



# The Bulletin



The community magazine for the ARRC and Innsworth Station

April 2011



## Deployment to Kabul

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# Welcome to 'The Bulletin'



Welcome to the second edition of the 'Bulletin' magazine. The magazine is designed for all those working in Imjin Barracks or part of Innsworth Station or looked after by the station staff, especially the families.

Following the launch of the magazine just before Christmas, this edition again covers a wide range of topics and themes to help people

make the most of their stay in Gloucestershire and in UK. Ranging from sport, leisure and tourism to welfare, the work of our dedicated Ministry of Defence Police and Policy Community Support Officers, and an update on Service Families Accommodation; the magazine has something for everyone. Special features in this edition include the work of the Service Personnel and Veteran's Agency, a Day in the Life of a Hospital Liaison Officer and even Gloucestershire's 'Brass Band' scene.

The deployment of our first rotation to Afghanistan is complete. Vox Pops, and Messages Home helps our families connect with their loved ones and gives everyone an insight into life out there, I encourage you to use these links. The Rear Party is being kept busy training the second rotation and preparing for their deployment for the changeover in July. Work is ongoing to ensure the smooth return of those currently deployed and preparations for NRF training in 2012 are well underway. A full support programme to the families is on offer and the Welfare Office staff and the ARRC Operational Welfare Support Cell (OWSC) continue to provide dedicated support to families, new arrivals and the events programme. Good use is now being made of ARRCnet with over 200 of you signed up to it. Also email 'shots' keep everyone informed of what is going on. If you have not yet managed to give your details to the OWSC or the Welfare Office then please do so to ensure you are kept in the picture.

We have said goodbye to General Sir Richard and Lady Shirreff on their move to Belgium where General Shirreff has taken up the post of DSACEUR. We wish them both the best of luck in their new tour and thank them for their enormous contribution to both the professional and family well being of HQ ARRC over the past 3 years. Equally, we welcome Lieutenant General James Bucknall to the post of COMARRC, although he is in Afghanistan and we are unlikely to see him till the end of the year. In the meantime, I wish everyone an enjoyable and rewarding tour in Innsworth, whether serving personnel or family members.

**By Brigadier Paddy Allison, Commander 'Rear Party'**

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## Editor's Farewell

Dear Readers.

Having launched the first edition of 'The Bulletin', I have now moved on to a new post in London. However, from a standing start, I think the first edition came out very well and was well received. It has been hard work but very rewarding.

Kind regards,  
Nigel Sargeant



■ Dirk Mathes,  
Editor, The Bulletin

### Welcome to Captain Dirk Mathes

I have now handed over the reins to Captain Dirk Mathes, a Bundeswehr colleague in Public Affairs, to whom you should address all correspondence and queries, tel 01452 718 522. Good luck to Dirk and please give him all support so that the 'Bulletin' continues to go from strength to strength.

### NOTE

The publication of an advert, article or photo in 'The Bulletin' does not necessarily reflect the views of the ARRC, Partner Nations or the (UK) MOD. The editor reserves the right to omit, amend or edit any advert, article or photo at the discretion of the HQ without liability. The next edition is due out in June 2011. Contributions, and suggestions for coverage in the next edition, must reach Public Affairs May 2011.

Public Affairs Office, HQ ARRC, Imjin Barracks, Innsworth, Gloucester, GL3 1HW

Captain Dirk Mathes  
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Front Cover Photo: View of the Kaia Mountains from HQ IJC  
Rear Cover: ARRC families enjoy a Welfare Office day out in the Forest of Dean

# Walk in the woods

A bright and bracing Sunday morning in January saw a group of ARRC families gather in a dappled woodland car park in the Royal Forest of Dean.

The families had ventured into the forest for a morning stroll along the Sculpture Trail which starts at Beechen House Lodge. The walk had been organised by the Operational Welfare Support Cell and run on the day by Colonel Danny Wilde, WO2 QMSI Dillon and his band of smiling "volunteers" who marked the way and helped those with pushchairs and smaller children.



An excellent brief from WO2 Dillon set the walkers on their way along the trails but with plenty of guides to help those officers with maps find their way! The open forest paths offered a chance for children to explore the beautiful forest and for parents to catch up with each other and meet new friends.

Danny Wildes' team had marked out two circular routes that navigated past many of the fascinating sculptures laid out in the forest. The more adventurous took the longer path whilst the younger families availed themselves of several shortcuts so all arrived at the finish line at the same time. The morning stroll ended at the coffee shop in the visitor centre where Captain Matt Pittaway of the Welfare team offered some welcome refreshments. The children naturally headed off for the adventure playground whilst others relaxed in the bright sunshine and restful benches.

All in all, a lovely morning out in the countryside. A great introduction to the Forest and the facilities it has to offer and an excellent chance to meet up with other ARRC families. Many thanks to all of those who put so much hard work into making it happen and we look forward to the next trip out.



# ARRC hosts military child education workshop in Gloucester



■ Dr Mary Keller, MCEC Chief Executive

In January, HQ ARRC hosted an inspirational workshop by the leading US military children's educational support group – the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) for over 150 delegates. MCEC is a US non-profit, world-wide organisation that works to provide quality educational opportunities for American Forces children, wherever they are in the world, both Reservists and full-time, who are affected by the family separation and turbulence that go with military life.

MCEC's role is to help US families, schools, and communities better prepare to support children who might be affected by constant relocation and separation from deployed parents. Appropriately, in the very month when over 200 ARRC personnel deployed to Afghanistan, a Coalition team flew in from its Texas HQ to stage the Workshop, aimed at supporting UK military and ARRC Partner Nation children.

Sponsored by SERCO, the Workshop was aimed at anyone who supports military children's education and development. Delegates were from a wide range of organisations, including the Children and Young People's Directorate LF, SSAFA Forces Help, the Army Welfare Service, the Naval Personal and Family Service, and the Army Families Federation, as well as educationalists and teachers and Forces parents.

Delegates heard at first hand about MCEC's work to help develop pupils and students. This includes: research, support to professional institutes, running seminars and conferences; and the development of resources for teachers.

Launching the Workshop, Dr Mary Keller, MCEC Chief Executive, said: "We are thrilled to be at HQ ARRC. Our Mission is to focus on the needs of the individual child. Military children move often and one of the best ways to help serving personnel is to help their children. Workshops like this provide a superb opportunity to channel people's desire to support our Servicemen and women. We provide literature, professional training and development, international accreditation, Parent to Parent and Student to Student programmes."

Lt Gen Shirreff sent a message of support direct from Kabul: "Welcome to the first MCEC seminar to take place in the UK. I must thank the many Service, educational and Gloucestershire delegates who have attended, as well as SERCO for their sponsorship, and above all the MCEC."

Numerous Gloucestershire schools were represented. Ruth Davis, of Churchdown School, close-by HQ ARRC, said: "It is vital to gain an understanding of the bigger picture and apply it to your own school. I have taken away lots of ideas."

# Life in Kabul

Chief of Staff ISAF JOINT Command



■ Chief of Staff ISAF Joint Command (IJC) – Maj Gen T. P. Evans (COS ARRC)

The ARRC has now been in IJC for two months. We are now integrating into what is a very busy, dynamic and focused headquarters. Any changeover of this type causes some disruption but everyone here is working extremely hard to minimize the turbulence and assimilate all the ARRC personnel into the team. There is no doubt that 2011 is going to be a fascinating year in Afghanistan and one that is going to set the pace out to 2014. The year ahead is going to be

challenging as we maintain the pressure on the insurgents, capitalize on the security gains that have been made and really focus on improving the lives of the Afghan people. We will see an increase in the growth and expertise of the Afghan National Security Forces that will enable the transfer of security in the districts and provinces as we work towards President Karzai's 2014 timeline.

From what I have seen having been here for 4 months as the Chief of Staff it is clear to me that this is a very focused and professional operational Headquarters, with an excellent ethos and a fast pace of work. The ARRC staff are certainly making their presence felt; much of this is down to the excellent preparation that took place last year. We were put through our paces on both our work up exercise, Ex ARCADE SPEAR and then on the Mission Rehearsal Exercise and this has allowed all of us to assimilate information quickly on the ground and make an active contribution to the combined effort in a positive and active manner. We wish you all well back in Innsworth and thank you for your support. We are starting to look forward to RnR when we have a moment.

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# Life in Kabul

Lieutenant Colonel Mark Wenham, Chief Public Affairs



■ Lieutenant Colonel Mark Wenham

**I have been at the ISAF Joint Command in Kabul Afghanistan for nearly two months now. My immediate impression is how much is going on in the headquarters and how focused people are on the mission. This headquarters was only set up just over a year ago and has clearly made a significant impact in that time on the planning of future combat operations across the whole of the country and day to day running of combat operations in Afghanistan. There is an air of quiet but determined commitment from everyone who works here and it is clear that making a positive difference to the lives of the local Afghans is the absolute priority.**

For my part we arrived in the middle of the night following a trouble free direct flight from UK that took just 7 hours to complete. Having been handed bedding and allocated a bed space in the transit accommodation we were whisked away for our induction briefings

that are designed to introduce newcomers to the workings of the camp. This lasted the day and after some much needed sleep we then embarked our own national training programmes before meeting up with the people we would be taking over from and being introduced to the teams we would be working with.

The team from the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps have reinforced the ISAF Joint Command, based here at Kabul airport, across all the disciplines in the headquarters. This includes working in the Operations Centre that monitors all the military – Afghan and ISAF – activity taking place across the country, in Intelligence, logistics, counter Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED), administration, public affairs, communication activity, engineering, combat support and air operations.

As with any organisation of this size, teamwork is the key and the Commander, Lieutenant General David Rodriguez, is clear that the team encompasses all the players: the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA). They are all working together to enable the Afghan Government to provide a secure and stable environment in which the people have hope and confidence in a better and brighter future.

From what I have seen while I have been here it is apparent that each area of the country is very different in terms of security and levels of development. There is certainly no one-size-fits-all solution, each area needs to be addressed differently, each has its own problems that need carefully worked out solutions with our Afghan partners. It is clear that the tasks that lie ahead in 2011 primarily involve helping the Afghan people to take the lead and ensure that the progress that is made is sustainable over time.



■ IJC Kabul



# Ministry of Defence Police – Neighbourhood Watch Volunteers required

PCs Ray Bartholomew and Tony Martin

In this issue we are looking at 'Neighbourhood Watch' (NHW) as a valid tool in the fight against crime, and passing on some Top Tips for protecting your car.

The Neighbourhood Watch idea came from the USA, where schemes had been running successfully since the mid 1970's, and it was adopted in UK during the 1980's; it has been established by communities looking to reduce crime levels in their areas ever since.

Neighbourhood Watch Schemes are based on the concept of the 'good neighbour'. The principles are simple: neighbours are encouraged to join together to keep watch on each others homes and to report suspicious people, vehicles and events in their vicinity to police. Special emphasis is also placed on the adoption of crime prevention measures by residents. NHW schemes lead to a greater shared awareness – by the police and the public – of the problems in a particular community and to a better understanding of the best practical steps that can be taken to tackle these issues.



■ The Innsworth and Cordingley Close Neighbourhood watch team

## Aims of NHW

- To reduce crime (especially house burglaries) and the fear of crime.
- To develop a community spirit among people living in NHW area.
- To enhance the relationship between the police and the public by encouraging greater contact between all concerned.
- To encourage residents to help themselves by helping police in the prevention and detection of crime.

## Benefits of belonging to a NHW scheme

- Criminals may be deterred from entering an area if they know that residents are vigilant and that they have taken adequate steps to safeguard their property.
- With the benefit of the backing of the majority of residents, NHW can operate successfully in most areas.
- Members can obtain crime prevention advice from police and street co-ordinators.
- Many insurance companies offer discounts on insurance premiums to NHW members.

Our own scheme, which covers Service Families Accommodation (SFA) at Innsworth and Cordingley Close, Churchdown was introduced in 1988 following a spate of burglaries, car break-ins and cycle thefts. The scheme won a national award in 1997 and was again nominated in 2001 and 2007. Following the RAF's departure from Innsworth, many street co-ordinators left and houses were seen to be unoccupied. Crime therefore began to return to the estate with burglaries and criminal damage the main crimes of concern. Since ARRC's arrival and the revival of SFA, several streets have been keen to get involved with NHW and already have street co-ordinators. Those currently without co-ordinators are: Campbell Close, Roberts Road, Gibson Road, Hannah Place, Jackson Crescent, Middleton Lawn (two required), Penrose Road, Vertican Road and Ward Avenue.

We need Volunteers for these streets. If you would like get involved and support the police and your community in a pro-active way, call Pc Ray Bartholomew on 01452 730804 for further information.

## Security tips for the car

- If you have a garage, use it/lock it.
- Park your car in a well lit area if possible.
- Secure all doors and windows when it is not in use.
- Fit an alarm, immobiliser or both.
- Etch windows.
- Remove attractive items.
- If the stereo system can be removed do so.

## Contact Numbers

Your local MDP officers are **PCs Ray Bartholomew and Tony Martin. Our numbers are available day or night:**

MOD Police: 01452 730804 Office (not 24hrs), 07771626346 mobile

MDP Control Room 01752 553384 (out of hrs),  
Gloucester Police 0845 0901234

# Gloucestershire Constabulary Safer Community Team, Innsworth

Police Community Support Officer Tracy Martin

**Innsworth is served by members of the Safer Community Team based at Cheltenham Road East Police Station in Churchdown. The officers responsible for the Innsworth area are PC Mark Peart, the Council Funded Police Officer and Police Community Support Officers Alex Lawson and Tracy Martin.**

Our role includes high visibility patrol, crime prevention advice, dealing with low level crime such as anti-social behaviour issues, providing a point of contact between the community and the police and liaising with other agencies to resolve any issues that may arise.

Our officers work closely with PC Ray Bartholomew and PC Tony Allen, the local MDP Community Beat Officers, and we often support each other at local community events. A Police Information Point (PIP) is held once a month, between 1030–1100 a.m., at the HIVE and PCSO Alex Lawson attends, along with the MDP officers, with them all available should you wish to discuss any policing issues you may have that need to be brought to our attention. Check on the HIVE Noticeboard for the PIP dates.

Gloucestershire police can be contacted on 0845 090 1234. It is also possible to contact your local Safer Community Team via the following e-mail address [cre-sct@gloucestershire.police.uk](mailto:cre-sct@gloucestershire.police.uk)

## Shed and Garage Security

The humble garden shed has increasingly become a happy hunting ground for thieves. With security on many houses upgraded, traditional burglars are actually opting for easy pickings at the end of the garden. The shed, garage or outbuilding tucked away from the house – is more often far easier to break into and less likely to be alarmed. However it is an Aladdin's cave of swag and bounty for the thief. Many sheds these days carry more stock than a small hardware corner shop, with household and garden DIY power tools neatly arranged on shelves or stowed on purpose made brackets and clips.

From the villains perspective such items are small, lightweight and easier to make off with than say a TV or computer, they carry a healthy second hand value and can be quite sought after .

From the Police's point of view, please report all shed breaks or attempted breaks – we can increase patrols if we know about it to prevent it happening to someone else.

At the end of the day the best ploy is to defend all your property from theft. Sheds are notoriously easy to break into. A padlock fitted on a flimsy clasp, held by a couple of tiny screws in a soft timber door frame offers no real protection. Windows are even less secure, whilst some thieves have been known to jemmy off a whole shed panel or roof to get inside. Once in, the tools themselves are ready to hand and unlikely to be security marked. Why not try Smart Water and security mark all your household valuables at the same time?

If you would like to purchase a pack of Smartwater please send a cheque for £15 made payable to Gloucestershire Constabulary along with your name, address, postcode and telephone number (please use capital letters) to NHW, Cheltenham Police Station, FREEPOST (GR 1430/1), Talbot House, Lansdown Road, Cheltenham, GL51 6BR.

A better-designed or built shed anchored to the floor is a good start but also think about where is the shed going to be sited. Consider PIR floodlighting – illuminating that part of the garden and fitting mains or battery powered alarms. Firmly secure the door and windows and



■ PC Mark Peart, Police Community Support Officers Tracy Martin and Alex Lawson

think about fitting a wire cage inside the shed to secure more valuable items. You may not be able to stop determined thieves from getting into your shed but you can delay them – no thief wants to hang around longer than they have to in order to get their hands on your possessions.

So go and have a look at your shed now – how easy would it be for you to break in?

# Welfare Update

Captain Matt Pittaway, Welfare Officer,  
HQ ARRC



■ Message from Captain Matt Pittaway BSc (Hons) RLC, the Welfare Officer for the ARRC Group

**Sadly, I must report that Capt Sue Doran has decided to relinquish her position as the ARRC Group Welfare Officer on retirement. Efforts are ongoing to recruit a suitable successor. However, in the mean time you will have to put up with me.**

As a way of introduction let me enlighten you with an intriguing tale of self indulgence. I joined the Army in 1985 (gasp) in the Royal Corps of Transport. I have dabbled in all the logistic hubs within Air Despatch, RCT Helicopter Crew, Shipping at Marchwood and Railway stations around the Bazaars. My last post before commissioning was as the Movement Controller WO1 Govt Authorised Explosive Rep at Kineton. I have also spent some 6½ years with Gurkhas and have passed all chili tests to date.

After Commissioning in 2007, my first post was as the Regimental Careers Management Officer with the Gurkha Logistics. I have recently completed a tour as the IO with Gurkha Logistics in Afghanistan 2009–10. I was posted to the 14 Sqn ARRC Sp Bn in Jul 2010 as the 2IC and have been operationally effective as the Unit Welfare Officer ARRC Sp Bn since Oct 2010.

Capt Alf Cupper R. SIGNALS has now taken up the reins as the ARRC Support Battalion Welfare Officer. The Welfare Team are here to look after all of our military personnel, both UK and Partner Nations and their families. Ultimately we are here to problem solve and provide the necessary support for our people where necessary.

For those who have gone out the door, deploying on roto 2 or are on the ARRC Sp Bn deployments – our job is to help the families to keep the 'home fires burning'. Housing, therefore, is a frequently emotive issue. Our Housing Liaison Officer (HLO) is Jessie Taylor, and she is the interface for all housing matters within the Station, with a particular emphasis on the needs of HQ ARRC's Partner Nations (PN) personnel and their families. The HLO's primary focus will be the resolution of all housing repair issues.

We are located behind the Spar Shop and are open Monday to Fridays 0830–1700hrs. Tel 01452 730309.

We look forward to being of assistance to you in the future.

# Storybook Soldiers

## Are you deploying?

Storybook Soldiers is a British Army scheme whereby officers and soldiers deploying can record a short story (no longer than 10 minutes long) for their children to listen to whilst they are away. The story is sent to the central team in Tidworth to be edited – background noise/mistakes taken out and sound effects inserted – and quality assured before being burnt to audio CD and sent to the spouse/carer of the child. A separate story can be recorded for each child and must be in English.

We are also able to record stories for RN and RAF personnel and send them off to their respective Services for editing.

Most of the CDs for ROTO 1 personnel have now been received and the response has been very positive with many accolades being received! If you would like to partake in this FREE scheme and leave a personal and unique gift for your child(ren), please call and leave your telephone number with Ann at the Welfare Office (01452 730309) and we will get back to you to arrange an appointment and discuss your requirements with you. And if your spouse has already deployed, it is not too late! Get in touch with us and we will be as flexible as possible to get recordings done whilst they are on R&R.

Look forward to hearing from you!

Lindsay Luke

The official Storybook Soldiers website can be accessed through the hyperlink: [www.drumbeat.org.uk/storybook\\_soldiers.htm](http://www.drumbeat.org.uk/storybook_soldiers.htm)



■ Proud soldiers with their storybooks



■ Jennie Spencer

## **ARRCnet is the collective term used to describe the operational welfare package that has been put together for the ARRC's forthcoming deployment to Afghanistan.**

There have been a couple of changes in the HIVE since my last article. The most observant people may have noticed that the HIVE logo has changed from purple to red. This is because I am now funded by the Army rather than Tri-Service. There will be no change in the HIVE service offered to anyone who contacts the office. Gradually all signs and paperwork in and around my office will change to red. I am also now referred to as a HIVE Information Support Officer. Please also note below in my contact details that there has been an alteration to my hours.

Many of you will be aware of the charity Tickets for Troops. For those that do not know, Tickets for Troops is a registered charity that provides free tickets to musical, sporting, entertainment and cultural events for members of the Armed Forces and their Families as a mark of the country's appreciation for their services. Since the launch in 2009, over 250,000 tickets have been donated and 90,000 troops have signed up.

The charity has challenged themselves to reach a target of 150,000 members this year. Some tickets are often released at very short notice and this can make it hard to pass the information out to people. It is very easy to join. [www.ticketsfortroops.org.uk](http://www.ticketsfortroops.org.uk) You will need to log on to join but there is no charge for this. You can see a sample of tickets without joining the group, so have a look, it's FREE.

Hopefully with the warmer weather approaching you may be thinking of days out for the family or with friends. Another company that offers a discount to Members of the Armed Forces and their families is the Merlin Group. You can save up to 50%. Merlin own a wide range of attractions including, Alton Towers, Lego land, Thorpe Park, Warwick Castle, Sea Life Centre's, the London Eye and many more. [www.merlinentertainments.biz](http://www.merlinentertainments.biz) or telephone 0871 224 4001 The code you will require to receive the discount is 'UK Forces'.

This company is just one of many that offer discounts to you. Please call into the Office if you would like a copy of the Forces discount brochure or again details can be found on line.

I have also received the latest copies of UK Boarding School Guide and UK Schools Directory. So please call in if you would like a copy.

Please remember to call the HIVE if you want information on New Postings, Local Unit Facilities, Education, Housing, Childcare, Healthcare, Employment & Training, Travel or Local information. That local information can be about swimming lessons, eating out, local butchers or the Gloucester Tradition of Cheese Rolling!

Jennie Spencer HIVE Information Support Officer Opening Hours  
Monday-Friday 08.30-14.30, Tel 01452 712612 ex 7936  
[innsworth@hivegb.co.uk](mailto:innsworth@hivegb.co.uk)

## **Work of a Hospital Liaison Officer**



■ Sue Miles, Hospital Liaison Officer ARRC Welfare Group

I am Sue Miles, the Hospital Liaison Officer within the ARRC Welfare Group.

Although my title is Hospital Liaison Officer I don't have any medical training. However, I am here to help and advise you with the medical and health services in the local area, particularly the hospitals – Gloucestershire Royal or Cheltenham General.

I can help you with finding out about the medical services provided at the hospitals and accompany you there for an appointment or visit. I can assist you when you have any concerns about the hospital by speaking with the Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS).

I can also assist you with any queries or information about local doctors' surgeries, dental practices and health visitors.

I am based in the Welfare Offices, and can be contacted through them or by telephone 01452 730309.

# Double Gloucester

Dominic Stevens, Destination Marketing Manager, Marketing Gloucester Ltd

**There are two sides to the City of Gloucester: the historic docks and the city, linked so perfectly that visitors can saunter from one to the other while forming a complete and colourful picture of a city as old as the Romans.**

Gloucester is Britain's most inland port; a former gateway to the Midlands, it flourished with trade in Victorian times, when tall ships queued to enter Gloucester's docks.

Visitors, from near and far, have been passing through Gloucester Docks for centuries. But while most of them in the past brought things to the Docks, these days they tend to take something away: anything, in fact, from a clear impression of how a bustling Victorian dock once operated, to a souvenir from one of the many museums and visitor centres which combine to make this historic complex one of the most popular tourist attractions in the Heart of England.



■ Summer Festivals

Historically, Gloucester Docks' geographic location has proved to be one of its major advantages. Proud of its claim to be the most inland port in Britain, it scored highly over its nearest rival, Bristol, because cargo could be transferred directly from seagoing vessels to longboats and then shipped quickly by canal deep into the heart of the industrial Midlands.

Llanthony Warehouse is 'home' to the Waterways Museum, where visitors follow in the paths of the people who once worked the canals, and where collections of everything associated with the waterways – from nuts and bolts, to boats, models and simulators – are found both inside and outside the building.

Today, historic ships continue to visit the city, dropping anchor alongside the Waterways Museum. But that museum is just one attraction in a maze of 15 converted Victorian warehouses that now also harbour the award-winning 'Soldiers of Gloucester' Museum, the Antiques Centre and the Gloucester Quays Designer Outlet.

Gloucester's maritime story is also unveiled from the water, on board the Queen Boadicea II – one of the Dunkirk 'little ships'.

The Docks really comes to life with the arrival of the city's famous Tall Ships Festival, when majestic and grand vessels sail into the narrow basin from all over the world and transport the waterside to seafaring days gone by. The ships are complemented by music, street theatre, fairground rides, living history re-enactors, interesting stalls and great food and drink.

At the time of writing it is hoped that the Tall Ships Festival will return to the city this August, check local press or the website [www.gloucestertallships.co.uk](http://www.gloucestertallships.co.uk) for updates.

The city centre is dominated by its world famous cathedral. Home to the tomb of King Edward II, with a glorious choir, this magnificent Norman structure portrays the founding of the Abbey 1,300 years ago, and invites all visitors to follow in the footsteps of the early monks through its beautiful fan-vaulted cloisters.

The cloisters will be familiar to film fans as the distinctive corridors of Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in the Harry Potter films. The first film, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, the second, the Chamber of Secrets, and the fifth, the Half Blood Prince, all featured scenes filmed on location in the Cathedral.

Gloucester's Folk Museum, opened in 1935, is among the earliest museums of its kind: a labyrinth of workshops and galleries strewn with toys, games and model steam engines from the Victorian era. The museum will be opening a fantastic new 'country kitchen' cafe and gift shop selling classic toys and retro gifts early in 2011.



■ Fireworks



■ Cathedral Square

The city also boasts the House of the Tailor of Gloucester, the original building used by Beatrix Potter in her wonderful story. Now a museum and shop, the house is tucked away in the pretty and quaint College Street, just a step away from the Cathedral.

Few cities in Britain are blessed with as much history and heritage as Gloucester. Traces of its Roman past are in evidence throughout the city, but probably nowhere as clearly as in The City Museum and Art Gallery, which contains a detailed description of how the Roman Empire reached a strategically significant site on the River Severn in around AD48. The museum is undertaking a major refurbishment and will re-open at Easter 2011.

It boasts both a viewing gallery from which visitors can glance down on the remains of Roman walls, and one of Great Britain's largest ever treasure hoards.

The initial Roman fortress was contained within an enclosed 43-acres site, laid out along typically military lines, with a rigidly gridded street system. It remained largely unaltered during its growth as a colonia, and – as Gloucester's 21st century visitors will quickly discover – has also influenced the development of the city to the present day.



■ Experience Gloucester's lively cafes and restaurants in the summer months

The city's nightlife is varied to suit many tastes; enjoy great restaurants with food from all around the world, explore cosy pubs in historic buildings or late, loud and lively bars and clubs, or check out the best new live music, comedy, theatre, art, cinema and lots more at the Guildhall, Gloucestershire's liveliest venue.

Of course Gloucester is the county's capital, but there's also a lot to see and do in the surrounding areas of Cheltenham, Stroud, Tewkesbury, the Forest of Dean and the Cotswolds. Highlights include the magical Sculpture Trail in the Forest of Dean, Cotswold Wildlife Park near Burford, the picturesque Cotswold village of Bourton-On-The-Water, the fantastic Wetlands Centre at Slimbridge with its incredible array of wild birds and the wonderfully nostalgic Gloucestershire Warwickshire Railway.

For further ideas on things to do, where to eat and shop and what's on, visit [www.thecityofgloucester.co.uk](http://www.thecityofgloucester.co.uk), follow us at [www.twitter.com/visitgloucester](http://www.twitter.com/visitgloucester) or become a fan at [www.facebook.com/gloucester](http://www.facebook.com/gloucester)

Alternatively drop into Gloucester Tourist Information Centre in Southgate Street, pick up a city guide and map and let the friendly and passionate team suggest activities to enjoy and attractions to visit in and around the city.




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Gloucester Do IT Centre | 01452 418180 | [gloucesterdoit@gloscol.ac.uk](mailto:gloucesterdoit@gloscol.ac.uk)
Tewkesbury Do IT Centre | 01684 851030 | [tewkesbury@gloscol.ac.uk](mailto:tewkesbury@gloscol.ac.uk)

# The beautiful city of Bath

Lucy Weaver, PR & Communications Executive

Famous for its Roman history, Georgian architecture and spa culture, Bath is often described as one of England's most beautiful and popular cities. Designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, Bath offers a striking cityscape of sweeping crescents, grand parades and Georgian buildings and is home to some of the best-preserved Roman remains in Europe. You'll also find a variety of places to eat out, a fantastic range of shops and plenty of accommodation from comfortable B&Bs to luxurious hotels. Our guide will make sure you don't miss the best bits...

## Walk where Romans walked

The Roman Baths museum is a good place to start your visit and provides a fantastic introduction to the city. Around Britain's only hot spring, the Romans built a magnificent temple and bathing complex that still flows with natural hot water. Walk where Romans walked, explore Roman artefacts and see the original Great Bath where you'll get a true sense of the ancients.

## Unique architecture

One of the reasons Bath is a World Heritage Site is because of its incredible architecture. The Royal Crescent, Circus and Pulteney Bridge are three of the city's iconic sights and a must-see for any visitor. But with 5,000 listed buildings, head in any direction and you're sure to discover remarkable buildings, picturesque parades and cobbled back streets.

## Learn from those in the know

The city is best explored with a knowledgeable guide, and free walking tours are available daily with the Mayor of Bath's Honorary Guides. These two-hour tours begin from the entrance to the Pump Room and take in all the major sights with an informative and interesting commentary along the way. Alternatively, if you prefer to sit back and take it easy, join the City Sightseeing Bus Tour for a relaxing way to reach all the highlights.



■ The world famous Roman Baths

## Take a bath

One of Bath's highlights is the Thermae Bath Spa. Using the warm, mineral-rich waters which the Celts and Romans enjoyed over 2,000 years ago, Thermae Bath Spa is Britain's original and only natural thermal Spa. Don't miss the Spa's roof-top pool where you can relax in the steaming waters whilst enjoying the wonderful surroundings of Bath's golden cityscape and countryside beyond.



■ Thermae Bath

## Time for tea

Bath has to be the perfect place to enjoy the quintessential British afternoon tea. Head to the elegant 18th Century Pump Room where the city's hot Spa water is still drawn for drinking or visit Sally Lunn's – the oldest house in Bath (c.1482) – serving the most famous local delicacy; the Original Sally Lunn Bun. The bun can be eaten with savoury or sweet accompaniments, although jam and thick lashings of cream really is delicious!

## Add some retail therapy

Bath offers a unique shopping experience with a fabulous selection of small independent shops and stylish boutiques, alongside familiar big name stores. For high street fashion head to SouthGate or discover Bath's hidden gems for an eclectic choice of boutiques, antique stores, homeware shops and designer outlets.

## What's on

Bath has a vibrant and year-round calendar of festivals and events. This summer will see the return of the popular Bath International Music Festival, the Coffee Festival and Roman Baths by Torchlight, to name just a few.

## Don't miss

Bath Abbey towers over the city centre and is one of the last great medieval churches in England. You can even climb the 212 steps to the very top of the church tower and take in incredible bird's eye views of the city below. Bath also has a huge number of attractions to explore such as the Jane Austen Centre, Fashion Museum and No. 1 Royal Crescent.

## Find out more

For a complete guide to Bath including accommodation options and an online booking service, information on things to see and do, shopping and places to eat out, see the official tourism website [www.visitbath.co.uk](http://www.visitbath.co.uk). Alternatively, contact Bath Tourist Information Centre for expert advice on 0906 7112000 (50p/min).

# Station Update



■ Lieutenant Colonel Simon Butt, Station Commander

**Hello again from Station Headquarters. It seems hardly two minutes since the ARRC and its attached units arrived, but six months have passed and JHQ is becoming but a dim and distant memory. The time seems to have passed quickly; hardly was there time to settle in before serious training for the deployment to Afghanistan began. The first rotation of troops to Kabul has departed and early reports indicate that they have settled in very well. Those on the second rotation will deploy in July.**

The Support Battalion will also be sending a large contingent on operations in Afghanistan in the Summer; the Pioneer Squadron will be reinforcing 3 SCOTS in Helmand Province and the Battalion Headquarters will deploy to control the arrival and training of 20 Armoured Brigade when it replaces the Commandos in September. Meanwhile, back at Innsworth, we'll keep the home fires burning and look after the folk left back here.

## Gymnasium news

The Station Commander is delighted to be able to offer use of the Imjin Barracks Gymnasium facilities to military dependents, Imjin Barracks based civil servants and dependents of Imjin Barracks based civil servants. The long-awaited state of the art equipment has all arrived and the place is looking smarter by the day. The showers are being re-furbished and insurance arrangements have been amended so that members no longer need to provide their own personal and third party liability insurance. We have just received the great news that there is no requirement to charge members for this facility.

## Dogs on Innsworth Station

There are certain rules to be followed for bringing dogs onto Innsworth Station land. These are:

- Dogs brought onto Innsworth Station land must be registered at the guardroom. To register a dog, the owner must provide a current veterinary certificate showing that the dog has been vaccinated against common canine diseases, and must provide proof of third party insurance.
- Although dogs may be exercised around the edges of the sports fields, they may not be allowed to stray onto the sports pitches.
- Dog owners are responsible for ensuring that any dog mess is picked up and deposited in one of the approved bins.

## Children's Nurseries

The HIVE and the Unit Welfare Officers have details of the nurseries near Innsworth Station which have places available for children from baby stage to school age, on a full time or part time basis. Please do call in to get details. Please also note that a discount is given to children from military families.

### The Old Station Nursery Innsworth

*'Home from Home Childcare'*

*Are you looking for high quality childcare in the best new environment?*

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*Do you know you are entitled to 15 hours of free early education for your 3 or 4 year old?*

*If your answer to any of these is 'yes', then come and visit our lovely new nursery on Innsworth Lane and meet our friendly and experienced staff team.*



#### The Old Station Nursery

Innsworth Lane  
Innsworth  
GL3 1ET

Tel: 01452 739010

Email: [innsworth@theoldstationnursery.co.uk](mailto:innsworth@theoldstationnursery.co.uk)  
[www.theoldstationnursery.co.uk](http://www.theoldstationnursery.co.uk)



# Service Personnel Veterans Agency

Sian Gausden, SPVA Communications Officer



■ Sian Gausden, SPVA Communications Officer

## So you have seen our Innsworth House building – but have you heard of SPVA?

Here at Imjin Barracks there are many buildings on site, most of which you will be familiar with and have an understanding of the work that goes on inside them. However, there is one building, Innsworth House, that you may know a little less about. For Service Personnel serving in the UK Armed Forces: read on – because what goes on behind those doors directly supports you. What is the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA) and how do they help you? Part of the MOD, SPVA provides a range of 'through life' support functions direct to around 900,000 serving and retired personnel and the 4.8 million strong Veterans Community. Many of you will have heard of at least some of our services, but not necessarily linked them to belonging to SPVA. You should know that SPVA is involved with a great many aspects of your Service life and beyond...

Innsworth House is only a small part of SPVA as the Agency is based over four sites; our others being Glasgow, Blackpool and Gosport. But behind the doors of Innsworth House are some significant services that support our Servicemen and women.

## JCCC: vital service

Some personnel keep odd hours at Innsworth House and that is because they work in The Joint Casualty & Compassionate Centre (JCCC) which is open 24/7. The JCCC is responsible for the administration of all casualty casework in the Armed Forces world wide. The work is split into two areas – compassionate travel for bringing a Service person back from an overseas location, e.g. during a family emergency and the second element of the work is casualty notification, repatriation and family support for serious illness/injury or death of a Service person, wherever and however that occurs. All personnel being posted overseas are issued with a JPA P001 JCCC contact card which has the 24hr contact number; this is given to family members in case of a family emergency. Recently the JCCC in

conjunction with TRBL have produced a fridge magnet which complements the JPA P001 card, the magnet can be stuck around the house and be found easily the moment it is needed, so, for those of you deploying overseas make sure you get your fridge magnet and stick that very important number on the fridge where we hope it will never be used.



■ Afghanistan Operational Service medals being prepared for delivery

## SPVA Medal Office: 44,000 medals in just one year

All current campaign medals and previously unclaimed medals back to WWII are issued by the SPVA MOD Medal Office also based in Innsworth House. Significant investment in personnel and JPA technology coupled with the laser engraving machines allows prompt delivery of Medals to Serving Personnel, veterans and their relatives. The Medal Office has dispatched circa 44,000 Medals over the last year with an average of 1,738 Iraq and Afghanistan medals



■ Innsworth House

being processed a month. Government policy changes surrounding Medals can have significant impact on the Medal Office for instance the change announced in August 2010 regarding the qualifying period for the Iraq and Afghanistan medal from 30 days continuous service to 45 days aggregated service is an example of how the Medal Office needs to keep adapting but still meet our customers need. Obviously current campaign medals are the primary focus, however, you may be surprised to hear that the Medal Office deals with around 150 applications a week from Veterans and their relatives for WWII medals.

## Veteran's Welfare Service and more besides

Every organisation needs its back office functions and SPVA is no exception, Innsworth House is home to elements of the finance, commercial, and secretariat teams and the site's Media & Communications representative.

Region 2 (South West and Wales) of the Veterans Welfare Service is also based in Innsworth House. Working closely with unit welfare officers, Army Welfare Service and the Personnel Recovery Units to ensure personnel leaving the Services are supported in which ever way suits the individual's needs. Their work also includes AFCS claims for in-service personnel.

So that is Innsworth house, but the Agency goes a lot further, with services like Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) primarily based at Gosport which allows all Service personnel direct access to carry out personal routine administrative actions, like applying for leave and changing bank details.

The JPA Portal, accessible via the SPVA infoCentre provides real time information on the JPA system status, maintenance times, key messages and links to other areas that you will find useful. Look out for the soon-to-be-refreshed portal pages making more clearly defined access for single services user and the HR professionals. SPVA in conjunction with the Single Services are constantly looking at ways to make our services more accessible and user friendly.

The Agency also provides support for those disabled or bereaved through Service. The War Pension Scheme and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme provide payments to individuals based on the severity of their injury – tax free! If the worse happens, payments to those left behind are made, including regular pensions to former spouses and partners. The Agency is currently working on media products for the next phase of changes to the AFCS which will come in later in the year.

For those soon to be leaving the Armed Forces, support from SPVA doesn't stop; you will become a member of the ever growing Veterans Community, and as such can access a vast network of support and guidance by calling SPVA's Veterans Helpline. The Helpline provides help on all statutory benefits, health, training, employment and housing; alternatively you can visit the website [www.veterans-uk.info](http://www.veterans-uk.info).

This article provides only a brief insight to what goes on in Innsworth House but I hope it gives you, our customer, a little bit more of what services SPVA provide.

## Contacting SPVA

### Service Personnel

JPAC Enquiry Centre: Mil 94560 3600  
or write to JPAC Enquiry Centre, Mail Point 403, Kentigen House, 65 Brown Street, Glasgow G2 8EX

Online accessibility: **Internet:** [JPAC@spva.mod.uk](mailto:JPAC@spva.mod.uk)  
**Intranet:** [JPACEnquiryCentre](#)

JCCC: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, +44 1452 519951

### Ex-Service Personnel

Veterans UK Helpline: 0800 169 2277

Email: [veterans.help@SPVA.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:veterans.help@SPVA.gsi.gov.uk)  
or write to Veterans Services, SPVA, Tomlinson House, Norcross, Thornton-Cleveleys FY5 3WP

Online: [www.veterans-uk.info](http://www.veterans-uk.info)



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

# Your housing at Innsworth

Ken McMinn, Communications Manager, Defence Estates Operations Housing

**You probably know that Defence Estates (DE) Operations Housing is responsible for providing Service Family Accommodation (SFA) for Service personnel and their families based in the United Kingdom, and you may have heard of MODern Housing Solutions (MHS). In fact, you could be reading this article sitting in an SFA property in the Innsworth area. But you may not know how we prepared for the arrival of HQ ARRC or the range of our Housing services.**

Moving house, especially moving country, can be very stressful. So we hope that any experiences you have already had with DE Ops Housing and MODern Housing Solutions (our maintenance contractor in England and Wales) have been positive.

DE Ops Housing provides accommodation for over 40,000 families in accordance with MOD policy and our work includes planning to meet the requirements of our Armed Forces, managing the allocation process through our Housing Information Centres (HIC), providing Housing Officers to conduct Move Ins, Move Outs and Pre-Move Out Advisory visits, and undertaking improvements.

DE is also responsible for providing a comprehensive maintenance service through contractors, which for Innsworth SFA is MODern Housing Solutions (MHS). MHS provide maintenance services for around 45,000 SFA properties in England and Wales, which are based on agreed levels of service for different problems. This means that you can expect an emergency issue to be dealt with very quickly, with someone attending within three hours, whilst it may take up to 15 working days to deal with a less urgent problem.

## What are SFA?

Homes provided for Service personnel and their families are known as Service Family Accommodation. However, you may hear them referred to the old term which was Married Quarters or just Quarters. DE manages around 49,000 properties across the length and breadth of the UK, which are allocated to entitled or eligible Service personnel based on their rank for Officers and family size for other ranks. Charges for accommodation are based on inspections of the property and take into account the size, available facilities and condition of the house; as well as other factors such as the environment where the house is situated.

## What DE and MHS did to prepare for your arrival

Contractors working on behalf of DE started the bulk of the improvements made to Innsworth SFA back in autumn 2009. In all, 362 properties had targeted improvements that included, where appropriate, new heating systems, roofs, kitchens, bathrooms, upgraded loft insulation, windows and doors. In addition, properties were redecorated and had new carpets laid where required. However, we knew that there were not enough properties for

everyone who needed them, so a major project was also undertaken to find suitable homes to lease in the area – which eventually added up to a total of 158 properties.

The move of ARRC was a huge undertaking for all those involved in the planning and preparation in both Germany and the UK, and of course a big upheaval for families. So, extra Housing staff were drafted in to deal with the large number of Move Ins to try to reduce the stress on everyone. However, DE recognises that the large number of properties being worked on, and the large number of families who needed to move into them, resulted in various issues and outstanding problems. DE and MHS were acutely aware of the situation locally throughout the process, and senior staff from both

organisations worked closely together to get things back on track when issues arose.

So we hope that the majority of you didn't have too many problems, that you have now settled in and that your family has settled into the area.



■ DHE Innsworth Housing Officers;  
Robin Horton and Larry Berry

## Useful information

DE Ops Housing has dedicated staff based at Innsworth, and they are happy to help with any enquires you have. However, if you have a maintenance request you should use the relevant Helpdesk to ensure it is dealt with as quickly as possible. Useful telephone numbers – Innsworth Housing Officers, Larry Berry and Robin Horton: 01452 739223, 731819 and 731461.

The team are based at:

The Blue House at 39/41 Middleton Lawn, Innsworth.

**Housing Information Centre** (for allocations, and to organise Move In/Out appointments and Pre Move Out Advisory Visits): 0800 169 6322 (select option 1, then option 7 for the Telford HIC)

**MODern Housing Solutions Helpdesk** (for maintenance and repair services): 0800 707 6000 (select option 5 for the West Zone). The Helpdesk is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and a translation service is available on request.

**Lease properties maintenance** (Kingsway, Hucclecote and Tewkesbury): 01225 838365 or 01225 838 422  
Email – [modmaintenance@touchstonecps.com](mailto:modmaintenance@touchstonecps.com)

### Useful Websites

DE Ops Housing and MHS also have Websites with useful information on a wide range of subjects. They can be found at:  
DE – [www.mod.uk/ServiceFamilyAccommodation](http://www.mod.uk/ServiceFamilyAccommodation)  
MHS – [www.modern housingsolutions.com](http://www.modern housingsolutions.com)

## About the maintenance service

SFA are supported by a comprehensive maintenance contract, which means you can ask for help to solve most of the problems that arise in your home. In England and Wales, MHS provide this service through a dedicated 24 hour Helpdesk that will arrange for local contractors to visit where appropriate.

However, as an occupant of an SFA property, you also retain some responsibilities such as changing standard bulbs and domestic fuses, replacing batteries in smoke alarms and maintaining your garden. Damage you or your family cause is also not covered and may incur a charge. But if you do have any problems or need advice you should call the Helpdesk immediately on 0800 707 6000 and they will be happy to advise you.

# Bulk Hirings at Kingsway, Tewkesbury and Hucclecote

Jan Jeff, Property Manager, Annington Homes

**A number of ARRC families are housed in Hirings, so this short piece is aimed at giving people an insight into their provision and maintenance. MOD bulk hiring properties have been sourced and provided for over five years with 820, including the 140 for the ARRC, now in operation throughout the country. The availability of new properties in the Innsworth area in 2009/2010 was severely limited, but we managed to find both the numbers and house types that met Defence Estates' criteria in Kingsway, Tewkesbury and Hucclecote.**

As part of the arrangement with the MOD, Annington provides a repair and maintenance service to these properties, and to this end, we work in conjunction with a property management company called Touchstone Corporate Property Services, in order to undertake this work for all the 820 MOD bulk hiring properties.

Touchstone is a long established company in the area of property management, used by such organisations as The Salvation Army and Lloyds Bank for the management of their property portfolios. For these companies, they provide all the necessary property services including repairs and maintenance, financial management, invoicing and rent collection and they currently have over 10,000 properties on their books.

Touchstone's offices are in Bath where we have also based two of our own Annington staff, myself and Gary Smith, our Acquisitions Manager. We work with Touchstone as part of an integrated team to support the MOD bulk hiring properties. Some MOD occupants may already be familiar with two key members of the team: Help Desk experts Bev Coggan and Sue Oaten, who arrange repairs and maintenance. They are very friendly and experienced in dealing with both repairs and maintenance and the unique circumstances of many of the Service occupants.

Bulk hiring properties are different to SFA properties in many ways, not least because they are generally brand new. We have produced a booklet entitled "Living in your new home – Guide for Service Personnel and their families" to help all occupants adapt quickly to

their new environment. A copy of this booklet has been placed in every one of the properties that we handed over to MOD – you will find it in the home pack from the developer that also contains instruction leaflets etc. (This Guide provides much useful information including how to deal with issues that are common in new homes such as shrinkage cracking, advice on TV aerials and satellite dishes, and an issue that many new occupants are encountering: condensation – more on these below. It also highlights the fact that there are Restrictive Covenants attached to new properties by the Local Authority that you, as the Occupier, need to comply with; your Housing Officer can advise you further on this. **If you cannot find your copy of "Living in your new home – Guide for Service Personnel and their Families", we will gladly send you a replacement if you email your details to the address above.**)

Please take the time to read this booklet as it contains a great deal of information that you will find helpful as you settle in to your new home. If you cannot find what you are looking for, or you need to report a repair or maintenance issue, don't hesitate to contact Bev or Sue on either of these numbers: 01225 838 422; 01225838 365; or by email [modmaintenance@touchstonecps.com](mailto:modmaintenance@touchstonecps.com)

These lines are open 9am – 5:30pm Monday to Thursday and 9am – 5:00pm on Friday. If the numbers are busy, please leave a message, they will return your call as soon as possible. Outside of these hours, and for emergencies only, please call 020 7540 9806. We actively encourage feedback – both positive and negative. Please use the email address above if you have any comments on the service provided to you and we will quickly respond. In the meantime, on behalf of Annington and Touchstone we hope you enjoy your new home.



■ Bev Coggan, Jan Jeff and Sue Oaten



## Gloucester City Hockey Club

Brian Mobberley

**For readers wanting to know how to start, or resume, hockey, read on. Gloucester has a vibrant hockey scene.**

The original Mens Club dates back as far as 1897 when a group of local tradesmen, who played on Wednesday afternoons being the 'early closing' day of the week for the traders. Apart from the war years the club has been continuously active until the present day with the ladies club amalgamating in the late 60's.

We are very much a family club which provides both coaching and playing experiences for those aged 8 to 80 and run four Ladies and five Mens teams. There is a vibrant Junior Section with over a 100 members. The girls U16 'Vixens' and the boys U16 'Badgers' teams play regular matches in the county circle; The younger ones down to 8 years old are not forgotten with mini festivals held locally, again on a regular basis.

We are a 'ClubsFirst' accredited club with all our volunteers working with children having been screened in a professional manner. This is a quality system for sports club and we are proud of our accreditation.

Our club base is at St. Peter's School, Tuffley Road GL4 0DD where there is a magnificent balcony overlooking the artificial grass pitch; come along any Saturday in the hockey season and you will see a programme of up to four matches taking place.

We also use the artificial grass pitch at the Oxstalls Tennis Centre at Plock Court GL2 9DW.

Both sites are used for coaching depending on the age group: for example the Under 11's boys & girls are currently coached 1700 – 1800hrs Wednesdays in school term times at the Tennis Centre.

Potential new members of any age or ability are always most welcome. More information can be found on our website [www.gloucestercityhc.co.uk](http://www.gloucestercityhc.co.uk) as shown above, where you will find the contact details for all the club officers, or telephone us on 01452 612 978/07812 723 635, or email [brrw.mobberley@btinternet.com](mailto:brrw.mobberley@btinternet.com)



## Gloucestershire Brass Band Association: not all flat caps and whippets!

Mark Windsor, MBE

**Let me introduce you to the Gloucestershire Brass Band Association: proof that playing a brass instrument is not all flat caps, whippets and warm beer!**



■ Band at stadium

The GBBA is one of the oldest brass band associations in the UK; we celebrate our 75th anniversary in 2012. A brass festival day and massed band concert is planned for Saturday 7 July 2012 at Highnam Court, Gloucester.

Our aims are to promote and support the movement (we currently have 38 member bands) as a whole while including the largest number of participants and having the widest spread possible of the local population involved. We organise two annual contests, featuring many bands with young players. Many more parents are coming to brass band events than in past.

We have provided since 2007 all the financial support and manpower for the Gloucestershire Youth Training Band which currently has 30 plus members. It meets six times a year at three weekend Blast Off events working in partnership with Gloucestershire Music Services. Each event culminates with a short concert for the parents where they receive more information about the brass playing opportunities available in the area. With it sitting between the Junior and Senior Bands it provides a natural aim for the younger players and a perfect feeder in to the Senior Band. These other two bands are operated by Gloucestershire Music Services [www.gloucestershiremusic.co.uk](http://www.gloucestershiremusic.co.uk).

Additionally we make grants to the youth players of member bands who are selected for the National Children's Band of GB or the National Youth Band of GB.

Membership and lessons at many Youth and Training Bands are often free, as is the loan of an instrument and even a uniform. If you have an interest in playing a brass instrument, visit our website [www.gbba-online.org.uk](http://www.gbba-online.org.uk) for further information.

During the summer months many local parks have a band playing on a Sunday afternoon so why not go for a picnic and hear some music for free.

Visit [www.bandsinthepark.org.uk](http://www.bandsinthepark.org.uk) for a full schedule for the summer.

# A German family moves to the UK

## Duncan and Martina Kohl



■ Duncan and Martina Kohl

It all started when my husband, a Major in the Bundeswehr, was transferred to HQ ARRC in Mönchengladbach, in October 2009. As we had our own house in Schleswig Holstein (600 Km away), I stayed at home with the two children, Luisa and Lina, and my husband "visited" us every weekend.

Before being transferred to the ARRC we had heard that it would probably relocate to UK. But, as it is in life, we didn't think about it then or take it seriously. Then the timeline to move was in place and all of a sudden everything became very real. The ARRC will relocate to Innsworth and we have to follow!

I had spent all of my life in the same village in the north of Germany and now I had to move. What was worse: I had to move to a country that didn't even speak German. The thought was mind boggling.

In the beginning I thought that my husband was teasing me (he was grinning all the time while explaining the moving times.) and after asking again and again I finally believed him. It took me several weeks to accept my destiny!

Then the world started turning again and I had thousands of questions. Some were useful and some were questions only a woman can ask (i.e: what's the colour of the carpets in our new house?). The main thing was that I wanted answers and I wanted them yesterday! From then on we started to plan our future in the UK and plan how best to complete our time in Germany. There were so many things to think about: Sell or rent the house, How are we going to get to the island, Which transport company should we use, How do we get German TV, How does the schooling system work, What do they eat? The list was endless!

Before we knew it the day to move had arrived and we hoped that we had thought of everything.

With mixed feelings we arrived in Innsworth and our transport company was already there waiting for us. Our German National Support Element had pre-deployed a NCO who supported us and acted as a proxy. He was also there waiting for us. After three days the move-in was complete. We had German TV, Internet and Telephone connections to Germany. The move itself wasn't half as bad as I thought it would be.

During the summer and relocation break we had everything organised. Our car was registered and insured, the children had found contacts and were enrolled into school and the local nursery. After a short period of time I tried driving on the wrong side of the road and it wasn't too difficult, just strange. My self confidence grew each day and my English is steadily getting better.

Now, six months on, I feel very happy where I am and one can say that we have 'arrived'. I am now at home here. This was only possible because of the great work and support we received from the German national support element and the ARRC welfare team, and also because of the sweet home that we are living in, with friendly and helpful neighbours who have become friends. Last but not least, it was also only possible because of the Brits themselves who make our life here enjoyable.

## OWSC Update and FOE

### March 2011

02/09/16/23/30 Kingsway Coffee Morning  
03/25 AOWA Coffee Morning  
04/11/18/25 Tewkesbury Coffee Morning  
04/11/18/25 Innsworth Coffee Morning  
27 All Ranks Families Lunch: Junior Rank Mess  
09/16/23/30 Families Vigil with Padre  
12 Cadbury World Day out

### April 2011

01/08/15/22 Innsworth Coffee Morning  
01/08/15/22 Tewkesbury Coffee Morning  
06/27 Kingsway Coffee Morning  
07/28 AOWA Coffee Morning  
27 Families Visit to Cribs Causeway

### May 2011

04/11/18/25 Kingsway Coffee Morning  
06/13/20/27 Tewkesbury Coffee Morning  
06/13/20/27 Innsworth Coffee Morning  
15 All Ranks Families Lunch: Junior Rank Mess  
31 Families Visit to Cheddar Gorge

### June 2011

08/15/22/29 Kingsway Coffee Morning  
03/10/17/24 Tewkesbury Coffee Morning  
03/10/17/24 Innsworth Coffee Morning  
19 All Ranks Families Lunch: Junior Rank Mess  
26 Families Visit to Bicester Village

The above planned events are provisional dates only and may change due to holidays etc. A detailed flyer will be sent out prior to each event to assist in booking each trip. Please note that parents must provide any form of child seat required for travel in coaches or mini buses.

# M·A·S·H

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

**We have over thirty years experience selling a wide range of military equipment, outdoor clothing, military footwear, back-packing and survival equipment to The British Army, The Royal Air Force, various cadets and police/ambulance services to name just a few.**



**Our extensive range covers Snugpak, Magnum, Viper, Web-Tex, Lowa and many more.**

### **OPENING TIMES**

**Monday to Saturday: 0830 - 1700**  
**Sundays: 0800 - 1300**

# The Bulletin



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