

OCTOBER 2020 • ISSUE 2

**MINI**

# High-Light



THE TRI-SERVICE MAGAZINE OF HIGHLAND RESERVE FORCES' AND CADETS' ASSOCIATION



**2622 Sqn at Barry  
Buddon – Pages 4 & 5**

# Activity levels rising rapidly

**It has been a busy six months since the first Mini High-Light was produced, with HRFA assisting the military support to the COVID response through a variety of ways, including the use of properties for mobile testing teams.**

Since lockdown measures began to ease, we have seen activity levels rising rapidly in all but the Engagement area.

This is understandable since most businesses are pre-occupied with survival, face-to-face activity is not possible and there is an MOD moratorium on employer engagement events and removal of the associated budget.

However, we did see the award of a number of Gold and Silver Employer Recognition Scheme Awards which is covered in one of the articles, and the Comms team have been beavering away in the social media and internet space, ratcheting up great numbers of hits and connections.

Building construction recommenced in late June and the Estates team are now working flat out to try and catch up with the planned works, particularly that funded by the non-domestic rate rebate on Cadet properties.

Similarly, Army Cadet Battalion professional support staff have

been hard at it, preparing the Cadet huts for the resumption of training, ensuring that they have the correct marking, signage, cleaning and personal hygiene supplies.

Implementation of the Tailored Review of RFCAs has paused whilst a small team of civil servants is set up under a senior civil servant for the MOD to take forward the recommendations with a team from the Council of RFCAs.

On top of this we are now in the depths of an MOD sponsored review of the volunteer estate, which is looking at options to optimise the estate whilst retaining contingency resilience.

The review is due to report to SofS at the end of January. So, nearly everyone is being kept on their toes!

In finishing I would like to welcome Ray Watt to the REED team. Ray is also an Army Reservist and a Squadron Commander in 154 Transport Regiment RLC.

And I would also like to thank Gregor Lindsay who has stepped down as Area Chairman of the Eastern Area committee due to a new job in Yorkshire, and to welcome back Jim Kinloch who has replaced him in that role.

*Mark Dodson*

## Highland Cadet Forces Trust



If you wish to make a charitable donation to the Highland Cadet Forces Trust, the bank details are:  
**A/C no: 30401028**  
**Sort code: 83-91-46**  
**(VAF Bank)**

# Gold and Silver ERS winners

**The recipients of this year's Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold and Silver Award winners have been announced.**

Overall, there were 127 organisations awarded Gold nationally, bringing the total number of Gold holders to 353.

Four of these were in the Highland RFCA-area. These were: Aberdeen City Council, Angus Council, High Life Highland, and Scottish Water.

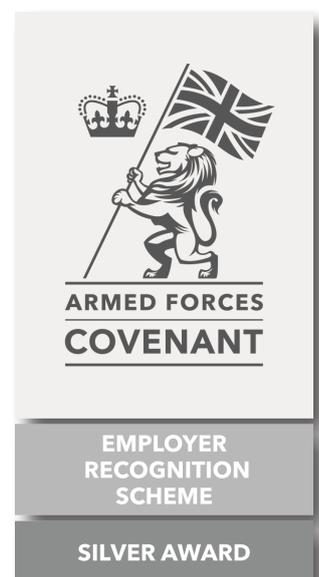
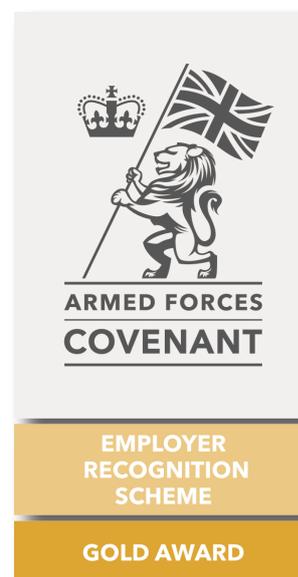
There were also nine Silver winners in Highland.

They were: BASICS Scotland,

Falkirk Council, Fife Medical Group, Horizon Security Solutions, Louise Worrall Wealth Management, Meldrum Joinery & Building Services, Moray Digital, NHS Highland, and Securitay Limited.

Both Falkirk Council and NHS Highland were existing Silver Award holders whose awards were revalidated.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, planned face-to-face ceremonies and presentations of the awards were cancelled. However, later this month, we will be using our social media platforms to highlight each of the category winners from Highland.





# Cadets #KeepTheFlameAlive

**The pandemic has highlighted the Army Cadet Force's resilience and motivation.**

Cadets have been living up to their trending hashtag by truly Keeping The Flame Alive and inspiring others to push through these difficult times.

Cadets and CFAVs from all over the Highland RFCA-area have been continuing to progress, inspire to achieve and challenge themselves. We have seen them showing initiative and creativity through virtual ACF activities, staying active by taking part in physical challenges and collecting well-deserved awards and certificates during lockdown.

In **June**, Cadet Sergeant Melville of The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards detachment, made a recruiting video to inspire the next generation of Cadets. She created it as part of 2nd Battalion the Highlanders ACF's Monthly Commandant's Challenge.

In **July**, 1st Battalion the Highlanders ACF's Cadet Anna McDowall and Bdr Stephanie McDowall from Orkney and Shetland Battery were both awarded ACF

Musician Badges for their involvement in Scottish Cadet Music Videos.

On **August 15**, for the 75th anniversary of VJ Day, The Regimental Band of The Black Watch ACF held a Virtual Concert called 'Hands Across The Commonwealth'. The programme included music performed by young musicians from Australia, Canada and the UK. The HRFA social media timeline was flooded with hundreds of incredible videos of pipers playing together across the Commonwealth.

Among all the virtual challenges, the Army Cadet Cycle Challenge in August was a physical challenge for those seeking fitness motivation during lockdown. The participants completed a whopping 12,985.70 miles during the month.

On **September 14**, The Regimental Band of The Black Watch ACF congratulated its longest serving member, Cadet Band Sergeant Major Darcy Johnston, on her 18th birthday and her new role as Second Staff Cadet. She has kept the flame alive for six years in the ACF. She joined as a member of the Band when she was just 12, continuing to achieve and inspire

throughout her continued service. She has been the HM Lord-Lieutenant of Fife's Cadet, the Senior Cadet Musician in Scotland, the Band's representative at numerous sporting events and a great example to her peers and instructors. She has also had the opportunity to meet HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, HRH The Princess Royal and HRH The Earl of Forfar. In addition, she has completed her Gold Duke of Edinburgh' Award, on top of learning both the French Horn and cello as well as performing all over the world. Her next step in inspiring to achieve includes her desire to become a Cadet Force Adult Volunteer.

Meanwhile, RAF Air Cadets have been holding Virtual Training Tuesdays. Such virtual activities were put in place to ensure Cadets are prepared for when face-to-face activities return.

Sea Cadets have also been keeping the flame alive. In August, they returned to their water sports activities. In total, their Summer Active Programme saw 2,059 Cadets return to boating, paddlesports, rowing, kayaking and sailing sessions. 150 units across 17 venues took part.

# 2622 get serious



Moving in to clear a building.

**C**COVID-19 restrictions have provided challenges for our engagement team with almost all planned events cancelled, so Head of Engagement Michelle McKearnon jumped at an invitation from Sqn Ldr Chris Beckley from 2622 (Highland) Sqn to have a socially distanced visit to the RAF Reserves at their annual training camp at Barry Buddon.

A bright and breezy day provided the perfect backdrop to see Reservists from 2622 alongside colleagues from 603 (Edinburgh) and 2503 (Waddington) Squadrons working together in a series of tasks to develop their teamwork and leadership skills.

The first task was “Protecting the Air Base – Reaction to Rocket Attack” with the objectives of finding and treating any casualties and recovering them to medical aid.

The team had to put into practice their first aid skills to stabilise the casualty until he could be evacuated, administering vital medical treatment and recording the injuries sustained all the while being alert for enemy rocket attack.

The second challenge “Combat in Buildings – Clearing the Enemy” involved locating and neutralising the enemy and rescuing a hostage. This task required precision teamwork with every person having a role to play on which lives depended. The troops formed a stack of five to storm and secure the building,

while protecting themselves from possible enemy fire.

After a fortifying brew, it was on to challenge number three, “Patrol and Attack”, with a section of eight locating and isolating the enemy before moving into the attack. This was aimed at honing battle skills and required clear communication and strong leadership from the section commanders.

Finally, Michelle observed the fourth

task, “Observation of the Battle-Space” – where a range of surveillance and observation techniques were needed to judge distance and space.

This proved to be a surprisingly difficult challenge as the bright sunlight and strong breeze caused eyes to water and squint, adding a further level of difficulty.

A high level of attention to detail was needed, something clearly lacking in our Head of Engagement who failed to spot



A simulated casualty is readied for extraction.



Dealing with a simulated casualty during the “Protecting the Air Base – Reacting to Rocket Attack” scenario.

any of the hidden objects. Back to basic training for her!

Michelle commented: “This was a fascinating day which really showcased the skills, determination and stamina of our Reservists, all of which transfer into their civilian jobs.

“I was particularly impressed at both the leadership and teamwork skills on display, and speaking as a previous employer myself, I know these skills are highly sought after in the workplace. All of the employers who had given these Reservists additional time to take part in this sort of training,

will reap the benefits. We look forward to being able to take employers out again to training camps to witness these skills in action for themselves once restrictions are lifted.”

To find out more about joining the RAF Reserve go to [www.raf.mod.uk](http://www.raf.mod.uk).



A quick weapons check (left) and preparing to clear a building (above).



# New modular hut at Bo'ness

**T**he second of our new modular Cadet huts was installed at Bo'ness on July 28.

The installation follows that of Newport, which took place in February. A third modular installation in Banff will follow this financial year.

Installation of the five sections, which are manufactured off site, takes four to eight hours to complete and thereby reduces the time from demolition to occupation from 34 to 8 weeks. The

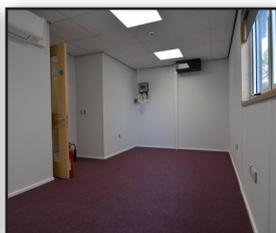
modern, energy efficient modular design replaces the old Spooner huts that have passed the point of economical repair.

The Bo'ness hut is used by Argyll and Sutherland Battalion ACF Cadets, and the Newport hut by Angus and Dundee Battalion ACF.

Pictured (below) are images of the completed build at Newport.



One of the sections being lifted off a delivery truck.



## What do YOU want to see in your *High-Light*?

Contributions are welcome!

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or 01382 631027