

Defence Infrastructure Organisation completes £10m Royal Marines accommodation

The new block will house Royal Marine recruits who have been injured in training.

The new accommodation at the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines (CTCRM) in Lympstone consists of a 181-bed block as well as supporting facilities, such as a large communal/recreation area and administrative offices. The multifunction communal/recreation space has televisions, a projector and screen, kitchenette for drinks and IT provision. It can also be used as a classroom when required or for individual learning. The ground floor also has toilet and washing facilities for visitors to this area.

The building includes 21 eight-bed rooms and one ten-bed unit plus three single rooms which can be used for support staff or individual troops. All bedrooms include individual storage and all rooms have been designed so that they can be allocated to either male or female occupants. There are additional baggage rooms on each floor with lockable individual cages for each person for larger items of kit.

Each floor has a utility room which includes a Belfast sink for washing larger items, washing machines and dryers. There are also dedicated drying rooms with extraction, low radiant heat and dehumidifiers to ensure clothes and smaller items of kit can be quickly washed and dried. A separate caged building for drying larger items of equipment and an external boot wash was also constructed adjacent to the new accommodation block.

The building is designed to be easy to clean and maintain with surfaces such as vinyl floors which are quick to wash. Durable finishes have been provided to the lift, baggage cages and handrails.

Final fixings and equipment such as Wi-fi, curtains, blinds, notice boards, white boards and TVs were installed throughout the building during construction to avoid costly and disruptive fit out post-handover.

Simon Jones, DIO Project Manager, said:

We are pleased to have completed this bespoke building to meet the Royal Marines' accommodation requirements along with our partner Galliford Try and our technical support providers AECOM.

This purpose-built facility will provide modern and essential accommodation to personnel and to allow them to continue training as they recover from injury and undergo rehabilitation prior to rejoining their normal unit.

This was a challenging project especially continuing safely throughout the current pandemic, but it demonstrated our expertise in delivering unique construction projects on time for the Armed Forces.

Simon Courtney, Managing Director for Galliford Try Building West Midlands & South West, said:

We are proud to have been given the opportunity to work with and deliver this unique scheme on site for DIO. There has been a high level of collaboration on the project throughout a challenging period, and we are delighted to now see the completed building ready for occupation by the Royal Marine recruits undertaking rehabilitation and recovery programmes.

The building, known as the Comacchio Building, was opened by Col. Simon Chapman, Commandant Commando Training Centre Royal Marines.

Representatives from the Royal Marines, Defence Infrastructure Organisation and contractors Galliford Try and AECOM attended an event at Lymstone on 4th November to mark the completion of this unique facility for the Royal Marines.

Taronga Zoo hosts British Consul General for COP26 Nature Day

At the zoo, she met with conservation experts who demonstrated how the team is protecting iconic Australian species.

The British Consul General met with Taronga's Divisional Director, Welfare Conservation and Science, Nick Boyle, and Manager, Conservation Science, Dr Justine O'Brien. The team showed Ms Cantillon the Taronga Institute of Science and Learning and outlined the Zoo's education and conservation programmes. She saw first hand their Greater Bilby breed and release programme Taronga, along with its partners, has reintroduced bilbies to the Sturt National Park, 100 years after they went extinct in the area. There are just 9,000 left in the wild and the release at Sturt increased the total bilby population by 17%.

She also heard about Taronga's breed and release programme for the Regent Honeyeater, a critically endangered Australian bird. Only 350 remain in the wild, but in October 58 were released to help bolster the wild population.

British Consul General Louise Cantillon said:

As the focus of COP26 moves towards the role of nature and adaptation it's great to see the work of the Taronga here in Sydney, and by extension their team in Dubbo. Their impressive work to breed and release native animals such as the bilby and the Plains-wanderer and their conservation research puts nature first.

Nature underpins human health, wellbeing and prosperity and we need to ensure countries, business and individual's value and defend these assets. Protecting and restoring nature must be part of the pathway to net zero which is why the UK is encouraging countries to include nature-based solutions in their climate plans.

Taronga Zoo Sydney's Divisional Director for Welfare Conservation and Science, Nick Boyle, said:

Taronga works with many partners across the world to tackle pressing conservation challenges and it is a privilege to be able to share our work with the British Deputy Consul today.

Sadly many iconic Australian species, including koalas and Taronga's emblem, the platypus, are facing increased challenges as a result of climate change.

The UN Climate Conference is an opportunity for us all to reflect on how we can make the best choices to protect our planet for future generations and for the incredible wildlife we share it with.

[Taronga Zoo](#) is certified net zero with a commitment to net zero by 2030, removing single use plastic, moving to renewable energy and reducing emissions. Their education work aims to support visitors and school groups to understand how they can take action to reduce their impact on the environment: from clearing litter from rivers, plastics reduction, protecting the Australian bush and iconic Australian ecosystems.

[COP26](#) in Glasgow has brought together world leaders, governments, civil society and businesses to focus on how we can limit climate change, keep warming to 1.5 degrees and create a cleaner world. The Summit will work to accelerate action on protecting and restoring forests and other critical ecosystems and helping the world move towards sustainable agriculture and land use. It will highlight the twin threats of climate change and biodiversity loss.

Significant progress has already been made at COP26 with more than 120 world leaders committing to end and reverse deforestation by 2030. This was the first major agreement reached at the summit by countries containing 85% of the world's forests, an area of over 13 million square miles. Forests absorb

around one third of the global CO2 released from burning fossil fuels every year, but every minute an area of forest the size of 27 football pitches is lost.

To contact the British High Commission for climate related media enquiries, please contact amelia.mcnaair@fcdo.gov.uk or 0416 645 857.

UN Human Rights Council Special Session on Sudan: UK statement

Madam President,

The Sudanese revolution, the bravery of the Sudanese people who made that revolution possible, and the democratic transition that followed the revolution, have been an inspiration not just to the High Commissioner, as she said this afternoon, but to my country and to this Council.

The military takeover of the 25 October was a betrayal of that Revolution and the hopes and aspirations of the Sudanese people. The UK has condemned that takeover and the human rights violations that have followed, so eloquently described by the High Commissioner. This dramatic deterioration in the human rights situation led the UK, along with our German, Norwegian, Sudanese and United States allies to call for this Special Session. I'd like to thank the other members of this Council who supported our call and the many delegations, particularly those from the African Group, who have worked with us so constructively and intensively over the last few days, on the draft resolution that we have before us today. Un grand merci a nos amis Africains.

We welcome once again the decisive action taken by the African Union in response to the military takeover and we echo the calls from the High Commissioner and the UN Security Council for the military to refrain from violence and fully respect human rights.

Madam President,

This Council has an essential role to play in upholding democracy and protecting and promoting human rights. It must speak with one voice today. We must ensure that the democratic gains of the Sudanese revolution are not lost and that the civilian-led government is immediately restored to power.

Madam President,

This afternoon, we stand shoulder to shoulder with the brave people of Sudan who have demonstrated in their millions on the streets of their country in defence of democracy, and of their fundamental rights. I urge our fellow members of the Council to join us and to send a strong and clear message

today that democracy must – and will – prevail.

Leeds man who controlled partner jailed for longer

News story

Billy Barker-Holden has had his sentence increased following intervention by the Solicitor General, Alex Chalk QC MP



A man who subjected his partner to a campaign of abuse has had his sentence increased following intervention by the Solicitor General, Alex Chalk QC MP.

Billy Barker-Holden, now 23, moved into the home of his partner, where he would become argumentative and aggressive when he could not source cannabis.

Over a period of 5 months Barker-Holden subjected his victim to a campaign of controlling and coercive behaviour. He would control what she wore, prevented her from wearing make up, prevented her from taking her phone upstairs with her and isolated her from neighbours and friends.

On different occasions the offender threw a drink in the victim's face, threw a full bottle of coca cola to her stomach, prevented her from leaving the house, held her by her neck and did not allow her to attend A&E when she began bleeding despite knowing that she was pregnant.

Barker-Holden pleaded guilty to one count of inflicting grievous bodily harm and one count of controlling or coercive behaviour. On 8 September Barker-Holden was sentenced to 2 years' imprisonment at Leeds Crown Court.

Following a referral to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence (ULS) scheme by the Solicitor General, on 5 November the Court found the sentence to be unduly lenient and increased it to 3 years' imprisonment.

After the hearing at the Court of Appeal, the Solicitor General, Alex Chalk

QC MP, said:

This is not the first time Barker-Holden has been violent towards a partner, and it is paramount that the sentence reflects the crime. Domestic violence will not be tolerated and I hope that today's outcome brings the victim some comfort.

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[Device installed to track bats at a Suffolk pumping station](#)

Press release

The Environment Agency worked with the Norwich Bat Group to install a wildlife receiver station at Benacre Pumping Station.



Officers installing the bat receiver at the pumping station.

The device is used to track the flights and migration patterns of bats and birds across the North Sea. It is one of many that make up a network of these devices, which have been installed along the East Anglian and European coastlines.

The data produced by the receiver will be analysed by [Wageningen University](#) as part of their studies into migrations of Nathusius' pipistrelle bats. It will also be used by the [Norwich Bat Group](#) for the same purpose.

Adam Willis, a graduate engineer for the [Environment Agency](#), said:

We were happy to work with the Norwich Bat Group on this and we hope the data produced from the receiver helps them conserve and protect bats and birds.

The bat antenna at Benacre pumping station in Suffolk.

Jane Harris, a national Nathusius' pipistrelle project officer for the Norwich Bat Group, said:

The installation would not have been possible without the help and support from the Environment Agency.

Thanks to them, we have gained another receiver in the East Anglian array. This will help provide valuable information about the poorly understood seasonal movements of Nathusius' pipistrelle in the region.

Several British bird observatories have receivers too, including [Landguard Bird Observatory](#) in Felixstowe and [Minsmere Nature Reserve](#) in Suffolk.

Additional information

- The antennae and receiver mounted on the pumping station receive signals from tiny radio tags that are attached to bats and birds to track their movements.
- Radio tagging is done by the Norwich Bat Group under licence with strict welfare considerations.
- The tags are attached between the shoulder blades with medical glue and will fall off after 2 to 3 weeks.
- Large butterflies and dragonflies can also be tracked.
- The equipment was funded by [Wageningen University](#) and installed by members of [Norwich Bat Group](#)
- The information gathered by receivers, like the one installed at Benacre Pumping Station, is fed into the [Motus Wildlife Tracking System](#), which is a global database of animal detections.
- The Motus Wildlife Tracking System is used to track tagged birds, bats and other species using radio telemetry. It is a global system and is maintained by [Birds Canada](#).

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