

# £15k sponsorship boost for ChamberFORCE

The relaunch event took place at the Amazon Fulfilment Centre in Dunfermline on August 23. Amazon staff and senior management had the opportunity to engage with a variety of military stands, vehicles and equipment.

Regional Learning & Development Officer, Lieutenant Commander Garth Atkinson RNR, represented the Royal Navy. 154 (Scottish) Regiment Royal Logistic Corps (RLC), 225 (Scottish) Medical Regiment and 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (7 SCOTS) attended the event to represent the British Army. 603 (City of Edinburgh) Squadron Royal Auxiliary Air Force represented the Royal Air Force. Regular units, including soldiers from 2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (2 SCOTS), also attended.

Vehicles on display included a Foxhound Protected Patrol Vehicle, Field Ambulance, and an EPLS MK3 truck. Visitors had the chance to get hands on with equipment including Army Bergens as well as trying out a virtual reality simulator.

The tri-service stands were followed by a presentation of a £15,000 cheque for sponsorship funding from Amazon to ChamberFORCE. The funding will be available over a three-year period. Fife Chamber of Commerce Chief Executive Alan Mitchell accepted the cheque on behalf of the other participating Chambers from Amazon Dunfermline General Manager Jamie Strain.

ChamberFORCE is a partnership programme between selected Chambers of Commerce in Scotland and their local Navy, Army and RAF units, designed to bring tangible benefits to Chamber members and to Defence. The founding Chambers of Commerce have all signed the Armed Forces Covenant and achieved ERS Gold Awards: Fife Chamber of Commerce, Dundee & Angus Chamber of Commerce, Moray Chamber of Commerce and Dunbartonshire Chamber of Commerce.

Highland RFCA first launched the initiative in November 2018, with the aim of bringing the participating Chambers of Commerce and Armed Forces Reserve units closer together. Defence Relationship Management (DRM) supported the initial pilot.

ERS Gold Award holder, Amazon, sponsored a virtual leadership event with Fife Chamber back in 2020. Keen to develop the relationship with other Chambers of Commerce, Amazon is sponsoring the next phase of the ChamberFORCE project. Amazon is now the official corporate sponsor of ChamberFORCE for the next three years, enabling the participating stakeholders to deliver advocacy for Defence.

This year, through its Military Programme, Amazon will recruit over 300 veterans, reservists and military spouses in over 35 different jobs. These jobs range from health & safety specialists, engineers, sales managers and team leaders to senior managers.

Amazon was awarded the Employer of the Year Award at the Ex-Forces in Business Awards for two years in succession for its outstanding efforts in supporting ex-services personnel and military spouses.

**Alan Mitchell, Fife Chamber Chief Executive, said:**

On behalf of all the participating Chambers of Commerce, I want to thank Amazon for embracing ChamberFORCE.

We are all very excited about working with the Amazon team and our friends at HRFCA to create an exciting programme of events that will strengthen the bonds between the businesses and the military units across the four regions that we represent.

Amazon has benefited enormously from employing ex-military personnel and reservists, and we want ChamberFORCE to provide a platform for many other businesses to enjoy the same benefits.

Dunbartonshire Chamber of Commerce was represented by Chief Executive Damon Scott, and Dundee and Angus Chamber by Sarah Young, Events and Marketing Manager. Scottish Chambers of Commerce Deputy Chief Executive, Charandeep Singh, was also in attendance.

**Charandeep said:**

I look forward to supporting the ChamberFORCE programme and unlocking the opportunities for Scotland's communities. With many sectors and companies continuing to cite recruitment challenges and skills shortages as a barrier to growth, ChamberFORCE is an excellent example of how partnership working can tackle the big challenges facing our economy.

---

## **£15k sponsorship boost for ChamberFORCE**

The relaunch event took place at the Amazon Fulfilment Centre in Dunfermline on August 23. Amazon staff and senior management had the opportunity to engage with a variety of military stands, vehicles and equipment.

Regional Learning & Development Officer, Lieutenant Commander Garth Atkinson RNR, represented the Royal Navy. 154 (Scottish) Regiment Royal Logistic Corps (RLC), 225 (Scottish) Medical Regiment and 7th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (7 SCOTS) attended the event to represent the British Army. 603

(City of Edinburgh) Squadron Royal Auxiliary Air Force represented the Royal Air Force. Regular units, including soldiers from 2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (2 SCOTS), also attended.

Vehicles on display included a Foxhound Protected Patrol Vehicle, Field Ambulance, and an EPLS MK3 truck. Visitors had the chance to get hands on with equipment including Army Bergens as well as trying out a virtual reality simulator.

The tri-service stands were followed by a presentation of a £15,000 cheque for sponsorship funding from Amazon to ChamberFORCE. The funding will be available over a three-year period. Fife Chamber of Commerce Chief Executive Alan Mitchell accepted the cheque on behalf of the other participating Chambers from Amazon Dunfermline General Manager Jamie Strain.

ChamberFORCE is a partnership programme between selected Chambers of Commerce in Scotland and their local Navy, Army and RAF units, designed to bring tangible benefits to Chamber members and to Defence. The founding Chambers of Commerce have all signed the Armed Forces Covenant and achieved ERS Gold Awards: Fife Chamber of Commerce, Dundee & Angus Chamber of Commerce, Moray Chamber of Commerce and Dunbartonshire Chamber of Commerce.

Highland RFCA first launched the initiative in November 2018, with the aim of bringing the participating Chambers of Commerce and Armed Forces Reserve units closer together. Defence Relationship Management (DRM) supported the initial pilot.

ERS Gold Award holder, Amazon, sponsored a virtual leadership event with Fife Chamber back in 2020. Keen to develop the relationship with other Chambers of Commerce, Amazon is sponsoring the next phase of the ChamberFORCE project. Amazon is now the official corporate sponsor of ChamberFORCE for the next three years, enabling the participating stakeholders to deliver advocacy for Defence.

This year, through its Military Programme, Amazon will recruit over 300 veterans, reservists and military spouses in over 35 different jobs. These jobs range from health & safety specialists, engineers, sales managers and team leaders to senior managers.

Amazon was awarded the Employer of the Year Award at the Ex-Forces in Business Awards for two years in succession for its outstanding efforts in supporting ex-services personnel and military spouses.

**Alan Mitchell, Fife Chamber Chief Executive, said:**

On behalf of all the participating Chambers of Commerce, I want to thank Amazon for embracing ChamberFORCE.

We are all very excited about working with the Amazon team and our friends at HRFCA to create an exciting programme of events that will strengthen the bonds between the businesses and the military units across the four regions that we represent.

Amazon has benefited enormously from employing ex-military personnel and reservists, and we want ChamberFORCE to provide a platform for many other businesses to enjoy the same benefits.

Dunbartonshire Chamber of Commerce was represented by Chief Executive Damon Scott, and Dundee and Angus Chamber by Sarah Young, Events and Marketing Manager. Scottish Chambers of Commerce Deputy Chief Executive, Charandeep Singh, was also in attendance.

**Charandeep said:**

I look forward to supporting the ChamberFORCE programme and unlocking the opportunities for Scotland's communities. With many sectors and companies continuing to cite recruitment challenges and skills shortages as a barrier to growth, ChamberFORCE is an excellent example of how partnership working can tackle the big challenges facing our economy.

---

## [Interest rate increased on the Court Funds Office special and basic accounts](#)

News story

The interest rates were increased for Court Funds Office special and basic accounts on the 2 September 2022.



Please note that, in response to the increase in the Bank of England base rate on 4 August 2022, the Lord Chancellor has reviewed the Court Funds Office (CFO) rates of interest payable to clients and has directed that from 2 September 2022 these will change to the following:

- Special Account – increases from 1.25% to 1.75%
- Basic Account – increases from 0.94% to 1.313%

The Lord Chancellor has made this decision to ensure that the running costs of the CFO service can continue to be met and that an increased rate of interest payable to clients can be provided.

If you wish to discuss further, please contact the CFO on 0300 0200 199 or email [enquiries@cfo.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@cfo.gov.uk)

Published 22 September 2022

---

## [Executive Officer in Application Management](#)

News story

Details of a permanent Executive Officer vacancy within our Application Management team.



This exciting and interesting role puts you at the heart of the VMD's work in the authorisation of applications for veterinary medicinal products. You will be part of a team that links with scientific disciplines and has frontline interactions with the pharmaceutical industry and with regulators from other global jurisdictions.

### **Job Title**

Executive Officer in Application Management

## Grade

E0

## Salary & Pension

£27,963 – £29,806 per annum with Pension Scheme

## Annual Leave entitlement

Commencing at 25 days

## Role

You will be responsible for overseeing the progression of application procedures subject to published standards targets for licensing work, as set out in the VMD Business Plan. Also meeting and contributing to objectives set out in the Authorisations Work Plan.

The job holder is a primary contact for members of the pharmaceutical industry, and involves communicating with internal assessors, other global country national regulatory body representatives and the pharmaceutical industry.

## How to apply

You must make your application via [Executive Officer in Application Management – Civil Service Jobs – GOV.UK](#) where you will find a full job description including salary details.

## Closing Date

30 September 2022

Published 22 September 2022

---

## [Performance update – September 2022](#)

News story

On a monthly basis, we publish the latest official statistics on appeals performance, which represent the highest volume (in terms of number of cases) of the work of the Planning Inspectorate.



## [Planning Inspectorate statistical release 22 September 2022](#)

Alongside this, we update the [appeals handling times](#) data to give customers the latest information on the average time it takes to receive a decision and provide an update on our other main casework areas.

In summary:

- There are currently 62 live local plan examinations in progress. Local Plans help to protect communities from speculative or unwanted proposals. We encourage Local Planning Authorities to use our advisory visits to help them get their plans in good shape and deal with challenges well before submission.
- We have a high number of [Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects \(NSIPs\)](#) at various stages. They include 70 national infrastructure schemes where we are providing advice before submission, 10 applications being considered by us and 12 proposals where we have completed our recommendations and the Secretary of State's decision is awaited. These are vital to the ongoing support by The Planning Inspectorate to the country's economic recovery.
- We continue to meet the statutory deadlines for infrastructure applications and are currently recruiting inspectors to do infrastructure work in preparation for an expected increase in submissions next year.
- The overall number of open cases at the end of August was 13,981 which was consistent with the previous month. We continue to focus on casework with the most community interest and those key to supporting the nation's economic recovery, such as national infrastructure applications, local plan examinations and appeals needing a hearing or inquiry. We continue to encourage all parties to resolve matters locally and reduce pressure on the appeals service.
- The number of decisions made in August was 1,474, slightly higher than the 12-month average.

- The Planning Inspectorate continues to work practically to reduce average decision times, a key priority with the [new Ministerial performance Measures](#) announced earlier this year. Since April 2022 newly received planning appeals heard by hearing are considered on a similar procedural timescale to planning inquiries, with decisions in 24-26 weeks. The median decision time for planning appeal hearing decisions is reducing and was 43 weeks in August. Many planning inquiries continue to be decided in fewer than 30 weeks, although some take longer.
- By the end of September many appeals in 30 Local Planning Authorities (LPA) will no longer be submitted via the Appeals Casework Portal (ACP) but through a new GOV.UK service. It is quicker and easier to use than ACP and is designed with users and to full accessibility standards. It is being tested live so it can be improved and rolled out to appellants in most LPAs by the end of March 2023.
- It is vital appellants can have confidence in the quality of our decision making and our quarterly (April to June 2022) data shows 831 appeal cases were quality assured. This represents 22% of all decisions issued and includes 598 by Inspectors in Training as part of their learning.

Published 22 September 2022