

**THE BLYTHE SAPPERS**  
**20<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE BLYTHE SAPPERS' COUNCIL**  
**1130hrs Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2015**  
**THE ARMY AND NAVY CLUB, LONDON**

**Present:**

<b>Sapper Alasdair Wilson</b>	<b>Chairman</b>
<b>Sapper Scott Robinson</b>	<b>Vice Chairman</b>
<b>Sapper Peter Clayton</b>	<b>Honorary Treasurer</b>
<b>Sapper David Hamilton</b>	<b>Honorary Auditor</b>
<b>Sapper Charles Holman</b>	<b>Honorary Membership Secretary</b>
<b>Sapper Jeffrey Lewins</b>	
<b>Sapper Robin Lloyd-Owen</b>	<b>Honorary Archivist</b>
<b>Sapper John McLennan</b>	
<b>Sapper Michael Muller</b>	
<b>Sapper Willie Shackell</b>	
<b>Sapper Stuart Sinclair</b>	<b>Management Committee Link Member</b>
<b>Sapper Bill Woodburn</b>	
<b>Sapper Carel Bouwens</b>	<b>Honorary Secretary</b>

**ITEM ONE. Apologies for Absence.** Apologies have been received from Sappers Gordon Charlesworth, Dudley Dennington, Hookey Walker, Roy Carlisle, John Taberner and Roy Wilsher.

**ITEM 2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.** The minutes of the 19<sup>th</sup> meeting were accepted as a true record.

**ITEM 3. Matters Arising.** There were no matters arising.

**ITEM 4. Summary of Decisions taken by the Management Committee.**

- a. The Secretary advised Council that the Chairman of the REAFC had advised that the Blythe Sappers Cup could no longer be awarded to the winners of the Inter Unit Football competition and had asked that it be awarded to the Man of the Match. He continued that after some discussion with the Corps that the Cup would become the trophy for the winning unit at the RE Games which are held annually. Furthermore the Society would make a donation to the same unit of £ 500 to be used for the purchase of sports equipment. Also the winning unit would be presented with a suitably engraved salver that would be retained. In order to maintain our link with the REAFC the Blythe Sappers would be awarding a salver to be presented to and retained by the Man of the Match at the Re Inter unit Final.
- b. The Honorary Archivist informed Council that he had been invited to review and update the Blythe Sappers Historical Note and was pleased to present the 11<sup>th</sup> edition in draft for approval. A discussion ensued on the merit of including the names of all members of the Society at the time of publication and the Chairman agreed to investigate the feasibility of this. Furthermore he was invited to consider the possibility of sending a hard copy to every member of the Society, to which he agreed to undertake further research.
- c. The Treasurer told Council that a recent expedition to Nepal had received a grant from the Blythe Sappers' Adventurous and Challenging Pursuits funds held by the Corps. This left very little in the allocation given to the Corps and that the Management committee had agreed with the Corps that at present there was no requirement to top this up.
- d. He continued to advise that grants for charitable cause had been very limited last year and that the Committee will be reviewing at its next meeting suitable causes recommended to it for support. Sapper Willie Shackell suggested the Army Cadet Force Associations' Outreach Programme would be a suitable and worthwhile cause to support. He agreed to provide a proposal for the Management Committee to consider at its next meeting.

**ITEM 5. SoFA Accounts 2014.**

The Honorary Auditor reminded the meeting that the accounts of the Blythe Sappers are reviewed and not audited in the true sense of the word and as such his appointment title is misleading. Nevertheless

he confirmed that the Blythe Sappers are financially sound and that there are no observations to report on the accounts. He congratulated the Treasurer on the work he had undertaken to ensure that the accounts are simple and accurate and for his continued efforts in utilising on line banking facilities.

**ITEM 6. Review of the Corps Report.**

The Honorary Membership Secretary, as the link to the Corps, reviewed the Corps Report which had been circulated prior to the meeting. He said that despite considerable reductions in the commitments for the Armed Forces as a whole the Corps remains as busy as ever, with units deployed to a variety of countries undertaking the full range of tasks of the Corps. The full report is attached to these minutes.

**ITEM 7. Proposed Chairman for 2017.**

The Chairman stated that a number of suitable candidates for the Chairmanship in 2017 had been canvassed and to date he had unfortunately not been able to seek agreement from any he had asked. A short discussion followed on other possibilities and the Chairman agreed to take these proposals forward.

**ITEM 8. Arrangements for Today's Lunch.**

*Principal guest:* Colonel John Blashford-Snell. Explorer  
*Subject:* "Expeditions whilst a serving Sapper"  
*Total numbers attending:* 77  
*Number of Guests:* 26  
*Those to rise:* Sappers Jim Gibb, David Hudson, Ian Ogden, David Richards, David Scott, Esmond White and Mark Wills

Council was advised that the Guest Night will be held at Chatham on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July and was asked to make a note in diaries as well as encouraging members to attend.

**ITEM 9. Next Meeting.**

- a. The date of the next meeting is set for 1130 hrs Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016.
- b. There being no other business the meeting closed at 1204 hours.

**Sapper Alasdair Wilson**  
*Chairman*  
*The Blythe Sappers*

**Sapper Carel Bouwens**  
*Honorary Secretary*  
*The Blythe Sappers*

## **CORPS UPDATE MAY 2015**

### **8 Engineer Brigade**

#### **12 (FS) Group**

1. HQ 12 (FS) Engr Gp has maintained a high tempo over the last month, with HQ staff supporting Sierra Leone and exercises in Jordan in addition to significant levels of work for future exercises.
2. 36 Engr Regt continue to be heavily committed to exercises in Jordan and the Falkland Islands. In addition the Regt is preparing for their significant commitment to Gurkha 200 and have recently deployed troops to Nepal to assist with the disaster relief following the recent earthquake.
3. 39 Engr Regt have retained their commitment to Sierra Leone whilst supporting exercises in the Falkland Islands. The LASS is leaning in to the preparation for exercises with other sub-units entering the critical preparation phase for exercises in Kenya.
4. 71 Engr Regt has conducted two regimental training weekends and deployed two reserve individuals to Canada.
5. 75 Engr Regt has conducted a regimental training weekend; completed a skiing expedition and are preparing to deliver M3 Rig training next month. They have started to identify volunteers for Op TOSCA (Cyprus) in support of 36 Engr Regt.
6. RMonRE(M) has completed a squadron and regimental training weekend and continue preparation to deploy a reserve individual to Sierra Leone.

#### **25 (CS) Gp.**

9. HQ 25 (CS) Engr Gp is balancing support to 2 Collective Training Level 3 exercises, 2 Joint Force Engineer Exercises (construction) and commitments against A-FORM.
10. 21 Engr Regt continue to support 1 LANCS BG in Kenya. Project ANEMOI (Falkland Island Radar Head project) Collective Training Level 1 continues with a DIO sponsored project (Ellington banks) due to commence, week commencing 13 Apr. 2 teams of 13 PAX are being generated to support recruiting surges for the reserve forces and the Op TOSCA (Cyprus) Engr Detachment is committed to the 3 SCOTS exercise prior to deploying in support of UNFICYP later this month.
11. 22 Engr Regt's Section Competitions and Officer Training package in Sennybridge and Operational Shooting Competition are now completed. Unit delivered LMG ranges for the Group Gunnery Cadre are nearing completion, and both 5 AES and 52 AES are engaged in Collective Training Level 1-2 activities in preparation for an exercise in Canada.
12. 26 Engr Regt has completed their commitment to an exercise and the Combined Arms Demonstration as part of Lead Armoured Task Force readiness validation. 33 AES deployed to the Sinai on 7 Mar to undertake Force Protection upgrades to MFO locations. RHQ planning now switches to Ex GRIFFIN HERALD 15 (capability demonstration) and the RE Summer Games.

13. 32 Engr Regt. 26 Fd Sqn will return from Canada and conduct continuation training before rebasing. 2 HQ & Sp Sqn have troops committed to Jordan and will shortly deploy personnel on exercise in Canada and Salisbury Plain. Rebasing preparation continues; bids to move personnel and equipment have been completed.

14. 35 Engr Regt retain 1 Fd Tp (33 pax) aligned to the Theatre Reserve Pool held @Readiness Level 3 (to train) for Afghanistan (Officers Academy Support). In addition they continue to resource the Canada temporary staff liability, and are in the process of deploying 58 pax to support this exercise season, whilst delivering a JFEE in Kenya (37 AES).

#### **29 (EOD & Search).**

15. HQ 29 EOD and Search Gp. The Gp HQ deployed on a Counter Terrorism exercise in order to develop Command and Control processes for this commitment. More widely, 244 personnel remain deployed in Jordan, including 11 US EOD Pax and the Gp remains heavily committed across a number of distinct activities both in the UK and overseas.

17. 1 MWD Regt. The presence of MWD handlers in Afghanistan endures, whilst the Regt has had a number of handlers and command elements deployed in Jordan. The Regt continues to prepare for relocation and consolidation in the UK.

18. 11 EOD Regt RLC. Whilst maintaining UK operations and other tasklines, and providing Ammunition Technical support in the UK and overseas, the Regt has been involved in a high profile (covered widely in the mainstream media) munitions incident call-out in central London.

19. 33 Engr Regt (EOD). Troops remain deployed in the Middle East and Jordan. 821 EOD&S Sqn continue to support 16X and 3X with the AATF (PARA) and LCG (Cdo), including exercises in France. 58 Fd Sqn (EOD) continue to engage in N Africa (specifically Morocco) whilst also maintaining close links with 217 Fd Sqn for the planning of further exercises.

20. 101 Engr Regt (EOD) is supporting the Middle East and troops held at readiness. 22 HQ&Sp Sqn have deployed a Short Term Training Team (STTT) recce to Nepal. The follow on STTT for the final delivery of training will be led by a reserve sub-Unit; 579 Fd Sqn in Apr/May 15; continuing 29 EOD and Search Gp engagements from 2014 (and before).

#### **170 (Infra Sp) Gp Update.**

21. Mar/Apr 15 remains a busy period for 170 Engr Gp with all sub-units committed; 20 Wks Gp continues to generate a 2<sup>nd</sup> STRE (AS) and the Gp continues to plan the establishment of a 9<sup>th</sup> STRE (Wks) to balance 64 Wks Gp and so make possible the operation of a sustainable FORM.

22. 20 Wks Gp continue to support Afghanistan, specifically the design of helicopter tie down points at the aviation detachment. In addition they are conducting work in Cyprus; improvement works at RAF Lossiemouth and has recently conducted a condition survey on Ascension Island.

23. 62 Wks Gp is delivering infra support across the broader Middle east area of operations by manning the UK STRE (ME) centred at MINHAD. In addition it maintains an STRE at very high readiness; is providing design support to the RE DFID Liaison Officer in support of operations in Montserrat, and has an STRE on Pre-Deployment Training.

24. 63 Wks Gp is delivering for Project ANEMOI, which is the rebuilding of the three radar head site on the Falkland Islands. In addition it is conducting technical infrastructure reviews (TIR) in Kenya and Cyprus.
25. 64 Wks Gp has recently recovered from delivering infrastructure support to the broader Middle East. It has one team on post operational leave and one committed to other tasks including; various exercises; the 170 Engr Gp Capability Demonstration and a survey of the estate in Nepal.
26. 65 Wks Gp is preparing to deploy on exercise in Italy. In addition, it has individuals supporting other exercises.
27. 66 Wks Gp is delivering technical support to discrete operations and projects across Defence, including Sinai, support to the RE Weapons Effect Demonstration; 516 STRE (BP) – BP support to multiple exercises globally as well as preparing to conduct technical assessments in Belize and Nepal; 521 STRE (WD) – WD support to Cyprus and Gibraltar; 528 STRE (Pwr) – TIR in Singapore (Strategic Naval Fuel Reserve), tech support to 2 Med Bde in the development of the new deployable role 3 hosp concept; 530 STRE (Mat) – Support to training of 21 Engr Regt ahead of Falkland Islands deployment, and seismic survey of the estate in Nepal.

#### **Future Activities & Events**

28. The following notable activities are planned for the future:
- 30 May 15 – Freedom of Ludgershall Parade, 26 Engr Regt.
  - 1-6 Jun 15 – RE Field Gun Championships (RN & RAF Teams), Tidworth
  - 3-4 Jun 15 – RE Games, Tidworth
  - 5-6 Jun 15 – REA Chilwell Weekend
  - 1-2 Aug 15 – REA Minley Weekend
  - 11-13 Sept 15 – RE Corps Memorial Weekend, Chatham
29. **RE 300.** The Corps will celebrate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Corps of Royal Engineers in 2016 with a selection of activities throughout the year. Details to follow in due course.
30. **Gurkha 200.** The Gurkhas are celebrating their 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. Activities are largely at unit and Brigade of Gurkha level but knowledge of the activity is important.
31. **BD 75.** The EOD units are celebrating 75 years of bomb disposal this year, planned events are as follows:
- 24-26-Jul-15 Carver Barracks Open Day
  - Oct-15 BD75 Commemorative Event (City of London)
  - 08-Nov-15 - Remembrance Day - Chelsea/Whitehall

#### **General Points**

32. **In Remembrance.** Col 'Archie' Archer GC CBE ERD sadly passed away on 3 May 2015 aged 100! He was a true EOD legend and will be sadly missed. His funeral is planned for Thursday **21st May 2015** at Christ Church, Old Southgate, North London (top of the Piccadilly Line) should personnel wish to attend.

Letters of condolence can be sent to Mrs Deirdre Strowger (Daughter), 8 Blake Court, News Holme Drive, Winchmore, London, N21 1SQ.

33. **Royal Engineers website.** To find out more about what the Corps is up to and view electronic copies of things like Sapper Magazine visit the RE pages inside the Army website using the link at the bottom of the page.

### **Sports & AT**

34. **Corps Sporting Results.** A short list of results to date:

#### **Telemarking**

Corps Team Event - Gold

Development Sprint Female- Gold: Capt Fran Bullock

Development Classic Female- Gold: Capt Fran Bullock

Army Champs Classic- Bronze: LCpl Dean Gillion

Army Champs Sprint- Bronze: Capt Will Jarrett-Kerr

Army Champs Combination- Bronze: Capt Will Jarrett-Kerr

Army Unit Team- Silver: R Mon RE (M) (Narrowly beaten by 3 RHA)

Mountain Race (against tough RM and GB athlete competition)

a. Male - Gold: LCpl Dean Gillion

b. Female - Silver: Capt Fran Bullock

c. Team Bronze: R Mon RE (M)

#### **Lawn Tennis**

Played 8, Won 7, Drawn 0, Lost 1, currently sitting second within inter Corps competition.

#### **Corps Badminton Championship**

36 Engr Regt became the unit champions.

39 Engr Regt were the runners up.

Unit Doubles was won by Cpl Joseph and Cpl Jas from 36 Engr Regt and the runners up were Spr Oates and Rastra Rai from 1 RSME.

Cpl Joseph Subba was the runner up and Spr Oates was the overall singles winner.

#### **Corps Rugby Union**

Inter Corps Champions beating the RA 39 points to 18.

#### **Corps Football**

Woolwich Cup Winners beating the RLC 3-0

35. **Corps Sporting Fixtures.** A short list of Corps sporting fixtures, should personnel wish to drop into events to provide support, is below:

#### **Hockey** (Aldershot)

18-20 May 15 Inter Corps outdoors (AGM 20 May 14)

14-15 Oct 15 Inter Corps Indoors

#### **Cricket**

DATE	OPPONENTS	GROUND	START
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6 May 15	RLC*	Chatham	1100hrs
7 May 15	T20 (REME)	Aborfield	1000hrs
11 May 15	T20 (AGC/RE/RLC)	Tidworth	1000hrs
12-14 May	Inter Corps T20	Aldershot	1000hrs
21 May 15	AAC*	Chatham	1100hrs
27 May 15	REME*	Arborfield	1100hrs
2 Jun 15	Int Corps*	Chatham	1100hrs
11 Jun 15	Beckenham	Beckenham	1100hrs
14 Jun 15	Band of Brothers CC	Belmont House	1130hrs
20 Jun 15	RMAS	Sandhurst	1330hrs
23 Jun 15	RA*	Larkhill*	1100hrs
1 Jul 15	Power Cup Semi	TBC	1100hrs
15 Jul 15	Power Cup Final	Aldershot	1100hrs
16-18 Jul 15	Royal Artillery	Larkhill	1100hrs
29 Jul 15	Sapper Cup Final	Chatham	1300hrs
30 Jul 15	AGM	Chatham	1100hrs

### Sapper Golf

Ser	Date	Match	Venue
1	22 <sup>nd</sup> / 23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	Spring Meeting	Tidworth
2	Tue 21 <sup>st</sup> Apr	RAOC	Hartley Wintney
3	Fri 1 <sup>st</sup> May	AGC(SPS)	Liphook
4	Thu 7 <sup>th</sup> May	AAC	Liphook
5	Wed 13 <sup>th</sup> May	REME	Sandford Springs
6	Thu 14 <sup>th</sup> May	RLC	Tidworth GC
7	Thu 28 <sup>th</sup> May	RAMC	Frilford Heath
8	Wed 3 <sup>rd</sup> Jun	RE Games	Upavon GC
9	Thu 4 <sup>th</sup> Jun	Defence Academy	Frilford Heath
10	Thu 11 <sup>th</sup> Jun	RM	Liphook
11	Fri 19 <sup>th</sup> Jun	Rye GC **	Rye
12	Mon 29 <sup>th</sup> Jun	Summer Meeting	Army Golf Club
13	Tue 7 <sup>th</sup> Jul	Chartered Surveyors	Hankley Common
14	TBC	RN	North Hants
15	Fri 17 <sup>th</sup> Jul	Littlestone GC **	Littlestone GC
16	TBC	R Sigs	Hankley Common
17	Mon 10 <sup>th</sup> Aug	RA Vets [60+]	New Zealand GC
18	30 <sup>th</sup> Sep / 1 <sup>st</sup> Oct	Autumn Meeting	Frilford Heath GC
19	6 <sup>th</sup> to 8 <sup>th</sup> Oct	RA	Sandwich
20	TBC	Past Presidents & Captains	Huntercombe GC
21	Wed 21 <sup>st</sup> Oct	Engr & Log Staff Corps	Effingham GC

**Swimming/Water Polo**

RE Inter-Unit Championships, Oct 15

RE Corps Training Camp, Nov 15

Inter-Corps Championships, Dec 15

Open water events at Boscombe Beach (Jun/Jul)

**Rugby League**

20 May 15 – RE v RA, Larkhill 1430hrs

**Football**

11 May 15 – RE v R Sigs – Blandford

13 May 15 – RE v REME – Blandford

15 May 15 – RE v RA – Blandford

**36. Useful Links**

Army Website (Royal Engineers): <http://www.army.mod.uk/royalengineers/26293.aspx#>

REA Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Royal-Engineers-Association>

RE Museum: <http://www.re-museum.co.uk/>

Institution of Royal Engineers: <http://www.instre.org/>

Sapper Shop: [www.sappershop.com](http://www.sappershop.com)

BD 75: <http://www.101erra.org/history/BD75.html>