

HMS Cambria: Cardiff's new 'crown jewel' in the defence estate

Described as 'a crown jewel' in the Defence Estate, HMS Cambria was delivered on time and on budget by RFCA for Wales in partnership with the Royal Navy and Associated British Ports (ABP).

The hugely successful project has enabled HMS Cambria, Wales' only Royal Navy Reserve unit, to return to its original maritime home in Cardiff, and enjoy a presence near the centre of Government for Wales.

It was four decades ago that HMS Cambria moved from Cardiff Docks to premises at Sully. Over the years there have been numerous attempts to return the unit to the capital, however it was the publication of Defence's Future Reserves 2020 (FR20) programme in 2013 that provided the catalyst enabling HMS Cambria's move back to the capital city.

The bespoke facility now serves as the central hub and operating base for the Ship's company from HMS Cambria; personnel from Wales's University Royal Naval Unit (URNU) who look after student Naval cadets at universities in the city, and the Royal Marine Reserves (RMR).

Reservists now have access to state-of-the-art classroom suites, shared accommodation facilities, administrative services, as well as social and fitness centres all under one roof.

Colonel Nick Beard, Chief Executive of the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association for Wales said:

Not only has the project enabled HMS Cambria to fittingly return to its original maritime home, but it now offers the best possible facilities for our reservists to work and train. We hope the brand-new facility will inspire future potential reservists from the surrounding areas to sign up to become vital and valued members of the Armed Forces family.

In addition to this 'crown jewel' in the Defence Estate, as described by Captain Mark Wyatt, (Navy Infra Capability Manager Reserves), the RFCA for Wales is responsible for the upkeep of over 400 buildings that are home to cadets and reserves in Wales.