

News story: Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) Mounts Bay in Bermuda

RFA Mounts Bay has been on deployment to the region as part of her Atlantic Patrol Tasking (North) duties, to provide humanitarian and disaster relief for the UK's Caribbean Overseas Territories and Bermuda.

This year RFA Mounts Bay has been in the Caribbean for hurricane season, ready to provide support at a moment's notice. Tasked by the Royal Navy, she was the UK's first military response to the Caribbean during Hurricanes Irma, Jose and Maria.

During the visit the Commanding Officer paid calls upon the Governor John Rankin and on Premier Burt. RFA Mounts Bay will also provide some logistical support to the Royal Bermuda Regiment and will host a Disaster Management Presentation of the vessels capabilities for members of Bermuda's Emergency Measures Organisation – the primary organisation for Disaster Management co-ordination on island. RFA Mounts Bay will also host tours for the Bermuda Sea Cadets and the Bermuda Scouts Association.

The Governor for Bermuda, John Rankin CMG, commented on the visit:

We warmly welcome the first visit of RFA Mounts Bay to Bermuda. I saw at first hand her invaluable work on crisis preparedness and crisis response in the Caribbean during the recent Hurricanes. I have no doubt that her presence in the affected areas in the immediate aftermath of the recent storms saved lives for which we are all eternally grateful. Thankfully, Mounts Bay visits us in calmer conditions and her visit provides a great opportunity for the sharing of experiences and capabilities between our own Emergency Measures Organisation and that of the RFA Mounts Bay itself. This can only help to strengthen our preparations should such extreme weather conditions befall Bermuda in the future.

Notes for Editors

- RFA Mounts Bay (L3008) is one of three Landing Ship Docks (Auxiliary) and was built by BAE (Naval Ships) at Govan on the River Clyde.
- Launched by Lady Band in April 2004, she was the first Bay class vessel, and following extensive sea trials was accepted into service in July 2006.
- A formal service of dedication took place in September of that year to mark the Transfer of Operational Command to Fleet, with the ship

honoured by the attendance of her sponsor Lady Sarah Band and her husband, Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, former First Sea Lord.

- The summer of 2007 saw RFA Mounts Bay receive the great privilege of the Honorary Freedom of her affiliated town, Falmouth and she continues to maintain close links with the Cornish region.
- So far during operational Service, RFA Mounts Bay has already played a key role in many amphibious exercises, including operations off Sierra Leone, the Baltic Regions and also many more, closer to home, around the coast of the United Kingdom and Western Europe.

For more information see [RFA Mounts Bay](#)

Press release: Milestone at Shoreham flood defence project

A major flood defence scheme that will significantly reduce flood risk to over 2,300 properties in Shoreham-by-Sea and Lancing has taken a step towards completion.

Work at Reach E3 of the Shoreham Adur Tidal Walls Scheme is now complete, and the northern section of the Downs Links and Lower Beach Road re-opened on Friday 8 December. Also, as a result of updated modelling for the project, part of the initial plan has been adapted and removed the need for major road works on the A283.

The scheme is made up of 10 individual reaches, and work has now started on 8. Construction on Reach E3, which includes raised walls and embankments, started in 2016. Steel piling has been installed along the landward side of the path, and has been clad with brick. The Downs Link path was diverted while the work was completed.

Before the advanced modelling took place, the A283 in Shoreham-by-Sea would have been closed for 12 weeks during construction in spring 2018. As a result of the work that has already taken place, only a very small number of properties would benefit from the road raising work. Instead, these properties will be protected with an alternative solution to ensure they also receive a high level of protection, and the road closures will not take place.

Elsewhere in the scheme, work on the slipway at Emerald Quay and Sussex Wharf is advancing and the first panes of glass of the riverside flood defence have been installed. The majority of the new wall at Ferry Bridge is complete, and

vegetation clearance at Riverbank in preparation for construction to start in the new year is finished. Work at Emerald Quay, Shoreham Harbour Club and Shoreham Fort is progressing well. Much of the work behind the High Street in Shoreham has been completed and is open to the public.

Phil Prydderch, Shoreham Adur Tidal Walls Manager at the Environment Agency, said:

It's great news for Shoreham-by-Sea residents that we will be able to enhance their flood protection without the planned road closures. We are committed to protecting all members of the community, and will continue to work with local residents to make them more resilient against flooding.

When complete, the Shoreham scheme will reduce the tidal flood risk to thousands of homes and a significant number of commercial properties in the area, as well as protecting important local infrastructure such as the road network, railway line and Shoreham Airport. This is one part of the Environment Agency's national effort to reduce the risk of flooding for at least 300,000 homes by 2020/21.

The Shoreham scheme's dedicated project visitor centre is at Beach Green Car Park, Shoreham-by-Sea, and is open between midday and 5:00pm on weekdays. Further information on the scheme is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) or by calling 03708 506506.

You can also request information by emailing shorehamwestbank@environment-agency.gov.uk or by writing to SSD Enquiries, Environment Agency, Guildbourne House, Chatsworth Road, Worthing, BN11 1LD.

Notes to editors

The visitor centre may be closed during scheduled visits from schools and interest groups. Flood impact maps showing the detailed modelling outcomes are available upon request.

All media enquiries: 0800 141 2743. Or email southeastpressoffice1@environment-agency.gov.uk

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[News story: MMO announce 2018 panel dates for the EMFF scheme in England](#)

Panels are required to consider applications over £100,000.00 and four panels will be held in 2018 giving applicants the maximum opportunity to apply for EMFF funding. Since the launch of the scheme in January 2016 there has been significant uptake so far. This has resulted in some funding areas becoming under pressure in 2018.

The 2018 panel dates are as follows:

- The first panel will be held on 21 March 2018. Applicants are asked to ensure their applications reach the MMO by 19 January 2018.
- A second panel will take place on 13 June with a deadline for applications of 13 April.
- A third panel will convene on 5 September with an application deadline of 30 June.
- A final panel will take place on 21 November with an application deadline of 14 September.

Commenting on the panels, MMO Director of Finance, EU and Licensing, Michelle Willis said:

“It’s imperative that people apply for funding by the panel dates and because of the scheme’s success, some funding areas will come under pressure during 2018. We want to ensure enough funding is available for projects to take place so we are asking for those interested to submit their applications as quickly as possible.

“The EMFF Scheme is very diverse and whilst we have received a wide range of projects since launch, we continue to welcome projects in 2018 including innovation projects, scientific – based projects and those with an emphasis on marine conservation.

“I would urge people to note the deadline dates for panel applications and take the time to submit applications which are of the highest possible quality to maximise the chances of application success.”

Please visit the MMO website for [guidance and information on how to make an application.](#)”

[News story: Northumberland Armed](#)

Forces Forum

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This well attended event drew over 30 representatives from across the region and reflected the interest in supporting the armed forces community in the region.

The issues of alcohol and veterans was covered by a presentation by Dr Sarah Wigham, Newcastle University, on research funded by Forces in Mind Trust. Her work dealt with evidence based interventions to tackle alcohol abuse in the veteran community. This multinational project drew heavily upon research from around the world and explored how this work can be adapted to meet the needs of veterans.

The forum discussed the complex issues relating to alcohol problems and veterans and the how the Mess/NAFI culture has evolved and the effect of cheap alcohol on serving personnel.

The forum was the opportunity of the incoming Royal British Legion, Advice and Information Officer, Ms Louise Liddell to introduce herself to the community and to brief the community on the Legion's work in the Northumberland region.

The wider veteran support environment was explored, specifically there was an exploration of the Northumberland Outreach Worker Project by its representative Mr Jonny Harrison. Even though he had only been in post 10 weeks he was already working 25 cases, or which 70% involved mental health issues and described their project as being so busy they have had to advertise for another member of staff to help deliver services.

The new [Albermarle Barracks Military Wives Choir](#), formed a year ago and has had a very successful appearance at Hexham Abbey and St Nicholas Cathedral. This Choir was formed with the express purpose of creating a supportive community rather than an award-winning choir and is made up of for wives, fiancées, and co-habiting partners, who might otherwise feel isolated.

The choir is also open to women serving in the armed services and female veterans, plus and wives, daughters of veterans. It is not restricted to Albermarle and is open to all who qualify across the region. It is now one of more than 200 military wives choirs across the UK. The Albermarle choir was set up because the nearest ones were in Catterick and Edinburgh.

The forum was a very useful meeting that allowed the VAPC to meet with other service providers and is an important part of the board's engagement strategy.

[News story: £170m competition launched for new Institutes of Technology](#)

Employers, education and training providers can now apply for a share of £170m to establish prestigious new Institutes of Technology (IoTs), which will specialise in delivering the higher level technical skills that employers need.

Today (15 December) the Department for Education has opened the application window for employers, Higher Education and Further Education providers to apply for multimillion-pound capital funding, as outlined by the Education Secretary at last month's [Skills Summit](#).

IoTs will see businesses and education and training providers working together to deliver provision to learners that is highly sought after by employers, in technical disciplines, particularly STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths).

Education Secretary Justine Greening said:

Institutes of technology will play a vital role driving our skills revolution with business and unlocking the potential of our country's young people through better technical education. By bridging the country's skills gaps, these new institutions will drive growth and widen opportunity.

This Government continues to invest in developing our homegrown talent so British business has the skills it needs and so that young people can get the opportunities they want.

These new institutions will help tackle the skills gap at a local, regional and national level and extend opportunity to thousands of people.

IoTs are just one of the skills reforms outlined by the Secretary of State on the 30 November at the Department for Education's [Skills Summit](#) which brought together education experts and some of the country's top employers to forge a new alliance to deliver a skills revolution.

Today we can confirm our aim to achieve a network of IoTs across the country. We expect the first IoTs will be open in 2019.

To apply register [here](#)