

[News story: Ready for F-35s: runway resurfaced at RAF Marham](#)

This took place with little to no impact on operational activity.

The first F-35 Lightning aircraft are due to arrive at their new home at RAF Marham shortly. The game-changing aircraft, which will be operated by both the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy, will be based at RAF Marham. Preparations are on track for the aircraft to be able to deploy from RAF Marham to deployed operating bases by the end of the year. In due course they will also deploy to the Royal Navy's Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers.

The resurfacing work was undertaken by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) through its contractors, a joint venture of Galliford Try and Lagan Construction. It forms part of a £250 million DIO programme of investment at the station and involves resurfacing about 90% of the airfield operating surfaces; all of this while the Tornado Force maintained operations from the airfield.

Rob Dawson, DIO's Principal Project Manager, said:

The completion of the resurfacing of the secondary runway is one a series of milestones for the work DIO and our contractors are undertaking to prepare RAF Marham to be the main operating base for the new F-35B aircraft. Along with work being completed by our colleagues at Defence Equipment and Support, this investment will transform RAF Marham with a host of new and upgraded facilities for the aircraft and the men and women who will operate them.

RAF Marham Station Commander Group Captain Ian Townsend said:

It's fantastic to have the secondary runway handed back to the station after the completion of the resurfacing in preparation for the imminent arrival of the F-35 Lightning. To see the Tornado's take off from it for the first time was a real milestone in the programme and we look forward to the next historic event in the next couple of weeks when the F-35's will touch down on the new runway as it arrives at its home base for the first time.

James Aikman, Project Director, Galliford Try Lagan Construction, said:

The Galliford Try Lagan Construction joint venture is delighted to have successfully reached this important stage of the project. We have a well-established relationship with DIO and this, combined with our experience of complex airside work, augurs very well for

the remainder of the programme.

Resurfacing the 1,855m long runway required the construction of two batching plants to prepare the specific asphalt and concrete needed for the new surface. Preparing the materials on site increased efficiency.

RAF Marham is currently the home of the RAF's Tornado fleet, which will begin operating from the runway immediately before being joined by the F-35s in due course. With the aircraft currently on operations it was important that this activity could be maintained without restriction. During the work, flying was only halted for three weeks while construction teams resurfaced an intersection between the main runway and the secondary runway. This was completed a day early despite poor weather.

The remainder of the work being undertaken at RAF Marham continues, including construction of three vertical landing pads to enable the F-35s to use their vertical landing capability and a squadron headquarters for 617 Squadron (The Dambusters).

Other work includes a high voltage power upgrade, refurbishment of 12 Hardened Aircraft Shelters and a small gym and canteen as well as a hangar, offices and technical facilities for 207 Squadron.

[News story: Get the ship in shape innovation event](#)

Background

[HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH](#), and sister ship [HMS PRINCE OF WALES](#), are the new cutting edge UK Aircraft Carriers and the largest ships the UK has ever built for the Royal Navy. These ships are intended to be operated by an extremely small crew relative to the ships' size and the complexity of tasks that they undertake.

The operating environment and geographic dislocation of personnel will be creating new challenges in the way that work is managed and effectively delivered. Personnel tracking and communications can benefit from cutting edge technologies and it is not yet clear which technologies can best enhance working routines, feeding routines and organisational structure.

The following are key areas where efficiencies are required:

- tracking all our people and providing potential data sets for machine learning approaches to logistics and workflow analysis

- schedule maintenance, connect the maintainer, information and tools in the right place at the right time
- keeping such a large real-estate clean is a challenge. Every hour spent cleaning, is time away from training, operating or maintaining. Is there an efficiency/ automation/ novel tech for when, where, how and with what, we are cleaning?
- accounting for people, provisions, consumption and on-board purchasing is an obvious candidate for evolution

Are you a company working in any of the above areas? Would you be interested in discussing your ideas, technologies and solutions?

If the answer is “Yes” then our upcoming Innovation event could be of interest to you.

At the event, delegates will:

- get a chance to go on-board and see the context of the challenges upfront with support from the actual end users, if possible
- hear first hand the technical and procedural challenges faced by the current Ship’s Company
- have the opportunity to shape future Defence Innovation challenges on the ship and future R&D investments
- have the opportunity to offer/discuss both viable products and conceptual capabilities requiring funding

Register your interest to attend

If you would like participate in this event, please [register your interest](#) now and save the date.

The deadline for registering your interest is 5pm on 19 June 2018.

We will contact you between 20 and 21 June 2018 to notify you, if you’ve been selected to participate and will provide you with further information about the event.

Please note that places for this event are limited and if the event is oversubscribed, we will have to limit the number attending from a single organisation.

News story: Two World War 1 Majors have finally been identified a century later

The resting places of Major Alexander Henderson Soutar MC, Corps of Royal Engineers and Major Octavius Sidney Darby-Griffith MC, The Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, have been marked 100 years after their deaths in the great war. Two rededication services were held on Wednesday 30 May at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Jonchery-sur-Vesle British Cemetery and La Ville-aux-Bois British Cemetery, both near Reims in the Champagne region of France.

The services, organised by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), part of Defence Business Services, were conducted by the Reverend Andrew Earl CF, Senior Chaplain HQ NW & Chaplain 2nd Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment.

Rosie Barron, JCCC said:

It has been a privilege and an honour to organise these 2 rededication services today. Both Major Soutar and Major Darby-Griffith were killed during the Third Battle of the Aisne. It is important that these courageous men, who fought tirelessly to halt the German Spring Offensive in 1918, are remembered.

The Reverend Andrew Earl CF, said:

It is a great privilege to be asked to rededicate the headstones of these 2 former comrades who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country and to see the ongoing work of the MOD's JCCC. It is important that when we say 'We will remember them', it is more than words, it's an ongoing commitment. May they both rest in peace.



Major Alexander Henderson Soutar MC, Copyright Soutar family, All rights reserved

On 28 May 1918 98th Field Company, Royal Engineers, were involved in fighting around Hermonville. They were forced to withdraw southwards but had to leave Major Soutar behind as he was wounded. It is believed that he succumbed to his wounds having been taken prisoner of war. He was 30 years old.



Members of the Soutar family with military representatives and local attendees, Crown copyright, All rights reserved

James Soutar, the great nephew of Major Soutar said:

The Soutar family is extremely moved by the dedication of David Tattersfield and the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre of the British Ministry of Defence in locating the final resting place of our ancestor, Major Alexander (Alastair) Henderson Soutar. Major Soutar sacrificed his life for his country 100 years ago, and has lain here unrecognized ever since.

We are all immensely grateful that we are able to come to France to pay him our respects and to thank him for his sacrifice. We are also relieved that his final resting place is now marked and may be known unto all who visit this beautiful place. We feel his soul is finally at peace.

On 9 September 1914 Major Darby-Griffith was commissioned into The Loyal North Lancashire Regiment. He was awarded the Military Cross, which was published in the London Gazette on 25 April 1918. His citation reads:

For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty when in command of a company which took over a sector of the line after an unsuccessful

attack. He quickly reorganised the line, which contained large gaps, and steadied his men under constant shell fire. When, after being relieved, 2 of his platoons were caught by an enemy barrage he distributed them in shell holes, and by working from shell hole to shell hole, got them clear without many casualties. After getting them clear he returned through the barrage and attended to his wounded, remaining with them till the last had been evacuated.



Major Gary Turner from The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment laying a wreath for Major Darby-Griffith, Crown copyright, All rights reserved

On 27 March 1918 Major Darby-Griffith was killed whilst in command of 9th Battalion, The Loyal North Lancashire Regiment. He was 46 years old.



The Standard being lowered as the Last Post is played during the service for Major Darby-Griffith, Crown copyright, All rights reserved

Both Majors were casualties of the Third Battle of the Aisne, a now often forgotten battle in the late stages of the German Spring Offensive. With no known graves, they were both commemorated on the Soissons Memorial in Soissons, France.

The final resting place of these 2 Majors came to light after a researcher, David Tattersfield, submitted evidence to the CWGC to suggest that they had been found. Further research by the MOD's JCCC and the National Army Museum was undertaken to corroborate the evidence that Mr Tattersfield had provided, and the identification of the 'Unknown Soldier' graves were both confirmed by the JCCC.

The service for Major Soutar was attended by 10 members of his extended family who had travelled from as far away as Canada, the USA and Hong Kong to pay their respects. Despite the limited information available, the JCCC traced Major Darby-Griffith's 91 year old granddaughter. As she lives in British Columbia she was unable to make the journey.

Members of the Corps of Royal Engineers and The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment were present at both services.

Mel Donnelly, CWGC said:

For almost a century Major Soutar and Major Darby-Griffith were commemorated on the Soissons Memorial to those with no known grave.

They were both decorated officers who had served on the Western Front for more than 3 years and we are honoured to be able to acknowledge their sacrifice and re-dedicate their graves today.

Two new headstones bearing Major Soutar's and Major Darby-Griffith's names have been provided by the CWGC, who will now care for their final resting place in perpetuity.

[News story: First plot stone unveiled at new service accomodation site in Wiltshire](#)

Lieutenant General Nick Pope CBE, Deputy Chief of the General Staff, together with Mr John Leary, Lovell's Major Projects Director unveiled the stone with representatives of the Army Basing Programme (ABP), Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) and Lovell in attendance.

Work is well underway across the Salisbury Plain Training Area to prepare for the Service personnel returning from Germany in 2019 under the ABP. A critical construction activity is the provision of Service Family Accommodation. This constitutes the building of 917 new homes at 3 sites on Salisbury Plain; Bulford, Larkhill and Ludgershall. In addition, ABP has purchased 100 homes of open market housing at Tidworth. The build of new homes represents a significant investment on Salisbury Plain and is critical to enable the final units to relocate to Wiltshire from Germany and within the UK in 2019.

General Pope said:

The new homes that Lovell are providing on behalf of the Army Basing Programme is testament to the Army's commitment to invest in our estate providing 21st century living and working facilities for our soldiers and their families.

Since Ministry of Defence contracted with Lovell in November 2017, work is now well underway across all 3 sites. At Bulford, where 225 new homes are being built, the Roads & Sewers works are largely complete and over a third of the foundations have already been laid. The Bulford programme is the most advanced of the SFA sites and timber frame installations have commenced.

Alongside the groundworks element, Lovell has also been undertaking enabling works including 2 new section 278 access junctions and the installation of

its administration/welfare facilities and storage compound. These facilities coupled with strong supply chain relationships will allow Lovell to deliver this prestigious project at the fast track rate required in order to ensure homes are ready for the returning Service personnel and their families.

Mark Duddy, ABP Programme Director said:

I am really impressed with the speed of delivery and the amount of progress that has been made since the contract was signed in November; we remain firmly on track to deliver the required new homes to enable the units to return from Germany in 2019. This project is an excellent example of how we are updating the estate by providing first class living accommodation for our Service personnel.

John Leary said:

Lovell were delighted to host today's event to mark the commencement of superstructure works on our SPTA scheme. We were honoured to welcome Lieutenant General Nick Pope CBE to unveil our commemorative stone, representing a significant milestone at the Bulford site and for the SPTA SFA project as a whole. We look forward to continuing to work with the ABP, WYG and our supply chain partners to ensure timely delivery of high quality SFA for our Service families.'

[News story: The injured troops revolutionising motorsport visit The Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre](#)

Team BRIT aims to be the first ever all-disabled team to race in the Le Mans 24 hour race. It has developed the world's most advanced hand control technology to allow its injured drivers to compete equally.

The majority of the team's drivers are injured military troops who spent time at DMRC Headley Court as part of their recovery process. On Wednesday 23 May, the team visited the centre, taking along its Aston Martin V8 Vantage to speak to service personnel and staff about the team, its target and how it is revolutionising motorsport.

Drivers who took part in the visit include Martyn Compton who received burns to 75% of his body following an ambush in Afghanistan, Jon-Allan Butterworth

MBE, the country's most successful military Paralympian who lost an arm following an attack in Iraq and Warren McKinlay, who suffered Cotard's Syndrome as a result of a traumatic brain injury, leading him to believe he was dead.

The team hopes that the visit to DMRC Headley Court will inspire some of those receiving treatment at the centre to consider opportunities such as driving with Team BRIT.

Nicola Norville, Deputy Charities Coordinator at DMRC Headley Court said:

We are delighted to welcome Team BRIT and our former patients to DMRC Headley Court. Their visit demonstrates how valuable the role of intensive rehabilitation is and the incredible outcomes that are achievable. We value the friendship that we have with Team BRIT and look forward to strengthening our links. With the support of the DMRC Benevolent Fund, we hope to capitalise on the opportunities available to us through such initiatives. Thank you to all involved and for your commitment to our patients.

CEO and Founder of Team BRIT, Dave Player said:

The team at DMRC Headley Court plays such a significant role in the rehabilitation of military personnel and we're very proud to be part of the journey of some of the people who have spent time there.

Through Team BRIT and our linked charity KartForce, we hope to show injured troops and any disabled people, that there are incredible opportunities out there and that disability is not a barrier to achieving amazing things.