visual Packages	First Aid Equipment	80 inch TV / Sound bars	New Signage
Printers	Coffee Tables	Bookcases	Barbecues	Projectors
Outdoor Seating	Shower Upgrades	PIR Lighting	Pool Tables	Settees
New Blinds	SMART Boards	Pressure Washers	VR Headsets	Dishwashers
Wet & Dry Hoovers	Painting & Decorating	New Front Door	PPE Workwear	New Wall Imagery

ESTATES

The Estates team manage more than 500 buildings and deliver a year-round programme of maintenance, improvements and capital projects.

Our Estates team manage a vast portfolio of buildings and projects, delivering highly cost effective maintenance and development projects. This activity is funded by various Ministry of Defence funding streams and Regionally Generated Income (RGI).

For the past 12 months, the team have been heavily involved in the RFCA Estate Optimisation Programme (REOP); a major Defence investment project which aims to optimise the Volunteer Estate to be more efficient, and to change Defence's historic footprint to one that supports today's demands. REOP aims to improve the lived experience of Reserves and Cadets by providing modern, energy-efficient, fit-for-purpose training locations, situated geographically to maintain the visibility of uniformed organisations whilst eliminating duplication of land holdings in similar areas to provide better value for money for the taxpayer.

By the middle of 2023, East Anglia RFCA will have delivered eight REOP projects across the region. One such project was the Ramsey Joint Cadet Centre Refurbishment in Bury, Cambridgeshire.

Bringing together Army Cadets and Air Cadets, the project involved refurbishing and extending the existing provision; adding much needed storage and office space. Works included the addition of a covered outdoor teaching area which still permits plenty of flat grassed space for open air activities within the perimeter. The existing building also received new windows and doors, a fresh coat of paint, new lighting. The kitchenette and ablutions are now modern and pleasant too.

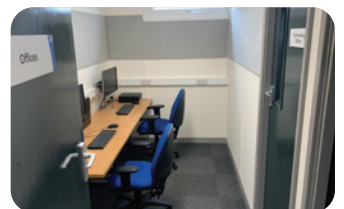


East Anglia RFCA are committed to providing sustainable, energy-efficient solutions across the estate.

2110 (North Walsham) Sqn, RAF Air Cadets Refurbishment



Funded by the RAF Air Cadets, sustainability was a key consideration in the planning of this refurbishment project. This large scale project involved replacing the roof covering and rainwater goods, the installation of thermal insulation in the loft void, replacement of the single glazed timber framed windows and doors with double glazed uPVC units and a full internal and external decoration with new lighting, flooring, kitchen and sanitary ware.



A number of measures were introduced to reduce (or encourage the reduction of) energy and water usage at the premises, including energy efficient motion sensitive LED lighting, individually controlled electric heaters, low flow rate taps and WC cisterns to reduce water consumption and the squadron now have separate bins on site so recyclable waste can be easily segregated.

ESTATES

Regionally Generated Income has funded a significant number of projects across the Cadet estate.



Clacton-on-Sea ACF Refurbishment

Utilising RGI, we made improvements to the building to ensure the space is functional, practical and welcoming. Inside the building, the flooring, lighting, fire alarm and heating systems were all replaced. New display screens were also fitted in the classrooms and the drill hall. The kitchenette and toilet facilities were updated, new doors fitted and walls repainted to leave it looking fresh and new throughout.

As an energy-saving measure, the Estates team installed new thermally-efficient double-glazed uPVC windows, and the new heaters are all fitted with timers. The timers enable the Army Cadet detachment commander to set the heating controls to warm up the building in time for when the cadets arrive, and then turn off automatically at the end of the evening, only on the days when they meet. The building's exterior was fitted with fibre-cement weatherboarding to keep the building looking sharp for years to come, new fencing was placed all around the site and outside lighting was upgraded to energy-efficient LED floodlighting.

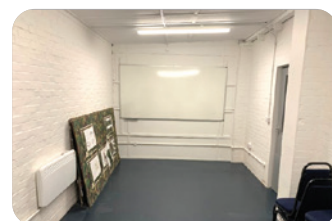


East Anglia RFCA welcomed 276 (Chelmsford) Sqn, RAF Air Cadets to our headquarters.

A brand new traditional build extension was added onto the existing RAF Air Cadets Essex Wing building incorporating velux windows and raised ceilings in the drill hall to allow for additional natural light, two classrooms, an office, kitchen and stores. All of the features inside the building, from the insulation to the heaters have been carefully selected to meet the standards set by the Defence Related Environmental Assessment Methodology (DREAM).

Maldon Joint Cadet Centre Refurbishment

The project, jointly funded by the RAF Air Cadets and Regionally Generated Income, involved the cadet centre receiving a new insulated roofing system and a full internal refurbishment including decoration, new flooring, lighting, kitchen, heaters, sanitary ware and an electrical re-wiring throughout. The drill hall suspended ceiling was also removed to provide a much lighter airier space for teaching and parading.



MEMBERSHIP

The volunteer Members of the Association act as local ambassadors in the community across a range of RFCA interests.

With over 160 Members across the six counties, our members range from qualified surveyors, accountants and solicitors to industry leaders and opinion formers. Giving their time freely, without remuneration, their expertise in finance, legal matters, HR policy, estates and employer engagement are core to the success of East Anglia RFCA.

We would like to celebrate some new appointments and welcome several new Members to the Association.

We extend a warm welcome to Mrs Susan Lousada, HM Lord Lieutenant of the County of Bedfordshire who will lead the Bedfordshire RFCA Forum.



Susan Lousada was appointed Lord Lieutenant in September 2022 and was previously a Deputy Lieutenant for five years.

Born and educated in Bedfordshire, Susan has lived all but four years of her life in the county. She has

over 20 years' experience of running a family business and continues to be a director of a property and investment company.

Susan has devoted much of her time to voluntary service with a particular focus on helping children and young people. During the first week of Covid lockdown in 2020, she was appointed as High Sheriff of Bedfordshire and spearheaded an initiative to tackle digital poverty, resulting in the supply of over 1800 devices to under privileged children in the county.



Our employer engagement team will be further supported with the appointment of Claire Wright to Chair of the Essex County Employer Engagement Group and Jim Wright as Chair to the Bedfordshire Employer Engagement Group.

In the cadet space, we welcome Colonel Rob Simpkin as the new Commandant for Suffolk Army Cadet Force. We also welcome three new Commanding Officers to our Reserve Units across the region.

For the Army, Lieutenant Colonel Anna Swales MBE assumed command of 158 Regiment RLC in October 2022 and most recently Lt Col Gizella Simpson-Hayes took on the role of CO for 254 Medical Regiment in January 2023.

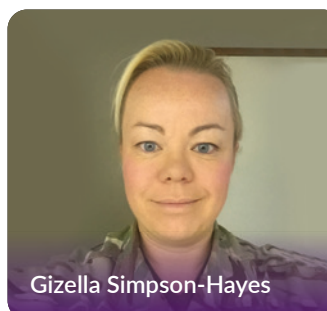
Based at Coldhams Lane Army Reserve Centre, Lieutenant Richard George RN has also assumed command of the Cambridge University Royal Naval Unit.



Rob Simpkin



Anna Swales



Gizella Simpson-Hayes



Richard George

EA RFCA HQ & REGIONS

East Anglia RFCA are represented by 73 members of staff across the six counties of East Anglia.

This year, we have welcomed several new faces to both our Chelmsford headquarters and regional offices.

Lance Porter is to be congratulated on his promotion to Finance Manager and David Gardner joined as the new Finance Assistant Officer.

Colin McLeod initially joined us on a temporary basis in our estates team and has now taken up the permanent role of Facilities Manager.

Our Employer Engagement team welcomes Jessica Pritchard who is showing a natural flair for event management.

Mark Bullock joined Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire ACF as the CAA for No.1 Company.

And finally, we welcomed two new AOs, Stewart Norman and Lenka Lankester to Beds & Herts and Suffolk ACF respectively.

Our Cadet AOs are key to the smooth administration of our Community Army Cadets, and this year we have seen the majority of them attend residential JPA Career Management training at the Army Personnel Centre in Glasgow.

Two of our AOs, Charmaine Ryland and Stewart Norman volunteered to attend the two week Army All Arms Book Keepers Course in Worthy Down and are now involved in running of the Cadet Non-Public Funds in their counties. A great help to their CEOs, and a task above and beyond their job-specs.



A personal account of flexible working at the RFCA by Claire Styles

Back in 2018, I entered into a job-sharing arrangement with East Anglia RFCA and five years later, I can say it's been the best experience; one that has enabled me to progress my volunteering & community interests as well as have a great work-life balance.

I returned from maternity leave to discover that my replacement over that period was a real asset to the organisation. Together we worked up the pros and cons of an arrangement that enabled us both to stay on as Communications & PR Manager. We submitted our request under the Association's flexible working policy, and thanks to the support of the senior leaders, this was accepted. The RFCA has a policy that enabled me to request a flexible working arrangement. These requests are considered on a case-by-case basis and my request to reduce my hours was approved.

I was already a school governor before covid but during lockdown I completed a year-long Leading Governance course with Department for Education funding, which equipped me to take on the role of Chair of Governors. I still hold this role today, and that's only possible because I work part-time. In addition, I was elected to represent maintained primary school governors on the Essex Schools Forum; a statutory forum consulted by the local authority on financial matters. Being able to make a difference to young people's education, helping them to reach their full potential, is a value I share with the Cadet organisations we serve at the RFCA.

Thanks to the support of the RFCA, I've been able to accomplish more for myself, family and the community.



FINANCE & IT

The forecast for the Financial Year is expenditure of £11.398m.

East Anglia RFCA is funded by several Ministry of Defence and single Services sources to deliver its three mandated outputs of Estates, Engagement and Cadets and Youth.

The forecast for this financial year is expenditure of £11.398m on an income of £9.534m, the difference being supported by income self-generated within the region. This income is from Non Domestic Rates Reliefs (NDRR) for cadet premises and from the commercial exploitation of our estate. The forecast for self-generated income this financial year is circa £316k and £393k respectively.

Estates maintenance, revenue and capital projects accounted for 55% of expenditure. Soft Facilities Management support to the estate added a further 15% to the spend.

Wounded, Injured and Sick Personnel Adaptations (WISPAs) accounted for 1% of total annual expenditure.

Support to cadets, including staffing, represented 19% of total expenditure.

Overheads were tightly controlled with the cost of Association HQ staff and IT/general administration expenses representing just 10% of expenditure.

IT Systems

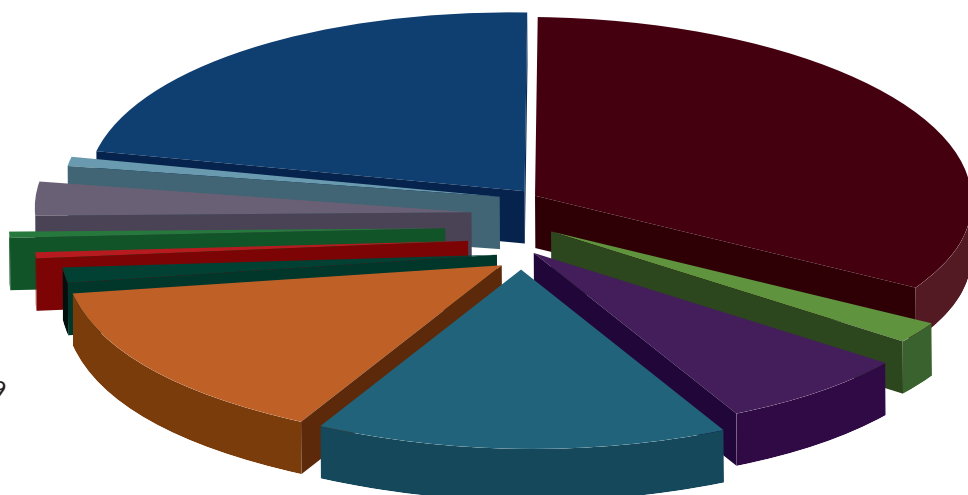
Maintaining normal running for all users, no matter where they were, was the primary goal this year as the system was adapted to manage the new hybrid way of working. Work has begun to migrate mobile telephones over to a new CRFCA led central contract to ensure better value for money and greater service as the security systems installed increase in complexity. This year also saw the introduction of a new signing in system at 250 Springfield Road utilising secure iPads at the main entrances for East Anglia RFCA and Essex Wing RAF Air Cadets. This new system will ensure that evacuations can be carried out efficiently and reliably.

Secretariat

The Secretariat department carries out administrative control and management of HR support, training and MIS administration for 70+ staff. The team has successfully hosted several hybrid meetings at East Anglia RFCA to ensure that both the social advantages of face to face meetings and the convenience of virtual meetings can be offered to attendees. This saw a rise in the number of people attending and engaging in our meetings.

Consolidated Expenditure Forecast Financial Year 2022/2023 (£11.398m)

Estates Capital Projects, £3,780,078
Vehicle Replacement, £230,703
Staff Costs (Assn HQ), £815,254
Staff Costs (ACF PSS), £1,730,027
Infrastructure (Soft Facilities Management), £1,664,216
IT & Communications, £147,833
Transport & Movement, £35,350
Recruiting Support, £65,095
Reserves & Cadets Support, £333,599
Administration, £100,014
Estates Maintenance & Minor Projects, £2,495,965



CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The role of Chief Executive at East Anglia RFCA is an immensely satisfying one and I count myself extremely privileged and fortunate to have served in this role.

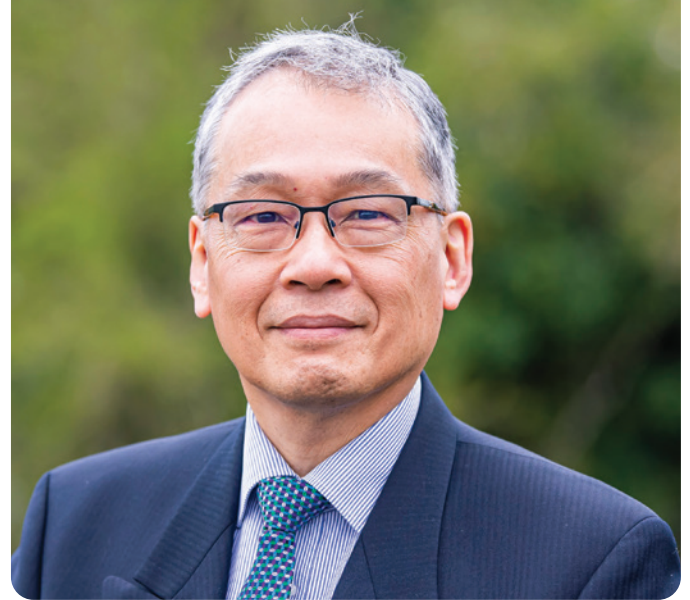
The current challenges that we are facing are many and varied, both externally and internally driven, but overall the organisation is in a healthy state thanks to everyone's efforts.

Our Regional Point of Command (RPOC) is standing up as a separate entity from 7 Brigade in April. RPOC Centre, as it is called, will cover the areas of three RFCAs – West Midlands, East Midlands and ourselves. I welcome this restructure as the focus that should now be brought onto Firm Base matters will be much improved. As the Chair has articulated, confirmation of the legislation required to stand up the proposed NDPB has not been received so the new National RFCA cannot yet exist. Against a backdrop of constant change we continue to deliver our stated MOD outputs and will do so if/when the new body comes into existence.

On the Estates delivery front, the VFM review of Reserve & Cadet Estate management related to the Future Defence Infrastructure System (FDIS) has commenced and is due to report later this year. Its outcome will decide the operation of our Estates management. I believe it is likely that the emphasis on our Estates team, and its importance, will be even greater. Business as usual Statutory & Mandatory Inspections and related work as well as project work (including Tranche 1 of the Reserve Estate Optimisation) is all going well, although the tempo of activity is extremely high. I commend our FM and Estates teams on their stand out performance.

The pace of our Engagement activities, particularly Employer Engagement, has been frenetic at times this year. We secured a very high number of Employer Recognition Scheme Gold and Silver Awards and this, together with raised levels of Armed Forces Covenants and supportive Employers, has led to us recruiting an additional REED from April with a Deputy REED to follow soon after. Our social media communication performance remains first class and I'm continually impressed by the dedication and hard work from our Employer Engagement and Communications teams.

The impact of constrained and ever changing training resources on the ACF is likely to run into 2024 and the corresponding burden on our Professional Support Staff



**COLONEL RAY WILKINSON QVRM TD DL VR
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

(PSS) has been heavy. I am very proud of the manner in which they have gone about dealing with the myriad of last minute problems that they have solved in order to ensure the Cadet Experience remains valued.

The harsh economic climate and buoyant job market has seen a higher than normal staff turnover, particularly in non-management posts. I wish those who have left the very best of success in their new roles and welcome most warmly those who have joined us. From my direct management team it was a blow to see Jeremy White, my Head of Finance, leave but I wish him well with his new position at Essex Fire & Rescue Services.

As the Chair has reported, I have decided to 'hang up my boots' towards the end of this year. The exact date will depend on identifying and selecting my successor, and their availability to take up the appointment. I am aiming for 1 October but I will of course remain in post after that if the situation requires. The role of Chief Executive at East Anglia RFCA is an immensely satisfying one and I count myself extremely privileged and fortunate to have served in this role. I have also been most blessed to have been surrounded by Lord Lieutenants, Association Members, Reservists, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers, and Staff who have done their utmost to support me in the execution of my duties. I will be eternally grateful to them all for ensuring that my time in post has been so enjoyable. Thank you.

Our Vision

East Anglia RFCA is widely recognised by its target audiences as the most valuable, knowledgeable and authoritative body in support of Reserve Forces and Cadet Organisations in East Anglia.

About Us

East Anglia RFCA is an autonomous and tri-service corporate body established by an Act of Parliament.

Our main role is to give advice and assistance to the Ministry of Defence on matters relating to Reserves and Cadets in our region.

East Anglia RFCA covers Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire.



**GEOGRAPHICAL BOUNDARIES OF
EAST ANGLIA RFCA**

Support Us

You can support our work in the following ways:

- Share your knowledge and enthusiasm for Reserves and Cadets by using your network to create local engagement opportunities.
- Use your local government connections to encourage attendance at events, support for planning applications and assistance with housing and education for service leavers.
- In your business, encourage your HR representatives to follow **@EAEmployers** on Twitter and email us at **ea-emp@rfca.mod.uk** to find out how to show support for Armed Forces Personnel.
- Tell your friends and colleagues that our sites are available to hire for training and conferences. Our sites are secure, often with plenty of free parking, well-equipped and all proceeds are invested back into the estate. Visit **venues-east-anglia.org.uk**

Stay up to date

Sign up to receive our monthly newsletter and stay up to date with Reserve and Cadet matters across the region.

Email **ea-comms@rfca.mod.uk** and we'll add you to our distribution list.

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