



WESSEX

RESERVE FORCES' & CADETS' ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

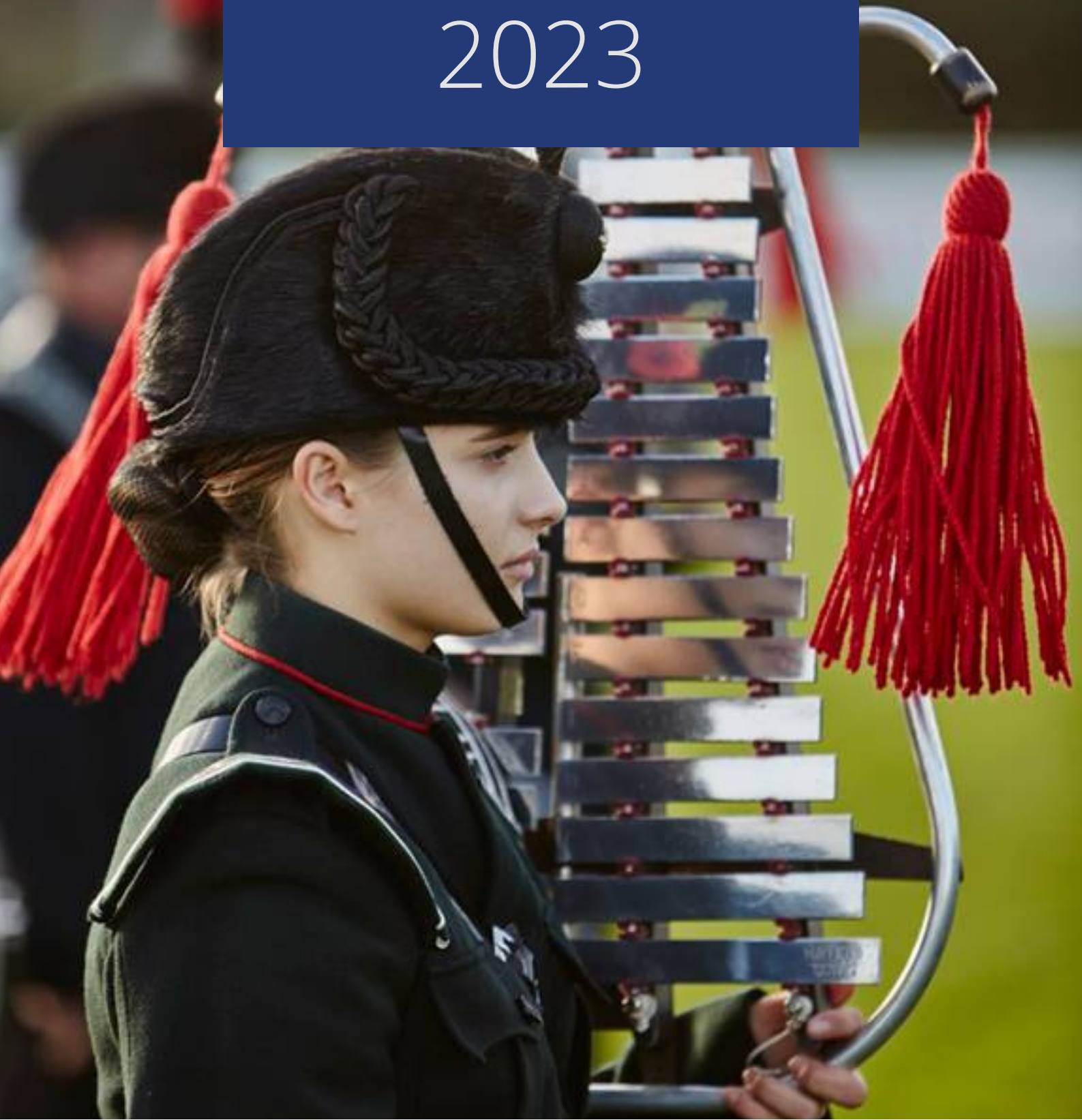


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WE ARE WESSEX RFCA

Wessex Reserves Forces' and Cadets' Association (RFCA) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to supporting and promoting 4,600 tri-service Reservists, 14,600 Cadets and 3,000 Cadet Force Adult Volunteers across the South West of England and the Channel Islands.

Wessex RFCA is widely recognised to be the most valuable body which supports Reserve Forces and Cadets in the South West.

Wessex RFCA is one of 13 public organisations across the country, set up by statute as a central government body with Crown Status. The organisation has three pillars of work; Cadets and Youth, Estates and Engagement.

RFCA's are not part of the Armed Forces, but are well placed to provide expert advice and assistance to the Defence Council, and the military, at any level.

Wessex RFCA delivers essential support to Reserves and Cadets, as well as the wider Armed Forces Community, across the City and County of Bristol, Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and the Channel Islands.

The Association has a wide-reaching volunteer membership, which is drawn from former tri-service officers, representatives from local authorities and local business and community leaders.

The Wessex RFCA team is headquartered in Taunton.



SOME WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

It has been a great privilege for Gloucestershire to hold the Presidency for Wessex RFCA through a year that has seen excellent progress on strategic matters and the processes successfully completed for new leadership in the posts of Chair and Chief Executive.

In keeping with all aspects of the Gloucestershire Lieutenancy, which puts the institution before the individual, our approach was to form a Presidential Group comprising myself, our Vice Lord-Lieutenant, three Deputy Lieutenants and the 2022-23 High Sheriff. I am immensely grateful to them for their commitment and expertise which has enabled us to give appropriate guidance and support.

There have been a great many achievements this year, many of which are reported in this excellent Annual Report produced by the team. I commend this to you and know that the Chair, Lance Ranson, will highlight the key successes in his Report at the AGM.

The RFCA is going through a great deal of change at present and this is keeping everyone very busy. Since the Sullivan Report was published in early 2020, the Council of RFCAs and the regional RFCAs have been working through a long list of recommendations to prepare the organisation for a future as a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB). Many are now complete and we await the final, but

most important, piece of the jig-saw which is the primary legislation required to actually establish the NDPB. Unfortunately, this is unlikely to be in place until 2026 or later, but Wessex RFCA will be well prepared.

In the meantime, the Value for Money Review, currently making its way through the MOD and up to Ministers for approval, may bring a major change to the way in which the RFCAs provide and maintain the Volunteer Estate. We look forward to hearing more about this and other change programmes at a series of update presentations after the formal business of the AGM.

One of the most welcome presidential duties is to host the President's Dinner, which this year was held in May at Tortworth Court near Wootton-under-Edge. This wonderful event provides a rare opportunity for the RFCA to bring together all of the commanders of Reserve units in the region with the Association Board members and some of the staff. It is a valuable networking forum where much can be achieved in the convivial surroundings of a formal dinner. As my representatives, Vice Lord-Lieutenant Roger Deeks and Deputy Lieutenant Susie Hewson thoroughly enjoyed the evening with those who attended and were pleased to congratulate them on their achievements.

I have been delighted that my Lord-Lieutenant's Cadets have been able to accompany and support me and Roger Deeks at several important events. These

SOME WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

included several Royal Visits, most notably the Cathedral Service to Commemorate the Coronation, and the St George's Day Service. On each occasion they represented their cadet units to the highest possible standard and we wish them well as they continue the development of their cadet careers. We were also delighted to see that Lord-Lieutenant's Cadets from the region attended the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award event at Buckingham Palace.

Finally, I wish to say thank you and farewell to Lance Ranson and Steve Hodder who are leaving their current roles as Chair and Chief Executive in September. They have been a great team in recent years. Members of our Presidential Group were involved in the selection of both of their successors. We have been fortunate to select and nominate

experienced Reservist Robert Wharton to stand for election as Association Chair at the AGM. After a short gap, Steve will be replaced by Brigadier (Retd) Neville Holmes who will arrive as Chief Executive in January 2024. Brigadier Nev is a former commanding officer of 6 RIFLES and was also Commander South West for two years before being promoted into the Deputy Commander Cadets role at HQ Regional Command. He brings a great deal of relevant experience and knowledge to all aspects of our role and we look forward to working with him.

We are most grateful to volunteer members for their valued support. Thanks also to the professional team for their skill, hard work and achievements. Under new leadership, we wish all those who serve the Wessex RFCA continued and rewarding success.



CHAIR'S REPORT

This will be my final Annual Report after five years as your Chair. Wessex RFCA has offered remarkable support to our Reserve and Cadet units through a period of unprecedented change and unexpected challenges. On your behalf I have to say how very grateful I am to Steve Hodder and the Mount House and county staff for their hard work and professionalism throughout this time. At all levels the staff have built extremely close links and cooperation with our Service customers with excellent results. Their achievements are clear on every page of this Report and, supported by our volunteers, we can all be extremely proud of our 115-year-old Association!

When Richard Haldane formed our Association in 1908 as part of his widespread reforms to Defence, he would no doubt have been keen for us to remain as agile, modern and relevant as possible in order for us to support our Reserves and Cadets. The implemented recommendations of the recent Sullivan Review have enabled us to achieve this and continue to offer real value for money for our annual budget. While the 'pause' on the Government's legislation means that we are likely to remain as an independent regional association for the time being, on policy matters the 13 RFCAs are operating far more as a single national entity.



ESTATES

You can see in this Report the large number of Reserve and Cadet buildings that our busy Estates team is responsible for. You will be aware that routine maintenance and regulatory compliance of the estate is currently being reviewed and is very likely to be handed over to a single contractor in the forthcoming year. Our team will continue to be closely involved in the management of these important tasks and will want to ensure that these are maintained to the highest possible standard. Our team will also continue to be closely involved in the project management of a number of developments across the region to ensure that our Reservists and Cadets have the most modern training facilities we can provide.

CHAIR'S REPORT

ESTATES

We have also been involved in ensuring that the locations of our units are optimised for the requirements of our Service customers.

RESERVES & RECRUITING

The 'package' designed to attract, recruit and retain Reserves continues to evolve as societal changes and individual attitudes mean that units have to offer unique and worthwhile returns in exchange for their Reservists' spare time. It is good to note that the opportunities open for reservists to train, deploy on overseas operations and to take part in sport and adventurous training are better than ever.

Many units are doing a fantastic job of highlighting the exciting roles they offer on social media and a major campaign to support recruiting will be launched shortly. However, as the 'champion' of Reserves of all three Services, it is concerning to note the 'centralisation' of the recruiting and induction of both Reserves and Regulars has not worked well and has resulted in net outflows for a number of years. It is very much hoped that this situation can be reversed and Wessex RFCA will do everything that it can to help achieve this.

ENGAGEMENT

The Armed Forces Covenant (AFC) continues to be a huge success nationally and is particularly relevant in the Wessex region as we have some of the highest numbers of Regulars, Reservists, Cadets and Veterans in the country. As you can see in this Report, many of our employers and organisations across the region have joined the Employer Recognition Scheme, with more joining on an almost daily basis. Our highly effective Engagement team has been a key element in this success and we need to continue to keep the firms engaged with Defence and encourage closer cooperation between them.

As people increasingly turn to the digital media rather than print for their information and entertainment, our media communications are very proactive and engaging with a real focus on attracting potential recruits to learn more about our military units. Do follow us!

Another important aspect of the AFC is support for Veterans. While the majority of Veterans go on to enjoy fulfilling civilian careers, there are some who for a variety of reasons find life to be rather more challenging. We all have a key part to play in identifying these Veterans in need and ensuring that the Services' charitable sector is fully supporting them.

CHAIR'S REPORT

CADETS & YOUTH

The cadet movement offers a fantastic opportunity for our youth to develop themselves in a fun, challenging, inclusive and safe environment. Our cadet units achieve so much and as the Commander HQSW, Colonel Gary McDade, said on his recent visit to Devon ACF;

'Visiting a Cadet unit recharges my batteries!'

Our Professional Support Staff (PSS) in the seven county ACFs work closely with the CFAVs to enable them to focus on training and provide a fantastic Cadet Experience for their Cadets.

I am very grateful to the PSS for their hard work and, as ever, I am full of admiration of the CFAVs across all the community Cadet units and CCFs for their dedication and professionalism.

The active leadership and support of our seven Lord-Lieutenants adds so much value to the work of Wessex RFCA and I am most grateful to Mr Edward Gillespie OBE for his role as our President for the last year. I also wish to thank all of Wessex RFCA's volunteers and in particular the Board and Committee members whose expertise and dedication are so invaluable. It has been a pleasure working with you all and I wish you all the very best for the future.



ENGAGEMENT

The last year has been exceptionally busy for the whole Engagement and Communications team. In August, we unfortunately said goodbye to our Events Officer Sally Pembery, which also then meant that we had to fill her shoes, this was no easy feat!

The team took on responsibility for the management and delivery all of the Wessex RFCA events, including our flagship Lord-Lieutenants Awards. It wasn't easy but we were thrilled that they all went off without a hitch and our recipients had a wonderful experience.

In the last reporting period we delivered our first ever Gold Employer Recognition Scheme Awards in the South West. The ceremony was held against the beautiful backdrop of Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth and was supported by the Royal Marines Band. The evening was a great success and credit must go the whole engagement team for pulling together such an outstanding awards ceremony. Thanks to the Royal Navy for allowing us to use their incredible venue and supporting the event.

2022 definitely saw an increase in engagement following the COVID Pandemic. The whole team was busy engaging with businesses, charities, gatekeepers, local authorities, civic leaders and stakeholders. In June last year, we managed to get across to the Channel Islands for a few days and had the opportunity to engage with a wide ranging audience during our time there. This has hopefully planted some seeds and will lead to further engagement activity.





We were invited to sit on a Cornwall Council board to support their bid for Cornwall to host the Armed Forces Day National event in 2023. I am delighted to say this bid was successful, and since the Autumn we were heavily engaged with the planning of Armed Forces Day in Falmouth with Cornwall Council, and other Stakeholders.

The media launch for Armed Forces Day was held at Pendennis Castle in March 2023, 100 days before the main event and was well supported by local units, cadet units and local dignitaries. The event in Falmouth was one to remember and were very proud to be support it.

I am happy to say that we now have an Engagement Committee, chaired by Major General (Rtd), William O'Leary. We had our first meeting in February, which was well attended and created some positive outcomes and support for myself and the whole Engagement and Communications team. We have welcomed this opportunity to have an Engagement Committee and look forward to working with the Chair and the members.

We continue to have a presence within Armed Forces Covenant Partnerships within local authorities and support their activities and outreach as best we can. I am happy to say that a number of the Councils have re-affirmed their Covenant pledges in the last year, which is a really positive.

Our Communications and Employer Engagement teams have been working tirelessly and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their continued commitment and support during an unusually busy 12 months. THANK YOU!

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

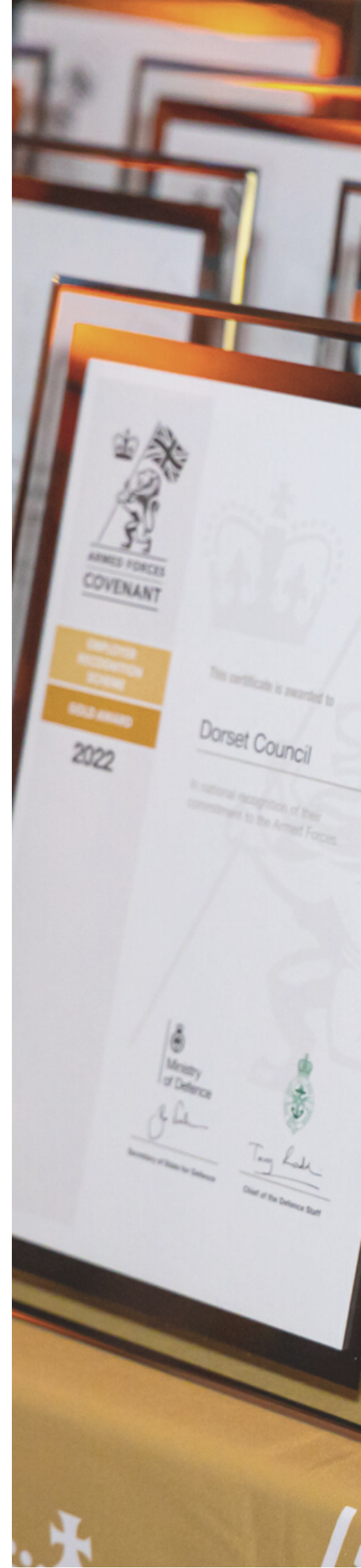
The Employer Engagement team has continued to utilise technology and virtual meetings to connect with and maintain relationships with businesses. However the last six months have seen a dramatic increase in face-to-face activity in a return to something very similar to pre-Covid times.

As a team Emily, Jon and Leanne are using their experience to great effect, having increased Armed Forces Covenant (AFC) signings and Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) award numbers last year, with an even larger increase looking likely going into 2023/24. You can see the year's numbers below.

The Regional Employer Engagement Group (REEG) continues to benefit from hybrid attendance, thus enabling those who may otherwise have to take a whole day out of business to attend a 2-3 hour meeting, to still make a valuable contribution.

The group has this year been bolstered by a new Bristol sub-group lead, Alistair Roxburgh from Atkins, a Gold ERS holder. Mike Sherburn who was also the Association's RAF Liaison Officer and then one of the RAF's Air Regional Employer Engagement Officers (AREEO) and also served as the Chair to the REEG, has transferred his AREEO post to Wales, following a personal relocation. In his place, longstanding Association and REEG member, Stephen Whitbourn has ably taken up the reigns.

Employers from across the region have been recognised for their support to, and advocacy of, the defence community by being presented with Silver and Gold Employer Recognition Scheme Awards.





The Silver Awards were once again presented face-to-face at our Lord-Lieutenant's Award ceremonies; and, significantly we hosted for the first time a stand-alone South West ERS Gold Awards ceremony at Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth with thanks to Captain Sarah Oakley and her team.

In conjunction with the wider engagement team the event was delivered successfully. 19 businesses were awarded Gold ERS 2022 at a glitzy ceremony that was extremely well delivered and very well received.

As well as supporting face-to-face Armed Forces Covenant signings, networking, and Unit events, the team has supported HQSW at the Army Engagement Group (AEG) presentations in several locations and will do so again in Weston-Super-Mare, Plymouth and Truro this year coming.

Employer Support to Reserve Units, Reservists and employers has been quiet, although there has been more connection requests from RF&C with specific ERS award holding organisations for the Reserve Forces 2030 consultations which we await further direction and outputs on.

COMMUNICATIONS

2022-23 saw another busy year for the Communications department, with a continued increase in the amount and pace of activity across Wessex RFCA, with only a small team delivering central support to each department in the Association. 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.

Due to changes in the team with the departure of Sally, and increased demands on the communications team's time, this year we have put a great deal of effort in to working more effectively and making best use of the limited resources that we do have. In the past 12 months Cheryl, our Communications Assistant, has taken on fully the management of our social media channels, which now makes up a large proportion of her work. This increased focus on our social media outputs has been incredibly fruitful, and has helped to grow our audiences and engagement across all of our channels. Thank you to Cheryl for all your hard work on this.

Sally's departure in September left a void in the team which we have had to work creatively to fill with existing resources, due to being unable to recruit a replacement at this time. Rachael and Siobhan have taken on the responsibility for the organisations events, with help from the team in iHub, and the wider Engagement team.

This year, the Engagement team has become much more involved in managing the membership. This involves working on updating our membership communications and the way in which we disseminate information. We look forward to sharing some of these developments in the future, and welcome your feedback and opinions on how we could be doing better.



The communications team is now involved in a number of national campaigns throughout the year, which take up a great deal of time and resources. These campaigns include Reserves Day, Armed Forces Day, Silver and Gold Employer Recognition Scheme announcement and awards campaigns.

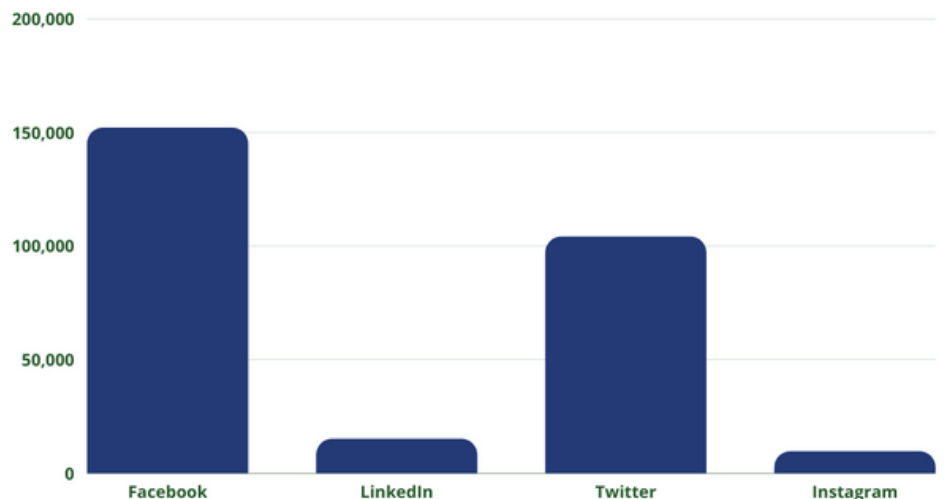
Nationally there is a great deal of change taking place within the wider Communications and Engagement area, with a review into the function and how it is resourced across all RFCAs being carried out in the first half of 2023. It is hoped that this review will help address the shortfall in resources across all the RFCAs and ensure greater consistency across the country allowing teams to better deliver on all of our key outputs.

Successes of 2022/23;

- 6.7% increase in followers across social media channels
- Delivery of our first Wessex regional Gold Employer Recognition Scheme Awards, as well as digital campaign
- Delivery of the Employer Recognition Scheme Silver Awards digital campaign

SOCIAL MEDIA REACH

April 2022 - March 2023



ARMED FORCES COVENANT

To those who proudly protect our nation, who do so with honour, courage, and commitment, the Armed Forces Covenant is the nation's commitment to you. It is a pledge that together we acknowledge and understand that those who serve or who have served in the armed forces, and their families, should be treated with fairness and respect in the communities, economy and society they serve with their lives.

The covenant focusses on helping members of the armed forces community have the same access to government and commercial services and products as any other citizen. This support is provided in a number of areas including:

- education and family well-being
- having a home
- starting a new career
- access to healthcare
- financial assistance
- discounted services



Covenants signed
April 22-March 23

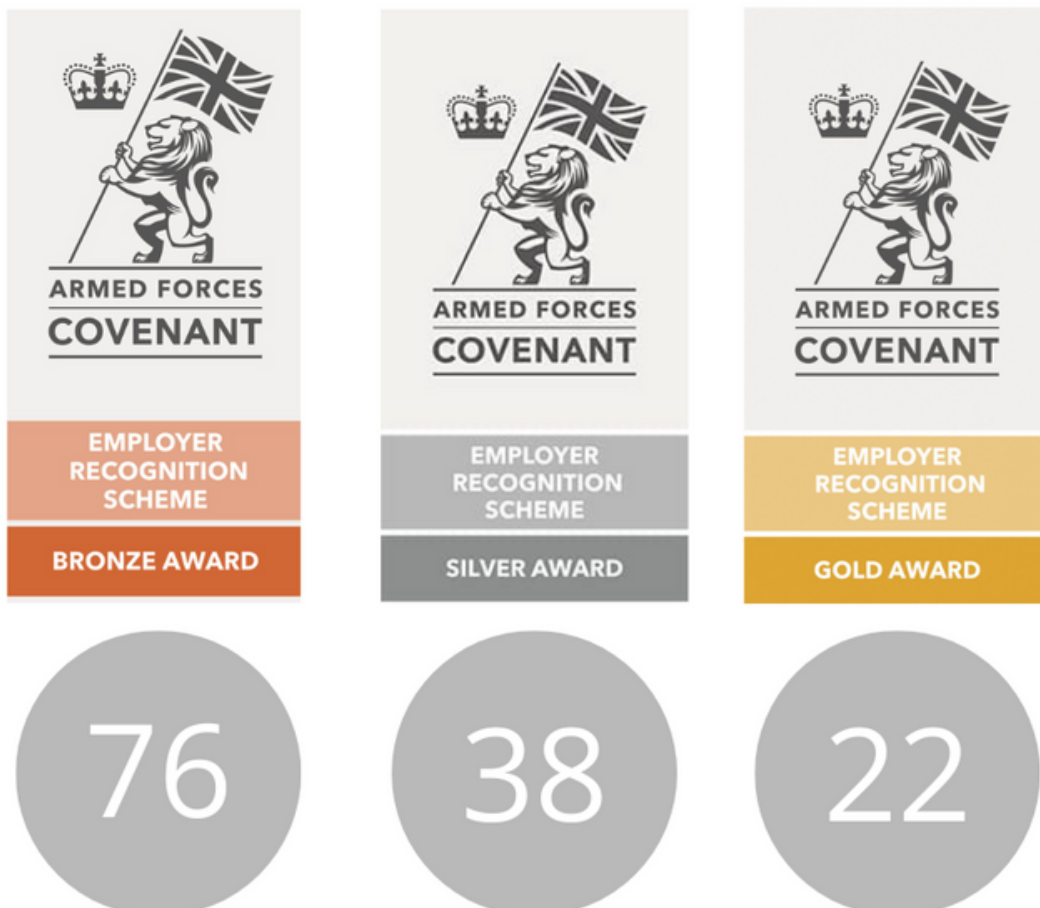
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EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

The Employer Recognition Scheme was launched in 2014 by the then Prime Minister David Cameron to recognise employer support for the wider principles of the Armed Forces Covenant and the full spectrum of Defence personnel. This includes Regulars, Reserves, service leavers, cadets and cadet force volunteers, spouses and wounded, injured and sick.

The scheme recognises and rewards UK employers for their support to Defence personnel, and encompasses Bronze, Silver and Gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to Defence and the Armed Forces community, and align their support with the Armed Forces Covenant.

The following Employer Recognition Scheme Awards were awarded in 2022;



GOLD ERS AWARDS BRITANNIA ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE, DARTMOUTH

In November 2022, 19 south west employers were presented with a Gold Employer Recognition Scheme Award at Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth.

Representing the highest badge of honour, Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold Awards are presented to businesses that employ and support those who serve, veterans and their families.

156 companies across the UK received the Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award for their outstanding support towards the Armed Forces community.

This year's awardees brings the total number of Gold holders to 649.

Winners in the Wessex region were presented with their award at a ceremony on Thursday 24th November 2022, at Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth.

Recipients in the Wessex RFCA area (including two Gold holders who had their existing award revalidated) were;

AeroGlow International
Aspire Defence Services Limited
Audax Global Solutions Ltd
Avon and Somerset Constabulary
CETSAT Ltd
Computer Network Defence Ltd

D3A Defence Ltd
Dorcas Media Limited
Dorset Council
Elliot Brown Watches
L3 Harris/TRL Technology Ltd
Networkology Ltd
Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust
Somerset NHS Foundation Trust
SSGC Ltd
Train4All Ltd
University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust
Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Revalidations:
Wiltshire Council
Wolferstans Solicitors

To win an award, organisations must provide 10 extra paid days leave for Reservists and have supportive HR policies in place for veterans, Reserves, and Cadet Force Adult Volunteers, as well as spouses and partners of those serving in the Armed Forces.



DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL AND TORBAY COUNCIL SIGN ARMED FORCES COVENANT

Devon County Council (DCC) and Torbay Council re-signed the Armed Forces Covenant in March 2023, thereby reaffirming their unwavering commitment to do all that they can to support the armed forces community and their families.

There are more than 100,000 members of the Armed Forces community in Devon and Torbay, and some veterans in particular need extra support once they leave service.

At a special event at the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines (CTCRM) in East Devon yesterday (March 22), Councillor John Hart, leader of DCC, re-signed the Covenant on behalf of the authority, while Councillor Nicole Amil signed on behalf of Torbay Council.

CTCRM Commandant Colonel Christopher E Haw MC signed on behalf of the Ministry of Defence.

Both councils are part of the Devon and Torbay Armed Forces Covenant Partnership. Devon has also been awarded Employer's Recognition Silver Award and Torbay has been awarded the Employer's Recognition Bronze Award and is working to achieve the Silver Award in 2023.

By signing the Covenant this week each signatory, and the organisation that they represent, is recognising the significant contribution members of the Armed Forces make to our country, and understand the issues that veterans, reservists, and their family members face.

Additionally, they are pledging that they will do everything they can to 'support the Armed Forces Community'.

Also invited to the event were special guests including former serviceman and Devon County Councillor, Roger Croad, the Lead Member for the Armed Forces Covenant, the Vice Lord Lieutenant The Rt Hon. Lady Arran CVO MBE VLL, the Chief Executive of DCC Donna Manson, and local county councillors for Exmouth Richard Scott and Jeff Trail, BEM, who is a retired Royal Marine.

The Partnership was created to support service members – a lack of familiarity about civilian services can make it difficult for many veterans and their families to access health care, to find suitable housing, employment or join social groups.

The Partnership has also helped launch the Devon Forces Family website so veterans can access information and know where to get help.

Former serviceman and Devon County Councillor, Roger Croad is Lead Member for the Armed Forces Covenant, and Cabinet Member for Public Health, Communities and Equality.

He said: "As a nation we have a duty to ensure that those who have helped to keep us safe and their families, are treated fairly.

"I'm pleased to be able to reaffirm our pledge. Many veterans, reservists and family members of veterans work for the Council. I want them to know that we not only recognise and thank them for their contribution, but that we understand the issues they face."

"I pledge that we will continue to support each veteran and the wider Armed Forces community in any way we can."

CTCRM Commandant Colonel Christopher E Haw MC said: "It is an absolute privilege to host the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant here at the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines, Lympstone today. I am honoured to represent the Armed Forces Community in formally signing the covenant alongside Devon County Council and Torbay Council. This has reaffirmed their pledge to the Armed Forces, and we are immensely grateful for their continuous support."

The Vice Lord Lieutenant Lady Arran said: "I am pleased on the Lord-Lieutenant's behalf to be witnessing the signing of this important long-standing arrangement which is so vital in helping our Armed Forces and their families serving here in Devon and for those veterans who have completed their service for our Country."



LORD-LIEUTENANT'S AWARDS 2022

This years Lord-Lieutenant's Awards were delivered in October by the Engagement team with the support of the iHub. The aim of the Awards are to recognise the hard work and dedication of those in the Reserve and Cadet community across the South West.

As in 2021, the awards were delivered in a hybrid fashion, with the opportunity to attend in person, and watch via a live stream on our Facebook page. This year the live feed

videos of the seven Award ceremonies were watched nearly 3,000 times.

Due to our Events Officer leaving in September, the events were challenging to organise. We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who was involved in the organisation of the events and all those who attended, for making them such a huge success.



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Ceremonies



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Certificates of Meritorious Service



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Lord Lieutenant's Cadets



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Defence ERS Silver Awards



RESERVISTS RECOGNISED FOR CONTRIBUTION TO OP CABRIT

In October three Reservists from The Royal Wessex Yeomanry were recognised for their outstanding contribution to Op CABRIT.

Corporal Michael Farley, Lance Corporal George Dwight and Lance Corporal George Wirgman were presented with the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate for Meritorious Service by the Lord-Lieutenant of Gloucestershire at a ceremony which took place at Hatherley Manor Hotel and Spa.

The Reserves were deployed as part of the Enhanced Forward Presence Battlegroup (eFP BG) deployed on Op CABRIT in Estonia with the Royal Tank Regiment Battlegroup. The Group made up the first all Reservist tank crew to deploy since World War Two.

The Reservists took part in several large-scale multi-national deployments within the Baltic states, including the largest NATO deployment during EX SPRING STORM,

eFP BG interoperability exercises, IA&O tasks throughout the Baltic and a Challenger 2 range period in Latvia.

Op Cabrit is the name of the UK operational deployment to Estonia where British troops are leading a multinational battlegroup as part of the enhanced Forward Presence (eFP).

UK Armed Forces have a leading role in NATO's eFP in the Baltic States, in order to enhance Euro-Atlantic security, reassure our Allies and deter our adversaries.

The eFP in the Baltic States is a deployment of robust, multinational, combat-ready forces to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, on a persistent, rotational basis.

About 900 British personnel rotate on a continuous basis alongside Danish, French, and host nation Estonian forces.



ARMED FORCES WEEK 2022

Armed Forces Week is a chance to show support for the men and women who make up the Armed Forces community, from currently serving troops to Service families, veterans and cadets. There are many ways for people, communities and organisations across the country to show their support.

2022 was the first Armed Forces Day since 2019 to be back to 'normal' with events taking place in full across the region. At the end of the Armed Forces Day celebrations at the National Event in Scarborough, it was announced that Armed Forces Day 2023 would be held in Falmouth, Cornwall.

Once again we supported the digital campaign across all of our social media channels, posting content throughout Armed Forces Week with particular focus on Reserves Day and Armed Forces Day.

We also worked closely with our supportive employers, to help them show support to the Armed Forces through their own social media channels.





CADETS AND YOUTH

Wessex RFCA has welcomed a number of new staff to the team supporting the Army Cadet Force (ACF) over the past 12 months. There have been new Cadet Executive Officers (CEOs); Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Nick Turnbull (Wiltshire), Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Mark Cubitt (Devon) and Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Simon Shephard (Gloucestershire). A Quartermaster Joey Clough (Wiltshire), Cadet Administrative Assistants, Darren Smith (Wiltshire), Rob Bainbridge (Dorset) and Chris Gibson (Gloucestershire) and Admin Officers Sian Jessop (Bristol) and Paul Hodges (Dorset).

Whilst there have been number of new faces there was also an opportunity to recognise the hard work and dedication of three staff members who were awarded Lord-

Lieutenant's Certificates of Meritorious Service at the Awards Ceremonies; Andy Carr, the Stores Assistant supporting Bristol ACF, Julie Gould, an Admin Officer supporting Devon ACF and Alan Brown, an Admin Officer supporting Dorset ACF.

Outside of the RFCA, the ACF welcomed new Commandants in Dorset, Colonel Mark Thomsett, and Somerset, Colonel Steve Kendall, with Bristol, Devon and Gloucestershire appointing new Deputy Commandants, Lieutenant Colonel Dawn Anstey, Lieutenant Colonel Steve Frost and Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Shayle. The RAF Air Cadets have also appointed a new Regional Commandant, Group Captain Maxine Fletcher.



Optimisation of the cadet estate has continued at pace, with a new Joint Cadet Centre (JCC) created in Thornbury. Mergers of detachments have been done sensitively, and this was evident at Bridgwater JCC.

A memorial plaque for a young sailor, Andrew Barr, killed in the Falklands Conflict in 1982, was carefully removed from the closing site at Cannington to its new home in Bridgwater. The padre led a service of remembrance and rededication of the memorial, attended by the ACF cadets, and dignitaries.

Cadet Training has returned to pre-pandemic levels, and summer 2022 saw residential training for all Cadet Forces. The Ten Tors Challenge (TTC) returned in May 22, following

a two-year pause, but saw a decrease in the number of Cadet teams involved.

Therefore the Cadet Committee Chair has put a focus on influence activity to encourage cadet teams to enter the TTC23 which this year was held at the end of April to de-conflict it from the King's Coronation weekend. This involved briefings from SO2 Ten Tors, over zoom, to prospective team managers prior to the registering cut-off date. To date 52 cadet teams, 15 ACF, 17 RAFAC and 20 CCF are taking part across the 3 distances.



ANDREW BARR MEMORIAL REDEDICATION CEREMONY

Army Cadets from Bridgwater Platoon gathered on Thursday March 30th for a ceremony to mark the rededication of the memorial to a former Cannington cadet, Andrew Barr

Born in Bridgwater on November 14th 1961, Andrew Barr was a cadet at the Cannington Platoon until he joined the Royal Navy at the age of 16. On May 21st 1982, during Operation Corporate, Andrew was serving on HMS Ardent, a Royal Navy Type 21 frigate positioned in Falkland Sound providing gunfire support to the attack on Goose Green, when the ship was attacked by at least three waves of Argentinian aircraft. Ardent was hit by four bombs and Andrew and 21 of his shipmates were killed. HMS Ardent sank the following day.

Following the Falklands conflict, Andrew's parents and the local community worked

together to secure a lasting memorial to Andrew on the site of the Cadet Hut at Cannington where it has sat ever since.

In the autumn of 2022, due to the condition of the Cannington hut and the low numbers of cadets attending, it was decided the platoon and the memorial would relocate to Bridgwater.

In a ceremony led by Capt (Revd) Lee Mullen RChD, cadets, unit staff, battalion officers, members of the Royal British Legion, representatives from WRFA (Wessex Reserve Forces' & Cadets' Association) and the Sea Cadets joined together to remember Andrew and rededicate his memorial at its new home next to the parade square at Bridgwater Joint Cadet Centre.



BATH ARMY RESERVE CENTRE – CREATION OF NEW JOINT CADET CENTRE

Refurbishment of the third floor at Bath Army Reserve Centre to create a new Joint Cadet Centre facility for the Army and Air Cadets.

Project Value - £0.65M

End User – 43 (Wessex) Signals Squadron, 255 Battery Royal Artillery, 302 Troop 131 Commando Squadron Royal Engineers, Bath Platoon Somerset Army Cadet Force, 93 (City of Bath) Squadron, Royal Air Force Air Cadets

Stakeholders - REO/RAFAC/ACF and Wessex RFCA

Contractor – 21st Century Building Services

Consultancy – SC Architecture, Holloway Squire Partnership, Pope Consulting, SOCOTEC



CAMBORNE JOINT CADET CENTRE – NEW SCALED ACCOMODATION

New build provision of classrooms, servery, toilets, drill hall and stores for Army Cadets and Air Cadets.

Project Value - £0.7M

End Users – 147 (Camborne & District) Squadron Royal Air Force Air Cadets and Camborne Platoon, Cornwall Army Cadet Force.

Stakeholders – RAFAC, ACF, Wessex RFCA

Contractor – Wernick Build

Consultancy – Avison Young, Cooke Brown



KEYNSHAM ARMY RESERVE CENTRE – NEW GARAGES, WORKSHOP AND STORES

Project Newbury work has been carried out to provide new garages, stores and workshop for Reserve and Cadet units based at Keynsham Army Reserve Centre.

Project Value - £3.2M

End Users – 101 Batallion REME, 243 (Wessex) Field Hospital, Bristol Army Cadet Force HQ, Keynsham Platoon (ACF), 2386 (Keynsham) Squadron.

Stakeholders – Defence Infrastructure Organisation Organisation (DIO), Army Basing & Infrastructure (B&I), Headquarters South West, SCIDA, Wessex RFCA.

Contractor – Rigg Construction

Consultancy – Askew Cavanna, Holloway Squire Partnership, Houghton Greenlees, Campbell Reith, Cooke Brown.



FINANCE

Wessex RFCA receives its funding from the Ministry of Defence and Single Service sources via the Council of RFCAs.

It also generates receipts within the region, primarily from Non-Domestic Rates relief and rental of its land and buildings for conferences etc through the Alternative Venues scheme. Regionally Generated Income as it is known is allocated by the Finance Committee and has been used to fund Estates projects and award grants through the Special Projects scheme, including for adventure training.

The main areas of spending are listed below:

- Estates Management including statutory and mandatory inspections and maintenance works.
- Estates capital projects.
- Staffing costs of the HQ and the seven counties.
- Infrastructure including rents, rates and utilities.
- Grants for work to support injured servicemen and to the Army Cadet counties.
- Transport and movement including vehicle depreciation and maintenance of vehicles.
- IT, communications and office administration including IT and office equipment, phones and the cost of holding events and meetings.
- Recruiting support including engagement with employers.

The Financial Report has yet to be formally signed off, however the full draft has been attached to this report in Annex A.



FACILITIES

With the gradual easing out of the Covid Lockdown routine the new normal emerged in the workplace. Still conscious of the spread and ever present danger of Covid contamination, a popular hybrid working system has emerged with three days in the office; two days working from home. This practice is very popular with the rest of the work locations that operate in a similar vein to us in Wessex. Of course the need to visit sites and oversee areas within the wider Reserve and Cadet locations continued.

On the resumption of face-to-face working, the Facilities department joined in a more cohesive way of working with Estates as part of the larger RFCA re-organisation.

VEHICLES

During lock down, vehicle order and delivery became problematic due to the slowing down and in some cases the discontinuation of certain models of vehicles. The furlough of large numbers of the workforce and an added shortage of micro condenser chips, followed now by the conflict in Ukraine, have hit the production and delivery times drastically.

This situation has been compounded further still by a shut down in Shanghai which is the biggest vehicle component exporter in the world. At the time this report was being compiled we are still awaiting delivery of certain vehicles. Despite all of these issues the vehicle turnover continues.





ALTERNATIVE VENUES

The previous years' work on Alternative Venues was well down from the normal due to Covid lockdowns. It was hoped that we would see a return from previous contracts in order to bring in some much needed income generation.

We were not disappointed as we were flooded with requests from all our previous clients. Much of this comes from a need for organisations to retrain their staff due to skill fade over the pandemic. In addition to this, when the G7 Conference was held in Cornwall we hired out a number of locations to the many police agencies that descended on the region to cover before, during and after this high profile event.

While Covid was still prevalent we also let contracts to Exeter NHS to run a mobile test laboratory from Wyvern Barracks. Booster vaccines were also administered from sites at Derriford and Poole. Two extremely and worthwhile contracts from both financial and community engagement perspectives were in Millbay, Plymouth and Whiteladies Road in Bristol for the The Military Preparation College.

UTILITIES

Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) have once more restructured their regions, and we are slowly beginning to recognise who the account managers are within our area. In tandem with this reorganisation, the electricity supplier MOD wide has changed. Gas contracts will soon follow. The dynamics of this has advantage in that DIO will pay all the energy invoices on the Military Estate. The only exception to this is the standalone Air Training Corps sites which are managed by Wessex RFCA. The efficient management of the energy invoices is particularly important in the current climate of escalating energy prices.

BRISTOL

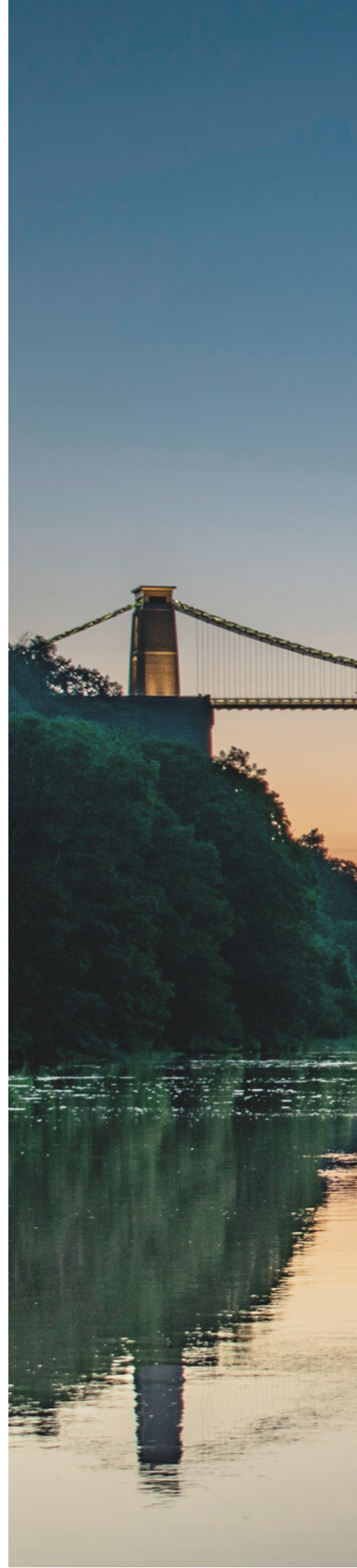
KEY PERSONALITIES

His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the City and County of Bristol - Mrs Peaches Golding OBE

County Chair for Bristol - Colonel Jane L Thompson TD DL

KEY EVENTS

- National Armed Forces Day, Falmouth, Cornwall - 24th June 2023
- Annual General Meeting – 14th September 2023 - RNAS Yeovilton, Somerset
- Bristol Lord Lieutenant's Awards – 28th September 2023 - Ashton Gate Stadium
- Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Awards - 23rd November 2023 - RM Stonehouse, Plymouth, Devon



BRISTOL

ARMED FORCES COVENANTS

HBath Demolition (Avonmouth) Limited
Chamois Consulting Limited
Conventus Solutions Limited
Driving Force Recruitment Ltd
DSG Close Protection Ltd
Ellis James Creative Limited
Evolve Commercial Limited
Horizon Mechanical Services (International) Limited
Hutchinson Legal & Associates Limited
Ibex Gale Limited
Interaction Learning & Development Limited
MCR Global UK Ltd
MechaTech Systems Limited
Precision Resource Group Limited
Synoptix Limited
Termination Technology Limited
Toocan Ltd
VIMA Group Consultancy Limited

BRONZE EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME AWARD

Bristol City Council
DSG Close Protection Ltd
Elbit Systems UK Limited
Horizon Mechanical Services (International) Limited
Hutchinson Legal & Associates Limited
Ibex Gale Limited
Infinity Systems Engineering Ltd
MCR Global UK Ltd
Precision Resource Group Limited
Rowden Technologies Ltd
The Bristol Port Company
Toocan Ltd



BRISTOL

SILVER EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME AWARD

AACE

North Bristol NHS Trust

Sanderson Government & Defence Limited

VIMA Group Consultancy Limited



CORNWALL

KEY PERSONALITIES

His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall - Colonel Edward Bolitho OBE

County Chair - Air Commodore John C Bessell RAF (Retd) DL

KEY DATES

- National Armed Forces Day - Falmouth, Cornwall - 24th June 2023
- Annual General Meeting – 14th September 2023 - RNAS Yeovilton, Somerset
- Lord Lieutenant's Awards – 30th October 2023 - Alverton Hotel, Truro
- Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Awards - 23rd November 2023 - RM Stonehouse, Plymouth, Devon



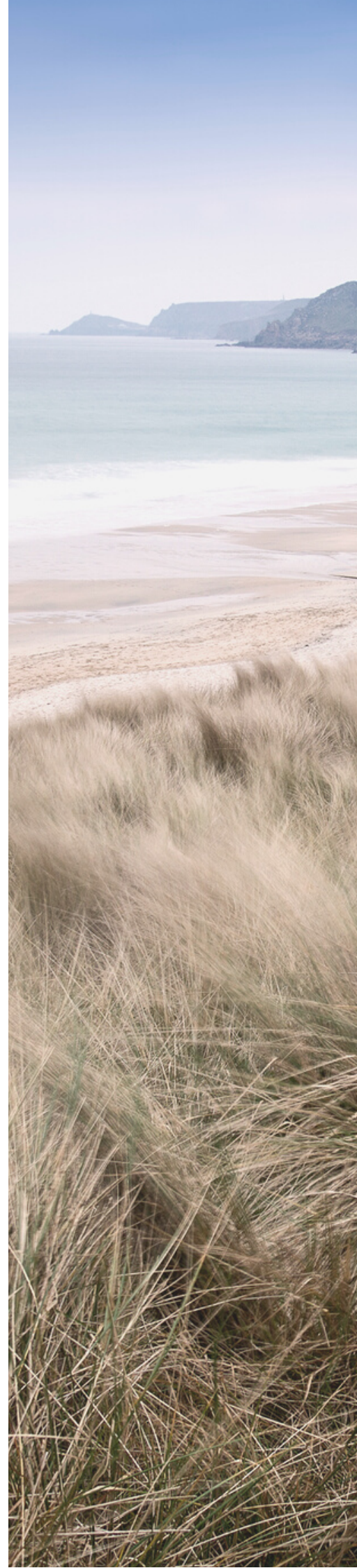
CORNWALL

ARMED FORCES COVENANTS

Consultancy Management and Training Services
Corserv Limited
Desmonde & Associates Ltd
Fuel Specialist Services Ltd
Jon Jewell Electrical Limited
Kerrier Homecare Limited
Monkey Tree Holiday Park
Mylor Sailing School & Mylor Sailability
Psychiatry-UK LLP
Recycle it Global Limited
Redruth Albany RFC
Reds Group Limited
Rhino Credit Control Ltd
Support Command Ltd
Take Point Training Limited
Trusted Tech Ltd
Turn to Starboard
Veterans Outdoors
Wildanet Limited
X-Act IT Ltd
YMCA Cornwall
Your Partnerships Ltd

BRONZE EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME AWARD

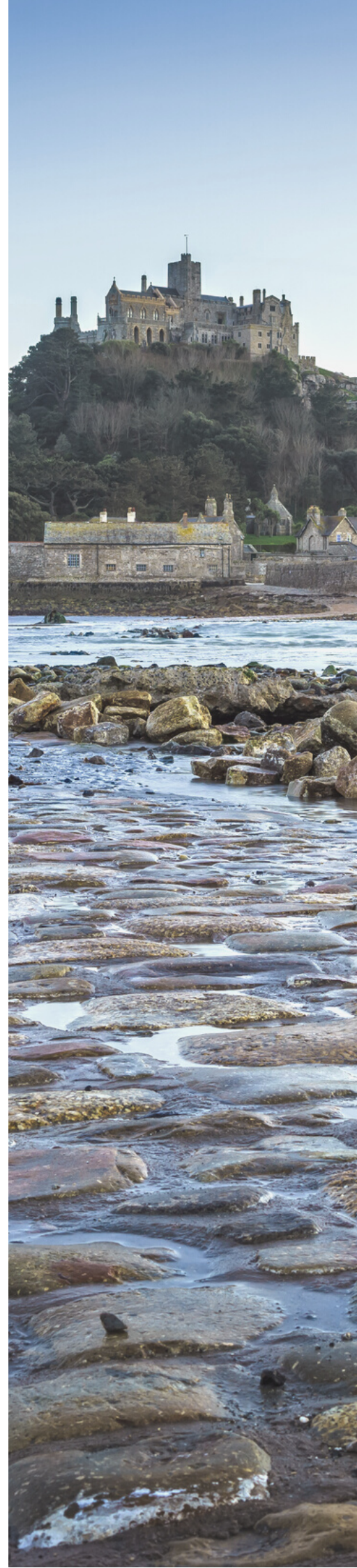
Corserv Limited
Desmonde & Associates Ltd
Goonhilly Earth Station
Monkey Tree Holiday Park
Mylor Sailing School & Mylor Sailability
Reds Group Limited



CORNWALL

SILVER EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME AWARD

Brady Construction Services Limited
Safety.Advice.Training.Handling (S.A.T.H 24) Ltd



DEVON

KEY PERSONALITIES

His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Devon - Mr David Fursdon

County Chair - Commander Jane Allen RD

KEY DATES

- National Armed Forces Day - Falmouth, Cornwall - 24th June 2023
- Lord Lieutenant's Awards – 5th September 2023 - Bickleigh Castle, Tiverton
- Annual General Meeting – 14th September 2023 - RNAS Yeovilton, Somerset
- Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Awards - 23rd November 2023 - RM Stonehouse, Plymouth, Devon



DEVON

ARMED FORCES COVENANTS

Adventure Therapy
Airside Medical Services Limited
Alliance-Pioneer Ltd
bthechange CIC
Coaching Focus Limited
Contact Group Limited
Core Blue Limited
Devon County Council
Devon ICS
Exeter City Football Club
Exeter Royal Academy For Deaf Education
Horses & Forces CIC
Houston Economic Consulting Ltd
JHB (UK) Ltd
KCM Kitchens Ltd
Low Carbon Estates Limited
MLA College Ltd
OLC Properties Ltd
Opsat (UK) Ltd
Perry Of Oakley (Holdings) Limited
Plymouth City Council
Pointers Financial Limited
Probert Financial Ltd
Project Cosmic
Regal Swords England
Respite for Veterans
RV1 Training Solutions
Safewear SW Ltd
Silverline Cruises
South West Family Values CIC
South West Survival Ltd
St Luke's Hospice Plymouth
TCi (GB) Ltd

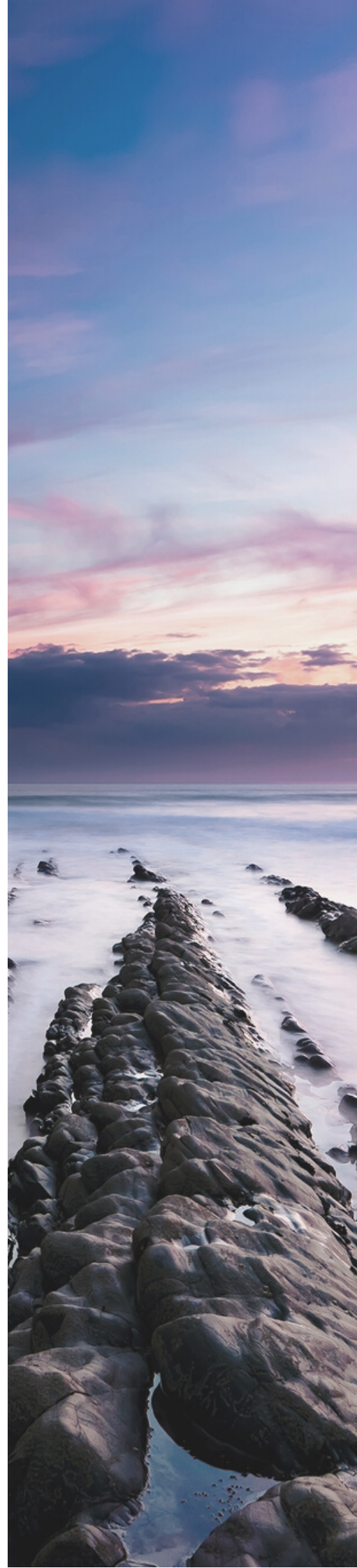


DEVON

Tecalemit Garage Equipment Company Limited
The Kintsugi Project CIC
Torbay Council
Torridge District Council
Troy UK Ltd
Venn Leadership Ltd

BRONZE DEFENCE EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

Airside Medical Services Limited
Alliance-Pioneer Ltd
Coaching Focus Limited
Core Blue Limited
Exeter City Football Club
Horses & Forces CIC
JHB (UK) Ltd
Low Carbon Estates Limited
MLA College Ltd
Opsat (UK) Ltd
Pointers Financial Limited
Probert Financial Ltd
Project Cosmic
Role 1 Medical Ltd
Safewear SW Ltd
St Luke's Hospice Plymouth
The Kintsugi Project CIC
Troy UK Ltd



DEVON

SILVER DEFENCE EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

Brigantes Consulting Ltd
Cobalt Communication Solutions Limited
Devon Partnership NHS Trust
Exeter Rugby Club Ltd
Livewest
Services Design Solution Ltd
University of Exeter

GOLD DEFENCE EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

Audax Global Solutions Limited
Dorcas Media Limited
RMA - The Royal Marines Charity
University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust
Wolferstans Solicitors



DORSET

KEY PERSONALITIES

His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Dorset - Mr Angus Campbell

County Chair - Brigadier Donald R Wilson CBE

KEY EVENTS

- National Armed Forces Day - Falmouth, Cornwall - 24th June 2023
- Annual General Meeting – 14th September 2023 - RNAS Yeovilton, Somerset
- Lord Lieutenant's Awards – 10th October 2023 - Kingston Maurward College, Dorchester
- Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Awards - 23rd November 2023 - RM Stonehouse, Plymouth, Devon



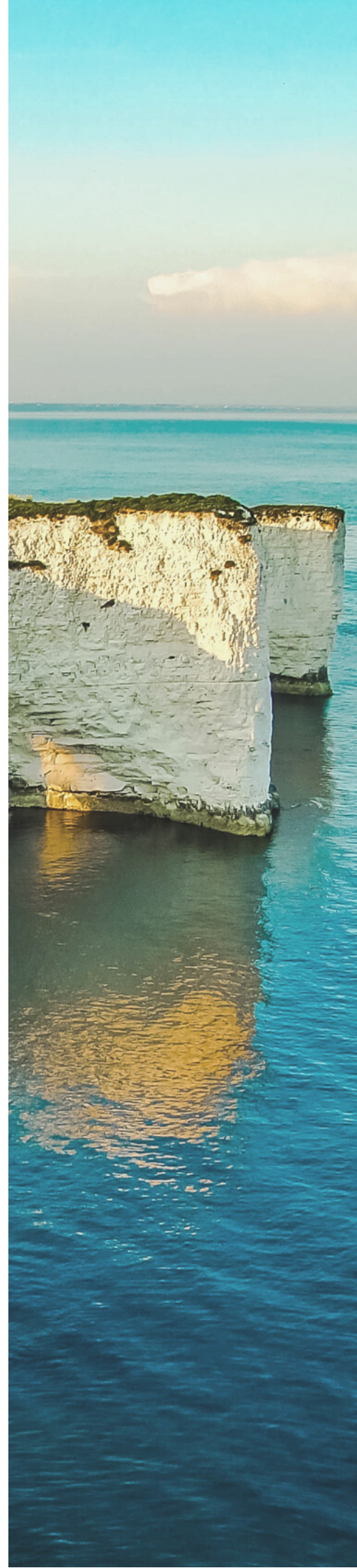
DORSET

ARMED FORCES COVENANT

Avigation Limited
DMP1 Ltd
E3 Consulting
Ellis Jones Solicitors LLP
End State Co Ltd
Home-Start Blackmore Vale
iForm Buildings Limited
Lewis-Manning Hospice Care
Motley Digital Limited
M-Technical Group Ltd
Pure.Crest Ltd
Sentinel Small Unmanned Aviation Systems Ltd
SLN Haulage Ltd
Swann Recruitment Ltd
The Tank Museum
Unicard Limited
Wessex Group Ltd
Your Time Coaching Ltd

BRONZE EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME AWARDS

Agincare Group Ltd
Auto Skills UK Recruitment Ltd
Bournemouth University
Dorset Advocacy
Flowbird Transport Limited
M-Technical Group Ltd
Muntanya Ltd
Nemesis Consultants Limited
Pure.Crest Ltd
SLN Haulage Ltd
Swann Recruitment Ltd
Your Time Coaching Ltd



DORSET

SILVER EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

Developing Assets (UK) Ltd
Dorset County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Expert HR Solutions Limited
Helping Homeless Veterans UK CIC
Perceptive Protection Ltd
Thorp & Co Ltd
Wessex Coach Education
YES Mortgage Services Ltd

GOLD EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME

D3A Defence Ltd
Dorset Council
Elliot Brown Ltd



GLOUCESTERSHIRE

KEY PERSONALITIES

His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire - Mr Edward Gillespie OBE

County Chair for Gloucestershire - Mr Robert Wharton TD**

KEY EVENTS

- National Armed Forces Day - Falmouth, Cornwall - 24th June 2023
- Annual General Meeting – 14th September 2023 - RNAS Yeovilton, Somerset
- Lord Lieutenant's Awards – 5th October 2023 - Hatherley Manor, Gloucester
- Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Awards - 23rd November 2023 - RM Stonehouse, Plymouth, Devon



GLOUCESTERSHIRE

ARMED FORCES COVENANT

Asia Zen Willwriting Limited
Base3 Solutions Ltd
Cable Intelligence Limited
Cyber Coaching Ltd
G-Dak Cyber Solution Ltd
GWAS Independent Ambulance Service Limited
HH Direct Marketing Ltd
IC Nuclear Ltd
Infrastar Ltd
P3M Works Ltd
Prospect Training Services
Synalogik Innovative Solutions Limited
Urbaser Limited

BRONZE EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME AWARD

Asia Zen Willwriting Limited
G-Dak Cyber Solution Ltd
Geometric Manufacturing Ltd
Lane Britton and Jenkins Ltd
Markey Group
P3M Works Ltd
Suzie Stanier Business Solutions
Synalogik Innovative Solutions Limited
Urbaser Limited



GLOUCESTERSHIRE

SILVER EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME AWARD

BlackTree Technologies Ltd
Dean Close School
Planned Link Ltd
Ascent Flight Training (Management) Ltd

GOLD EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME AWARD

L3 Harris TRL Technology Ltd



SOMERSET

KEY PERSONALITIES

His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Somerset - Mr
Mohammed Saddiq

County Chair for Somerset - Brigadier Nigel C Beacom
QVRM TD

KEY DATES

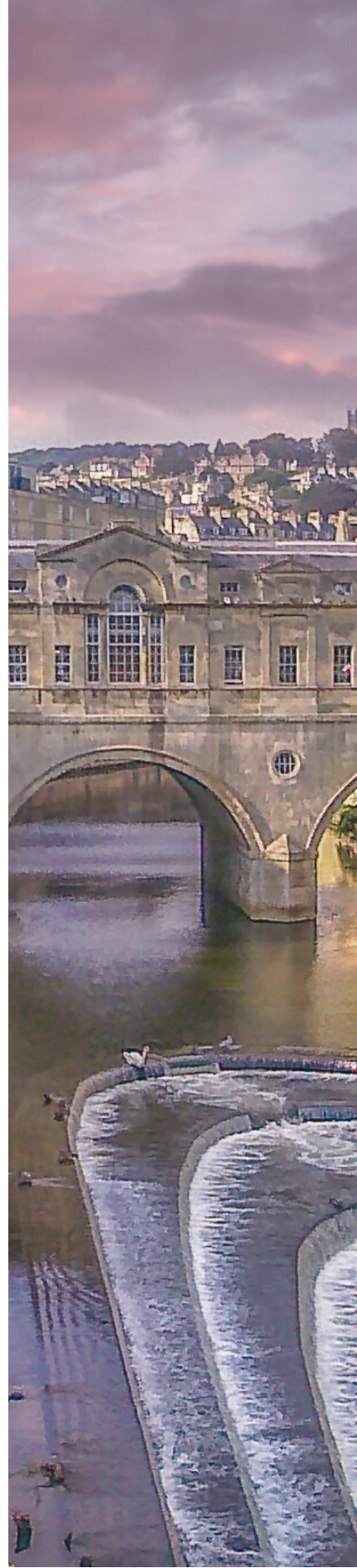
- National Armed Forces Day - Falmouth, Cornwall - 24th June 2023
- Annual General Meeting – 14th September 2023 - RNAS Yeovilton, Somerset
- Lord Lieutenant's Awards – 21st September 2023 - Haselbury Mill, Crewkerne
- Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Awards - 23rd November 2023 - RM Stonehouse, Plymouth, Devon



SOMERSET

ARMED FORCES COVENANTS

A.W.E Security Options Limited
Achieve Together
ARK At Egwood C.I.C
Artemis-UK Solutions Ltd
At Height Services Ltd
Atlantas Marine Limited
BPM Contracting Services Ltd
CH Contracting (South West) Ltd
Eat Festivals
Emerald First Aid Training Ltd
E White and Son Ltd
In House Training & Consultancy Limited
Meadgate SC
Naval Solutions Ltd
Optimise Workplace Wellbeing Ltd
Pointer Consultancy Group Limited
Promise Works Limited
Provincial Grand Lodge of Somerset
Stokes Partners LLP
Symphony Healthcare Services Ltd
Taunton Rugby Football Club
TFTG Limited
The Armishaws Group
The Gorge Outdoors
The Warrior Academy Ltd
WellBe Training and Counselling
Wessex Lifting Services Ltd
Yeovil College
Yeovil Town Football Club



SOMERSET

BRONZE EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME AWARD

RBPM Contracting Services Ltd
Justelle Marketing and Media Ltd
Naval Solutions Ltd
Pointer Consultancy Group Limited
South West Larder Limited
Stokes Partners LLP
The Armishaws Group
Yeovil Chamber of Trade & Commerce

SILVER EMPLOYER RECOGNITIONS SCHEME AWARD

Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust
Sand Lizard Technical Solutions Ltd
Somerset Chamber of Commerce & Industry Ltd
Vigilant Security (SW) Ltd
Writhlington School

GOLD EMPLOYER RECOGNITIONS SCHEME AWARD

Avon & Somerset Constabulary
Cetsat Ltd
Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
Somerset NHS Foundation Trust
Train4All Limited
Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust



WILTSHIRE

KEY PERSONALITIES

His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire - Mrs Sarah Troughton DSTJ

County Chair for Wiltshire - Colonel Martyn Wills MBE

KEY DATES

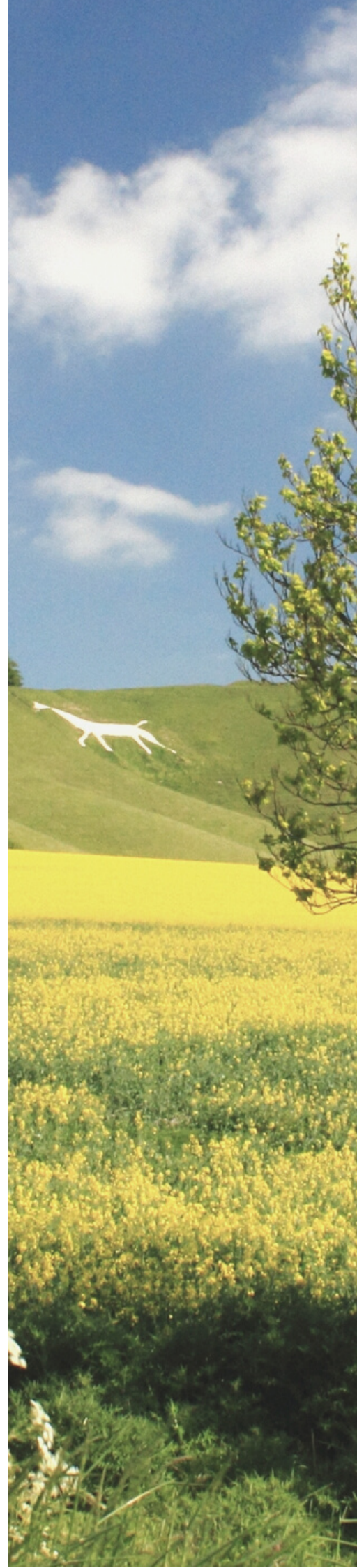
- National Armed Forces Day - Falmouth, Cornwall - 24th June 2023
- Annual General Meeting – 14th September 2023 - RNAS Yeovilton, Somerset
- Lord Lieutenant's Awards – 17th October 2023 - Marlborough Town Hall
- Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Awards - 23rd November 2023 - RM Stonehouse, Plymouth, Devon



WILTSHIRE

ARMED FORCES COVENANT

PAbicare Services Limited
Aspire Defence Limited
Calne Town Council
Cloud Rede Ltd
Code 9 Group Ltd
Cybervio Ltd
F-TEC Forklift Training Engineering Centre
Great Western Railway - HO
Heywood House
Incursion Cyber Security Ltd
KTSL Ltd
Meeting Makers Limited
MGF Facilities Management Services
Parker Bullen LLP
Peachy Productions (London) Ltd
Provincial Grand Lodge of Wiltshire
Salisbury Model Centre 2022 Limited
Sentinel Photonics Limited
SVGC Group Ltd
Swindon Town Football Company Limited
Tac Sim Training
Torque Events Limited
Totally Living Care Ltd
Trojan Technologies Ltd
Warminster School
Westbury Park Engineering Limited



WILTSHIRE

BRONZE EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME AWARD

SAbicare Services Limited
Aviation Systems Group Ltd
Cloud Rede Ltd
Code 9 Group Ltd
Meeting Makers Limited
Parker Bullen LLP
Southern Quarter Limited
The Dorothy House Foundation Ltd
The Veterans' Alliance Ltd (TX-Net)
Torque Events Limited
Van Kappel Limited

SILVER EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME AWARD

4C Strategies
Arke Ltd
Canny Comms Ltd
Day 1 People Limited
GreenSquareAccord
Help For Heroes
SP4 Group Limited
Wincanton

GOLD EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME AWARD

AeroGlow International
Aspire Defence Services Limited
Computer Network Defence Limited
Networkology Ltd
Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust
SSGC Ltd
Wiltshire Council

