

Royal opening for carbon neutral military dog training facility

HRH The Princess Royal this week officially opened a new training facility for military working dogs and their handlers at the Defence Animal Training Regiment (DATR) at Remount Barracks, Melton Mowbray.

The Canine Training Squadron (CTS) is home to around 200 highly skilled working dogs, training in a variety of roles including police force protection, arms and explosives searches, Counter Improvised Explosive Device (C-IED), and drugs search operations in the UK and overseas.

DATR Commanding Officer Lt Col Mike Robinson RAVC said:

The Defence Animal Training Regiment provides innovative and crucial training for our personnel and military dogs.

I am pleased the Canine Training Squadron headquarters is officially open and can continue to provide a great learning environment for our Armed Forces whilst fulfilling our NetZero objectives.

Following £4.1 million investment, the new training centre will be carbon neutral and 96% self-sustaining.

HRH The Princess Royal met service personnel who showcased the training of military dogs and their handlers, and the range of capabilities they provide to the MOD. HRH was also invited to plant a tree on site as part of the Queen's Green Canopy. This initiative is part of the national celebrations to commemorate Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Defence Infrastructure Organisation Area Delivery Manager for Lincolnshire and East Midlands, Greg Piper, said:

The state-of-the-art new training facility will provide a modern and self-sustaining operating capability for the Unit going forward. The project was a complex and challenging piece of work, but excellent collaborative work with partners, stakeholders and the customer ensured successful delivery and we are delighted to see this very important facility now in full operation.

An Army Safety and Environmental Award was presented to the DATR in March, recognising the collaborative approach between the Unit, Defence Infrastructure Organisation and Amey in delivering the new, sustainable training facility.

The new facility includes three new classrooms, indoor and outdoor training areas, a new Station Headquarters office space and training accommodation.

Using its own solar panels and a battery generator the facility will fulfil its own electricity requirements, and an air source heat pump and recovery system will regulate heating across the entire site. A grey water harvesting system will recycle water for non-drinking requirements, reducing the main water supply by up to 60%.

The new facility has achieved a Defence Related Environmental Assessment Methodology (DREAM) rating of 'excellent' and will help the Army to achieve its net-zero carbon emissions targets for 2050. In addition, cost savings from the project will be invested into Army infrastructure.