

# DIOlogue

The magazine of the Defence  
Infrastructure Organisation

Issue 5 September 2012



**Defence  
Infrastructure  
Organisation**



**Meet DIO's Chief Operating  
Officer Mark Hutchinson**



**Soldiers unearth Salisbury  
Plain secrets**



**Win a jar of DIO honey**

Featured in this issue of

# DIOlogue



# Welcome

## from Andrew Manley

Welcome to the fifth edition of DIologue.

The next 17 pages carry features and news stories that highlight how our work supports the Armed Forces and also shine a spotlight on our transformation.

Looking to our transformation programme, we've devoted pages three to six to the innovative ways in which our organisation is changing. From tapping into the diverse talent and skills we already have, to the making of leadership pledges, to the birth of the inventive Future Business Network, we are honouring our vow to create a remarkable organisation.

On page 13 you'll find two pictures that exemplify what DIO is about – delivering infrastructure that makes a real difference. One image is of Tidworth in 2008 close to the beginning of a £455m scheme to improve accommodation for 5,200 soldiers based there. The other was taken as the project draws to a close. I am sure you will agree the difference is extraordinary.

On page 9 Ellie Hughes writes about a new £3.2m Royal Marine Rehabilitation Facility which we, along with our industry partners, constructed for the Royal Navy. Sometimes it's easy to lose sight of the fact that our work has an immeasurably positive impact on people's lives and the effectiveness of our Armed Forces. The comments made by the servicemen using this facility are a powerful reminder.

Because of the nature of our work it's not always possible to publicly celebrate the work of some areas of the organisation. But on page 10 we've put together a feature on the sensitive area of Nuclear Equipment Support and the team's valuable contribution to the construction of a Wildcat Training Facility and a Replenishment at Sea Training Facility.

Those who like history will no doubt be fascinated by our feature that marks the 70th anniversary of Stanford Training Area on page 14.

Finally, if you're interested in wildlife then you'll want to read our feature on bees on Salisbury Plain on page 16. You can even enter a competition to win a jar of honey.

### Andrew

*(Andrew Manley, DIO Chief Executive)*



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## DIologue

DIologue is the online journal of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO). It is available on both the DIO intranet and to external readers on the DIO website.

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## DIO HELPS PROTECT AND ENTERTAIN OLYMPIC CROWDS



The Defence Infrastructure Organisation has been helping keep the skies above London safe... and ensuring stunt doubles for James Bond and Her Majesty The Queen made a successful entrance at The Olympic Games' Opening Ceremony.

DIO staff carried out significant work at RAF Northolt so the historic airfield could accommodate four Typhoon jets and three Sea King helicopters, to defend London from terrorist threats from the air during the Olympic games.

One of the helicopters carried stunt doubles for James Bond and The Queen to The Olympic Games' Opening Ceremony.

## INJURED SOLDIER GETS KEY TO NEW HOME

A soldier who lost both legs and his right arm in an explosion while serving in Afghanistan has been presented with the key to his newly-adapted home.



Guardsman Dave Watson, aged 25, from the 1st Battalion Scots Guards, is delighted at how his new property has turned out, all of it with the help of a range of military support services.

The £100,000 building programme to convert his new bungalow in his home town of Preston, Lancashire, into a property more suited to his needs began in January and Guardsman Watson has been closely involved throughout.

## DIO DELIVERS CRITICAL REHABILITATION FACILITIES TO ROYAL MARINES

A new Physical and Remedial Training Centre has been completed for 40 Commando Royal Marines (40 Cdo RM) at Norton Manor Camp in Somerset.

Sarawak Gym, named in recognition of 40 Commando's involvement in the Indonesia-Malaysia Confrontation from 1962 to 1966, was opened at an official ceremony by Lieutenant Colonel Matt Jackson Royal Marines, Commanding Officer 40 Commando Royal Marines.

The new building was delivered by DIO working with regional industry partner Debut Services (South West) Limited, and will provide essential modern sports facilities to support the physical wellbeing of unit personnel.

## NEW COMBINED MESS OPENS AT RAF LOSSIEMOUTH

The opening of a new £25 million combined mess at RAF Lossiemouth in Scotland has been marked with a high-speed Tornado fly-past.



The project, which replaced two existing messes at the RAF base, was spearheaded by the DIO at the request of the RAF.

The new facility is four stories high, occupies the ground space of two football pitches and contains 99 en-suite rooms for Senior Non-Commissioned Officers (SNCOs).

## GREEN LIGHT FOR NEW ENERGY SAVING TOOL

An innovative carbon cutting tool developed by the DIO is to be rolled out to 160 MOD sites.

The Monitoring and Targeting tool – created by the DIO's energy management team at MOD St Athan and the Carbon Trust Wales – produces information about carbon emissions at MOD bases.

The data can then be used to design ways to cut energy consumption and hit a Government target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 25 per cent by 2015. ■

## DIO CRUCIAL TO ARMED FORCES' FUTURE

DIO is playing a vital role in Defence reform, a MOD finance leader has said.

MOD Director General Finance Jon Thompson spoke about DIO's change programme during a speech at DIO's Senior Leaders' Workshop at Staffordshire.

He said: "DIO is an integral part of the MOD and of the wider transformation programme.

"It aligns perfectly with the MOD and its overall vision for a battle-winning Armed Forces – a smaller, more professional MOD with a hard headed approach to what we can afford."





# Step-change

**Major public sector change is notoriously slow, clunky and difficult to achieve. But, at the Defence Infrastructure Organisation, innovative ways of working are making change everyone's business and transforming the organisation from the inside out.**

"From the very beginning, we have adopted a 'masterful approach' to change in DIO. This means that we as leaders set the frame – but we let our people do the work. We are now taking this principle to a whole new level," says the Defence Infrastructure Organisation's (DIO) Chief Executive Andrew Manley.

The programme to transform the delivery of Defence infrastructure has to date been led by a central team that has evolved over the past twelve months. This team comprises staff from all parts of the organisation. However, a recent workshop saw DIO's senior leaders being invited to step forward and 'sponsor' areas of work that will be critical to its journey towards becoming a leading infrastructure organisation.

"Our programme is about to move into what we are calling an 'implementation phase'," Andrew continues. "To date, we have focused on identifying what must change in order for us to become a world class organisation. This new concept is about inviting all corners of our business to come and help make this change happen."

"Those who volunteered to be sponsors have been charged with going back to the business, tapping into the diverse talent and skills we have in DIO, and getting a wider circle of staff involved in this critical work. This is a fantastic opportunity for people to contribute to our organisation's future, learn new skills by working on something different and build networks across the business."

The 15 work packages that will be delivered in this way include: planning and preparing the business for a change in the location laydown, working on job descriptions for the new organisation and looking at how the transition from the current organisation to the Enhanced Operating Model will be managed.

Gerry Maw, a senior manager in DIO's Projects division, was keen to be part of this step-change in business transformation. "I recognised the importance of this work, and was attracted to being challenged with something outside my normal area of operation", he says. "This won't be an easy piece of work – there is a huge amount to get done in a short time. Luckily we have some brilliant people who are up for a challenge!"

He continues: "You can only take development work so far before you need testing and challenge from those who are going to be asked to live the new design and processes. We want people to buy in and take ownership." ➤



In fact, research shows that where employees are part of the decision-making process, increased engagement will be a likely product. For example, work done by management consultancy McKinsey and Co suggests that when staff are involved in making the decisions that will affect them in a transformation programme, they become personally committed to making it work.

And although staff engagement is high on the DIO agenda, this isn't to say that staff are being involved in the change programme simply as a means to achieve this end. "What this new concept is really about is inviting all corners of our business to come and help make the changes we have been working through actually happen," confirms Andrew Manley.

**The 'co-creation' approach isn't the only new way of working that is helping to transform the delivery of Defence infrastructure. Here, two DIO members of staff discuss their experiences of new and innovative working practices being used at the organisation.**

### Leadership Pledges

Tasked with leading the organisation through transformation, DIO's most senior managers have been asked to make pledges and report their progress against them at regular intervals.

Simon Adamson who leads a sub-programme responsible for the new organisation design and processes speaks about his personal pledge to bring excitement to the work:

"I developed my specific pledge during the design of a meeting to agree the High Level Organisation Design of DIO. This design is something that will have significance across not only the infrastructure community, but the whole of the MOD.

"During the lead-up to this meeting I sensed in the team, and myself, a nervousness about how the session would work, how it would be received and what the output would be. It felt a bit nerve-racking and on reflection a little negative. We were collectively looking at what could go wrong – rather than being proud and excited about what we were doing.

"Approaching the workshop from this more positive perspective allowed the team to feel more confident about the work and their contribution. It made a massive difference, not only to how the meeting was managed, but particularly to how effective it was.

"Following this experience I have tried to use this approach on other work that I have been involved in. Being openly 'upbeat' about the work and focusing on both the positive as well as the concerns gives a more rounded approach to the work, and allows all involved to give of their best, to be proud of the work they have done but to be realistic about what work is yet to be done."

### Open Spaces

Open Spaces is a technique used for identifying, analysing and resolving key issues quickly. The process starts with individuals writing a key issue on separate post-it notes. Collectively the group decide which issues need to be discussed and place them on a grid. A time period is set (around 45 minutes) and the issues on the first row of the grid run concurrently in different parts of the room. The person who nominated the issue leads their group discussion. People are free to go where they feel they can contribute and can stay as long as they want to within the groups.

Tracy Buckby, Strategic Business Manager, explains the benefits:

"Open Spaces is a brilliant way to discuss key issues and proactively resolve them for the greater good of the business. Individuals feel more engaged having been given the opportunity to contribute to the solution. The Open Spaces method demonstrates our Guiding Principles – primarily 'Exemplary Team Work' and 'Thrive on Innovation'. It does this by enabling different areas of the business to come together, re-enforcing networking and communication between staff. It allows us to work as one DIO team, and it really encourages innovation and creativity." ■





Nick Jones is on the FBN Design Team.

He says: "We're charged with designing the FBN. FBN is all about people being involved and identifying things which could be done better, empowering our people to identify and solve the problems that see every day as well

as putting forward their ideas for making things in DIO better.

"Sometimes, as an outsider, it's easy to be cynical about this sort of thing. But the energy and enthusiasm that this project is creating is amazing. I really would encourage everybody to become involved. It's incredibly productive and great fun.

"Also, the potential to deliver results to the business is huge. Similar schemes have been run in large organisations, saving millions of pounds a year."



Keith Maddison is a champion working with the Versatile Working team.

He says: "FBN is about giving the individual the opportunity to feel empowered enough to make a change within the organisation – to do things differently.

"It's about making a cultural change, changing a mindset. It's not just about service delivery or transformation, it's bridging the gap between these two.

"It's about thinking outside the box. Andrew Manley inspired the team I was working with to engage with the project. He told the teams to be bold and told them that 'it's not wrong to be different'. The games we played and the exercises we took part in helped to reinforce this way of thinking."

# Future Business Network

**The Future Business Network, an initiative we hope will contribute to our transformation into a world class organisation, is gaining momentum!**

We believe that working differently, works better, and we want to empower all our people to be confident and step forward with great ideas to improve our business. By building networks across the organisation, we can share skills, knowledge and experience – boosting both organisational performance and individual professional development.

Within the network we now have 40 volunteers from across the business running four improvement projects that address travel, international communications, versatile working and 'contactability'. Each of the projects has a mentor and a champion, providing knowledge and support to the team.

Here, members of our growing network share their experiences.



Liza Yeaman is a project member working on Improving 'Contactability'.

She says: "When I'm in my normal work environment I'm the consummate professional. The atmosphere at FBN is much more relaxed. It gets the creative juices going and ideas seem to flow amongst all of the teams.

"At FBN I'm working alongside all different civil service grades and there's not so much protocol. This makes it even more relaxed and I believe that when you're relaxed, you're likely to produce better work.

"Because we've been encouraged to take a very 'anything goes' approach to problem solving we've been able to look at issues from scratch, to take a completely fresh view from the outside."

"Because we've been encouraged to take a very 'anything goes' approach to problem solving we've been able to look at issues from scratch, to take a completely fresh view from the outside."



Tara Dean is a member of the FBN Design Team and a project leader for Improving 'Contactability'.

She says: "FBN is very different because it gives us the opportunity

to be creative. It allows us to question the way things are done and then follow through that questioning to create new ways of doing things. As Andrew Manley has said, 'it's OK to be different'.

"There's so much energy within FBN. It's made DIO a place where I really want to work. In my normal job I feel like I'm contributing to Project HESTIA, which is just one part of DIO, but with FBN I feel like I'm contributing to the future of the whole organisation.

"FBN also creates an atmosphere where it's OK to have feelings. If you're worried about something, you can share it and others will help." ■





# Building a performance culture

**Mark Hutchinson recently became DIO's Chief Operating Officer.**

**This role will see Mark play a key role in the delivery of services to the Armed Forces. Here the father-of-three reveals the changes he plans to make at DIO, the challenges he faces... and how he likes his steak cooked.**

**How have you found the Chief Operating Officer role so far?**

I've had a range of impressions. I've been very struck by the skills of staff across the organisation and the fact we deal with such a diverse set of stakeholders and by how vital our role is to so many Defence outputs.

I've also been surprised at how confusing the DIO organisation can be. I spent most of my first month working out who worked with whom and how it all came together. The disparate locations make this akin to three-dimensional chess.

Another impression was a sense of transition. The Chief Operating Officer role was different in the past to how it is shaping up to be. There's a huge change. It's becoming more exclusively a delivery role than a planning and delivery role and it's clear that all concerned are still in the process of adapting to these new requirements. ➤





### What skills and experience do you bring to the role?

I hope I can add some value simply by effective management of what is a large and diverse delivery organisation. It's not dissimilar to things I have run in the past. For example, the Met Office had a complex range of staff – scientists, academics, salespeople.

In this way I hope I can help enhance our delivery and performance. I'm focused on ensuring we are held to account and deliver excellent services.

I'd also like to help people manage the big changes we're all going through. I'm very conscious that I need to lead on this front and assist people with change. This can be quite traumatic if handled badly or insensitively.

Andrew Manley allowed me a 'honeymoon period' in my first few weeks during which I spent a lot of time listening to people's wishes and concerns about the future. The important thing now is to set out what I am going to do about these issues – and then do it. Establishing credibility and trust is crucial.

### What do you see as the main challenges?

One would be winning the confidence of our customers by delivering what we promise and ensuring it meets their needs.

Another would be building a performance culture and a collective identity across Operations. For example, when I've asked people across the business what they do, they say they work in Hard FM, or Accommodation, or Soft FM. But we are all part of a single delivery business – DIO Ops – and there are things all Ops staff have in common that should generate a similar sense of allegiance and self-identity.

Currently we're too compartmentalised. As a customer you want to be dealing with one delivery organisation,

not several different ones - particular when they're all part of the same organisation.

Having a collective Ops focus is good for the customer – I think Ops staff would also benefit in career terms through pro-active exploitation of the whole Ops field in personal development and employment terms. How are you going to progress your career if you focus your efforts on one small area of the business?



*Becoming even more customer friendly should be the heart of our business*

### How would you like to see DIO change as an organisation?

I'd like to see us become more customer-friendly and responsive – that should become the heart of our business and culture.

#### What do you do in your spare time?

I'm a rugby fan so I watch Bath play. I live out in the country so I like walking. I also have three children who keep me busy.

#### What inspires you?

People acting with personal integrity and trying their hardest to do a good job for others. Anybody doing that gets my admiration.

#### What's your favourite meal?

A steak – rare – but no vegetables. And red wine.

#### If they made a film of your life, which actor would you like to play you and why?

I'd like to say Steve McQueen or Paul Newman but honesty compels me to suggest Peter Sellers given the many Inspector Clouseau moments of unintentional comedy in my life.

#### What's your favourite album?

Alive on Arrival by Steve Forbert.

#### Favourite film?

A Night at the Opera by The Marx Brothers. ■





# From rehab to Royal Marine

**Last month the Defence Infrastructure Organisation handed over a state-of-the-art £3.2 million rehabilitation facility to the Royal Navy. Parker Hall will serve Royal Marine recruits who have been injured during training.**

**Ellie Hughes travelled to Lympstone in Devon, to meet some of the recruits and investigate what the facility has to offer.**



*Darren Parker builds up the strength in his right foot at Parker Hall*

Beads of sweat trickle down Darren Parker's shaved head as he repeatedly jumps onto a two foot high box.

He has been doing this for the last 20 minutes and, judging by the look of determination on his face, doesn't intend to stop any time soon.

But just eight months ago Darren would have struggled to walk, never mind undertake such a gruelling work-out.

The Royal Marine recruit injured the metatarsal in his right foot, halting his dream of joining one of the world's most respected fighting forces.

But now he is just a few weeks away from re-joining fellow recruits and, hopefully, earning the coveted Green Beret.

Although he has his own strength of mind to thank for this, he also believes the new rehabilitation centre provided by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) has played a part too.

"Parker Hall means an awful lot to us recruits," he says. "It was purpose-built for us. It makes a big difference to

my recovery knowing that the MOD values us and has put in this amount of effort to rehabilitate us and get us back outside to finish our training."

Darren is not alone in making use of the new facilities which opened at the beginning of July.

The room is filled with the sound of the heavy breathing of 108 other recruits who form part of Hunter Company.

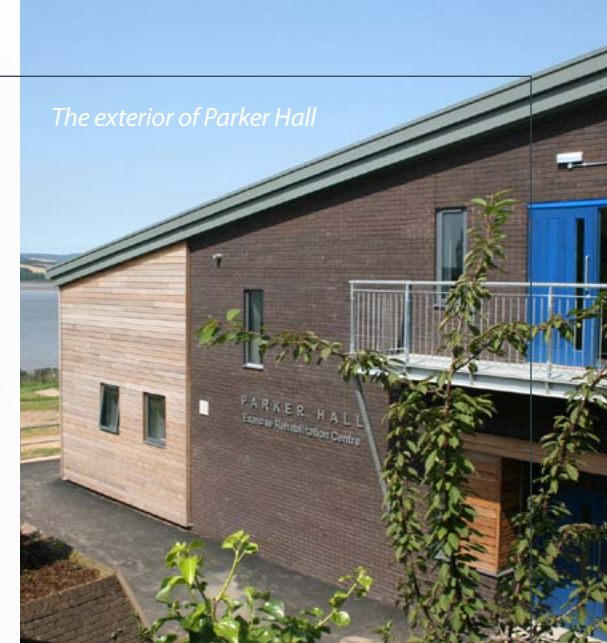
The centre utilises the best in modern technology, employing two £33,000 anti-gravity treadmills, as well as specialised programmes of physiotherapy to provide injured recruits with the best care to enable them to return to training in record time.

Hunter Company is the Commando Training Centre's (CTC) remedial organisation. When a Royal Marine recruit is injured during training they transition into the care of Hunter Company who treat and rehabilitate them to return to mainstream training.

The impressive facility was delivered by DIO in partnership with Debut Services Southwest, and funded through the Royal Navy/Royal Marine Apprenticeship Success Fund.

DIO Project Manager Emily Simmons said: "It was a truly great experience working on the Parker Hall project. I love working with the Royal Marines as their spirit is infectious. My Debut

*The exterior of Parker Hall*



colleagues have been completely committed throughout the planning and delivery and I think that is because we all realise that the facility is for such a great cause, we are delivering something that really matters." ➤



*An overview of the main training area*







*A recruit uses one of Parker Hall's anti-gravity treadmills. This equipment controls air pressure in a chamber to gently lift the user and reduce the impact of running on the feet and legs*

Planning permission for the facility was granted in early 2011 and work officially started on the gym in June 2011. Parker Hall was officially handed over to Navy Command in July 2012. Reflecting on her time during the planning and delivery phase, Emily credits the success of delivering such a sophisticated facility in just over a year to a “completely collaborative approach between DIO, Royal Naval Infrastructure Organisation, Debut, CTC Royal Marines and the end users”.

Mark Orme, from Debut Services Southwest, was the contractor’s project manager delivering Parker Hall.

He says: “This project was a great example of how a fully integrated team can deliver a bespoke, fit for purpose facility. The relationship between the DIO, Navy Command, Royal Marines and Debut was excellent throughout, fostered by our shared objectives and cooperative approach.

“This close relationship proved invaluable in helping to facilitate the general progression of the project throughout and crucially aided the management of the various stakeholders involved in the process.”

Parker Hall encompasses a matted exercise area, bespoke cardio-vascular and weights equipment area, a reduced-impact surface running track, interactive smart boards and two anti-gravity treadmills to provide training support for up to 150 recruits.

Aside from the state-of-the-art equipment, recruits going through rehabilitation have access to dedicated and expert staff including a Colour Sergeant Exercise Rehabilitation Instructor (ERI) who manages all rehabilitation on site, six Corporal ERIs and two Chartered Physiotherapists. Each of these staff members have access to specialised consultation bays.

Colour Sergeant ERI Martin Ash says: “The facility clearly shows that the Royal Navy and ultimately the MOD see the importance of investing in

the rehabilitation of the Royal Marines recruits. Parker Hall will mean that we can better provide a dedicated programme to get injured lads back into training as soon as possible. The bespoke equipment will add to my staff’s ability to integrate recruits back into mainstream training with their troops at the right level!”

Before Parker Hall was built, Hunter Company recruits were rehabilitated within the CTC’s main gymnasium, Stone Gym, which had no specialist rehabilitation equipment. This was the only gym within the site at Lympstone and had to be shared with the other fully fit members of staff.

Emily Simmons says: “This arrangement was not only detrimental to the fully fit

recruits and Royal Marines as they were unable to use the Stone gym between 10:00 and 15:00 hours, but the gym was not fit for purpose for Hunter Company rehabilitation either.”

Colour Sergeant ERI Ash added: “We felt it was important to provide the Hunter Company recruits with a light and spacious building with plenty of wall space for inspirational posters conducive to creating a positive mental attitude and mirrors for checking form. We also agreed that positioning the building to overlook a key piece of training equipment, the bottom field, would motivate the recruits going through rehabilitation to want to join a troop as quickly as possible.” ■

*Riding rehabilitation... recruits undergo gruelling training regime to improve their fitness*





# Inside Nuclear Equipment and Support

**At MOD Abbey Wood DIO's Nuclear Equipment and Support (NES) team play a key role in a number of large military projects.**

Their aim is to ensure that any required infrastructure component is identified early and addressed appropriately.

Gerry Maw, Deputy Head of Nuclear and Equipment Support, says: "In May, a major investment in maintaining the UK's nuclear capabilities at the Atomic Weapons Establishment at a cost of around £1 billion per annum was announced. This is part of a rolling programme known as the Nuclear

Weapons Capability Sustainment Programme which comprises over 40 projects across 20 years.

"Some of the major projects are valued at several hundred million pounds and involve very complex and specialist infrastructure engineering. We play a

key facilitation role on estate aspects and provide Strategic Weapons with assurance on appropriateness of the estates solution, cost and design and give an independent view on construction activities."

## Wildcat Training Facility

Nuclear and Equipment Support has been heavily involved in the construction of the £15 million Wildcat Training Facility at RNAS Yeovilton.

When it is complete in November it will boast two helicopter simulators, mock aircrafts for mechanical practice plus classrooms.

NES has played a key role since the project started nine months ago. Staff have drafted contracts, assessed designs, ensured standards of construction have been maintained and carried out site visits.

DIO Construction Advisor Nathan Cooper says: "It's going to be fantastic.

"It'll provide the opportunity to train in a very realistic environment and reduces flying time which reduces costs."

Last month the Defence Secretary unveiled the first of a new fleet of Wildcat helicopters, and confirmed a £250 million contract to support them. The first two of 62 Wildcat helicopters ordered by the MOD were handed over by manufacturer AgustaWestland at the Farnborough International Airshow. The MOD is buying 34 Army Wildcats and 28 maritime attack variants, which will replace the Lynx fleet operated by the Army Air Corps and Fleet Air Arm.



## Heavy Replenishment at Sea Training Facility

A training facility to teach sailors how to safely transfer vital supplies from ship to ship while at sea owes much to Nuclear and Equipment Support.

The DIO team were involved in assessing designs, drafting contracts and carrying out site visits at HMS Raleigh, in Torpoint, Cornwall.

The £25 million project began in July last year and is due to be complete by November.

Replenishment at sea is a method of transferring fuel, munitions and general stores from one ship to another while afloat and takes place during the day or night and in all weathers.

The new facility will feature a classroom block and Replenishment at Sea systems built around a 25-metre steel mast and steel ship structures.

DIO Construction Advisor Nathan Cooper says: "The transfer of cargo between ships at sea is the most dangerous activity the Navy does during peacetime. A number of things can go wrong.

"This new facility will help train crew and ensure when they do it for real it is done in the safest possible way." ■



# Soldiers unearth Salisbury Plain secrets

**Sandwiched between Netheravon Airfield and Amesbury on the southern edge of Salisbury Plain lies an ancient burial mound. Here soldiers have swapped their SA80s for trowels and brushes and unearthed a number of significant archaeological artifacts. Ben Glass caught up with the troops on the last day of the dig.**

“Either we excavated the graves or the badgers would have destroyed them all,” says the DIO’s Senior Historic Advisor Richard Osgood as he cast his eye across the dig.

“They were burrowing their way through a lot of them. We were finding human bones in the burrows.”

The evidence is plain to see. The entire dig is potted with dark tunnels that disappear into the sixth-century burial site at Barrow Clump. In the walls of one trench surrounding the graves of an Anglo-Saxon woman plus two children are seven badger holes.

Richard continues: “Some people have wondered whether it was appropriate

to dig up graves, but surely it’s more respectful to ensure the remains are preserved than have badgers ruin them?”

And the decision has led to one of the most significant archaeological finds in recent history.

Richard says: “The burial ground is relatively small and we expected to uncover around 15 graves, but instead have unearthed 27.

“The really exciting thing is that because of the variety of artefacts found any future student wanting to study the sixth century of Wessex will have to refer to Barrow Clump.” ▶

*Private Harry Buxton, Military Intelligence, excavates an Anglo-Saxon woman*







*An Anglo-Saxon warrior with a spear ferrule and a wooden drinking vessel*

During the eight-week dig the team have discovered three shield bosses, a square headed broach, three disc broaches, two gilded button broaches, a Roman broach, hundreds of amber and glass beads, a silver ring, five spear heads, a spear ferrule and a wooden drinking vessel with bronze bands.

The finds were made by more than 100 soldiers taking part in Operation Nightingale – an award-winning project using archaeology to aid the recovery of injured soldiers. DIO worked with The Rifles to create an initiative which gives troops the opportunity to learn a series of excavation, land survey, drawing and mapping techniques and also enhance their presentation skills.

Mike Kelly, 1 RIFLES, who suffered an eye injury in Afghanistan, believes he and his comrades are the best people to excavate the graves.

“The feeling of touching something

that hasn't been touched for 2,000 years is amazing,” he says.

“A lot of these remains are of soldiers. They've been buried with spears and shields. Because I'm a soldier I feel like I understand what they went through, what they went through in battle, the hardships they had, what their friends and family went through.

“We lost a Colour Sergeant and it was extremely hard on a lot of people. I can empathise with these people in the graves. Because of the soldier thing there, there is so much respect.”

David Hart, 6 RIFLES, was injured in Kabul when a suicide bomber attacked the vehicle he was in.

He says: “I've really enjoyed learning new skills among great people. You feel a lot like you're touching history.”

Rowan Kendrick, 29, 5 RIFLES, echoes David's view.

He says: “History was always one of my favourite subjects at school and being able to do this is amazing.

“I love the idea of contributing – of helping people learn about Anglo-Saxon times, of being able to go into a museum and seeing something I've helped put there.”

The project has inspired eight soldiers to go on to study archaeology at Leicester University.

One of them is Corporal Steven Winterton, of 1 RIFLES, who was injured during a mortar attack in Afghanistan.

He says: “I've always been interested in archaeology. I really enjoy watching Time Team on TV and this was a fantastic opportunity to try it out myself. Operation Nightingale has opened up this opportunity to me and I'm looking to make a career out of archaeology.”

The efforts of the soldiers – and their finds - have caught the attention of the UK's archaeological community.

During a glitzy British Archaeological Awards ceremony in London Operation Nightingale was bestowed a special award in recognition of its innovative use of archaeological work to boost the recovery and career prospects of military personnel injured in Afghanistan.

Dr Mike Heyworth MBE, chairman of the BAA, says: “The trustees of the British Archaeological Awards were unanimous that Operation Nightingale was a project worthy of special recognition, not just because of the important archaeological work undertaken, but due to its positive impact on the well-being of courageous soldiers from The Rifles who have been able to take part.” ■



*Rifleman Mike Kelly, 1 Rifles, with an Anglo-Saxon gold leaf button broach discovered on the site*





# Tidworth's transformation

Tidworth in May 2008



**These pictures show how a £1.5 billion DIO project to improve living accommodation for 18,700 soldiers is gathering pace.**

The images are of Tidworth where a £455 million scheme – including the construction of 116 new buildings, 36 refurbished structures and alteration of a further 13 – is making life better for 5,200 soldiers based there.

The Tidworth improvements form part of Project Allenby/Connaught which will see the construction or refurbishment of 550 buildings and the demolition of 487 at six sites together with the provision of a range of services.

Project Allenby/Connaught is MOD's largest infrastructure Private Finance Initiative (PFI) – a way of funding public infrastructure projects with private money.

So far contractors Aspire Defence, who were awarded the contract in 2006, have completed construction, refurbishment or alteration of 469 buildings at Aldershot, Warminster, Perham Down, Bulford, Larkhill and Tidworth.

Andrew Mathewson, DIO Head of Infrastructure Private Finance Initiatives, says: "Tidworth has been completely regenerated. It was filled with old

Edwardian buildings not fit for the 21st century. There were leaking rooms, the heating and hot water regularly failed, and the camp was badly in need of significant investment.

"Now we have excellent fully-serviced new and refurbished buildings serving eight battalions, as well as Brigade and Garrison headquarters.

"What's more, this is not a quick fix. Under the PFI agreement for Project Allenby/Connaught, none of the buildings will be allowed to degenerate as they will be fully maintained throughout the life of the 35-year contract."

Peter Smart, Chief Executive for Aspire Defence, added: "I am very conscious that this has been a significant investment by the MOD. We've worked hard to deliver this outstanding accommodation and other facilities to a high standard – all of which has been delivered on or ahead of programme. This, along with the wide range of supporting services which we provide, has been a major factor in making soldiers' lives better." ■

Tidworth in July 2011





# Practice makes perfect

**This summer marks the seventieth anniversary of the Stanford Training Area – one of the most intensively used military training areas in the UK. Here, Ben Glass looks back on the formation of the area and examines its importance to the UK Armed Forces.**



*An officer leads his men in a training exercise at STANTA in the early 1950s*

If you type 'battle training' into Google one of the first results is a link to a Wikipedia article about Stanford Training Area (STANTA).

While this may baffle teenagers looking for war-themed computer games, this Defence Infrastructure Organisation training area is one of the MOD's, if not Britain's, most vital assets.

Almost every British soldier to see action over the last seven decades has trained here. Tommys on their way to Normandy in the 1940s, troops preparing for the streets of Belfast in the 1970s, commandos en route to Afghanistan last year... all honed their fighting skills in the 35 square miles (64 square kilometres) of fields and small

villages on the border of Norfolk and Suffolk.

But STANTA's start in life was abrupt and controversial.

The area had long been used for military training, and following the evacuation of Dunkirk in 1940, 118,000 acres of Norfolk and Suffolk were being used for this purpose. But it soon became apparent that an area dedicated to complex live firing was required and that this area would need to be closed to the public.

On June 19 1942 the 582 inhabitants of six villages – Stanford, Buckenham Tofts, West Tofts, Langford, Tottington and Sturston – were ordered to move out.

Lieutenant Colonel Tony Powell (rtd), Regional Executive Officer for Defence Training Estate East, has been involved in the area since first training there himself with the Royal Anglian Regiment in 1965.

He says: "The population of the villages were drawn together at two locations – the Blacksmith's Forge at Tottington and at West Tofts School – and they were told to leave within three weeks.



*A modern soldier clambers through a window during a training exercise at STANTA*

"I imagine a lot more would be made of the evacuation were it to happen now, but there was a war going on. The majority accepted the evacuation as part of the war effort. Some villagers believed they would be allowed to return after the war, and were disappointed. The requirement for the training area has remained."

On June 10, a church service was held at St Mary's Church in West Tofts – one of the four churches on STANTA.

Lieutenant Colonel Powell says: "It was conducted by the Bishop of Norwich Graham James and attended by between 200 and 250 mainly local people. ▶"



The theme was the sacrifices made both by those evacuated and those that train on STANTA. It was a thoughtful service predominantly for civilians with links to the villages and local dignitaries.

“The purpose of the service was two-fold. Firstly to mark the 70 years since the evacuation, and secondly to rededicate a stained glass window which had recently been restored thanks to English Heritage.”

The years following evacuation saw STANTA’s role change as conflicts changed.

The original villages and buildings were so frequently used for training during the Second World War that few remain. Cold War training led to the construction of a Northern European village. Training for Northern Ireland saw the building of patrol bases and observation towers. After training for the Balkans, the fighting village area was extended to provide a Middle Eastern urban facility and most recently an Afghan village was added.

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Goodin, Commander DTE East, claims such areas play a vital role in ensuring military personnel are prepared for battle.

“Operations are increasingly conducted among the population,” he says.



*Troops prepare for urban combat in the Afghan Village at STANTA*

“So training in urban environments is increasingly important, and this is one of the great advantages of STANTA. The villages are constantly being used and are likely to become more and more important.”

But how realistic are the mock warzones?

Lieutenant Colonel Goodin says: “They do not have to be exact replicas but they are as close as possible. And by the time all the props are in, they are realistic. The villages do enough to create what Samuel Coleridge called “the willing suspension of disbelief” – the soldiers are able to train as if they were in theatre.”

And what would happen if soldiers didn’t undergo this role-play training?

“They would be less well trained and the risk of casualties would increase, no doubt about it.” Lieutenant Colonel Goodin says.

“For example, the first time a junior commander plans and carries out an operation he does it here.

“He does it with a real Afghan soldier, in an environment with real Afghan civilians, in what looks like a real Afghanistan street. It’s very realistic.

“So when he does it for real for the first time he has already learned from experience on training and has been given the best possible opportunity to get it right.”

This sort of training is so vital that STANTA has become one of the most intensively used military areas in the UK – hosting training for 80,000 military personnel every year.

As well as urban training facilities, STANTA has the full range of field firing areas for live firing up to company level with mortars and artillery. Forward Operating Bases there can accommodate a battalion and the four

troops.

Lieutenant Colonel Goodin reveals that despite the nature of some of the training, the area usually has a serene atmosphere. He says: “There are no sign posts or telegraph poles – just heathland, woods, fields, sheep and the training facilities.

“It’s very peaceful. If it hadn’t have been taken on by the MOD it would be more developed and this Breckland landscape would have been lost to modern development. It’s a timeless place.”

Of 30,000 acres of land covered by STANTA, 13,000 have been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Forests, marshes, lakes and streams ensure an abundance of a variety of animals and flora and fauna.

There are more than 600 species of flowering plants, 28 of which are rare or uncommon, 32 types of butterfly, 414 of moth and 27 species of mammals such as deer, squirrel and otter. The area has a significant bat population and is home to 137 species of bird.

As well as being important for wildlife it is also significant historically as it has 26 ancient monuments. ■





Chris Wilks collects his honey on Salisbury plain



# A taste of honey

With its rich history and rare wildlife, Salisbury Plain is well known as a fascination to archaeologists and biologists.

But there is another group of specialists who are equally enamoured with the area – beekeepers.

There are now more than 350 hives on the plain and

their hard-working inhabitants produce more than 10 tonnes of honey a year.

Here, Defence Infrastructure Organisation Training Facilities Allocating Officer and part-time apiarist Chris Wilks talks to Ben Glass about why Salisbury Plain is an allure to both bees and their keepers.

On a military training day it would be hard to miss the hum of bullets zipping across Salisbury Plain.

But once the din of mock battle has faded only the keen-eared will hear a more gentle buzz – that of honey bees harvesting nectar in one of the UK's most fertile landscapes.

For part-time beekeeper Chris Wilks the hum means it's going to be a good year.

On the Plain Mr Wilks keeps 150 beehives which last year produced five-and-a-half tonnes of award-winning wildflower honey. Fellow beekeeper Robert Field has a further 250 hives in the area.

Mr Wilks says: "We're very lucky being able to keep our bees here. Beekeepers across the country are envious because of the wild flowers and the herb-rich chalk landscape.

"Of the top 22 UK wildflowers from which bees collect nectar, 18 of them are found here.

"Beekeepers often have to find areas rich in these sorts of flowers and then take their bees to them. Here, the flowers simply grow around the hives."

And the result is some of the finest honey in the country according to Mr Wilks.

He says: "People tell me Salisbury Plain Honey is unique. It has a malty, floral, wildflower honey that is golden sunshine in colour and has won awards." ▶







*Chris gets stung between 20 and 30 times on an average visit to his apiaries*

But it's not just the thought of delicious honey that encourages the retired major to get up at 5am to tend his hives and then return again after a day in the office.

"Bees are fascinating, crafty creatures," he says. "They all work together for the common good, as a complete unit that cleans, feeds and reproduces.

"They're very good at forecasting the weather. When it's about to rain they become feisty. They work it out because they can sense a change in the air pressure.

"In bad weather they will reduce laying because the hive can't support new bees.

"They carry out cost-benefit analysis. Even if it's a sunny day they might not leave the hive because the wind speed could be

too high. They work out they would need to consume more to make the trip than the trip would produce.

"You learn something new about bees all the time. Even people who have been keeping bees for 40 years are always learning something new."

But producing nectar of the Gods is not without a price to pay.

"On one trip to the apiaries I might get stung 20 or 30 times," he says. "It's mainly on the hands. A lot of beekeepers wear thick leather gloves but I like to be a bit more hygienic and wear disposable blue rubber gloves.

"This reduces the possibility of spreading a disease from one hive to another but you get stung more easily. It's more of an

## Amazing bee facts

- Bees are the only insects that produce food eaten by man
- Honey bees flap their wings more than 200 times per second
- A bee has a top speed of 15mph
- Bees visit two million flowers to make one jar of honey (500g)
- The average worker bee will make half a teaspoon of honey in her lifetime
- A honey bee will visit between 50 and 100 flowers during one collection trip
- There are 60,000 bees in the average colony
- The average worker bee will live for only 35 days before her wings wear out



irritation than a pain. You get used to it. But you don't like to see a bee sacrifice itself – they will die after they sting you."

It appears a little discomfort should be the least of Mr Wilks' worries.

The British Beekeepers Association warns that anyone stung is at risk, albeit a small one, of going into anaphylactic shock – an extreme allergic reaction that can be fatal.

Mr Wilks says: "Because I'm on Salisbury Plain and miles from any medical help I carry around adrenalin in an epi-pen. I'd have to inject it into my thigh if I noticed any symptoms of anaphylactic shock and that would be the end of my beekeeping days."

But the hazard is worth it, Mr Wilks claims.

He says: "It's so satisfying – helping keep them alive in the winter, building them up so they're strong in the summer and then collecting lots of honey."

## Competition – win a jar of honey

Chris Wilks only sells his Wiltshire Wildflower Honey at a selection of shops in and around Salisbury Plain.

But lucky DIologue readers are being given the chance to win one of three jars of the sweet stuff.

To enter our competition answer the following question: **How many bees make up an average colony at the height of honey production?**

Email your answers responses to [DIOSec-SecComms1a1@MOD.UK](mailto:DIOSec-SecComms1a1@MOD.UK) by October 15. ■

