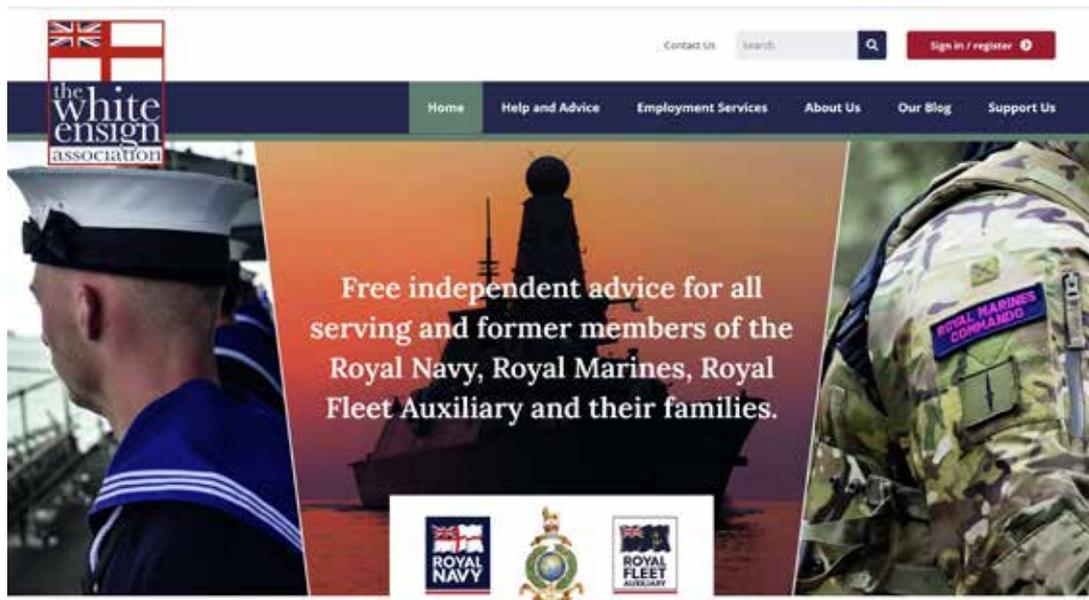


# newsletter

## *Welcome to the 16th Edition of The White Ensign Association's Newsletter*



Welcome to our summer newsletter. For those of you that regularly visit the [WEA website](#), you will now find a refreshed image and a more intuitive and hopefully, helpful, navigation method allowing you quicker and easier access to the information you need. This update of our on-line presence is only a small part of the investment the Association has made over the last year to enhance its suite of digital tools to improve both the client, and staff, experience. The development of the website is accompanied by the introduction of a new casework management system based on MS Dynamics which allows for seamless reporting and recording of data, greater information availability and perhaps most importantly much easier access for both our corporate and individual clients to the material they are searching for.

Alongside the investment in hardware we have also engaged in regular briefings to groups on Zoom and Teams and whilst we intend to return to our national programme of physical briefings and interviews as

COVID social distancing restrictions are relaxed, we will also continue to offer video lectures and individual sessions to those groups and individuals who find it more convenient to use this type of medium. Like, I suspect, many, we have emerged from the pandemic to adopt a hybrid working pattern, combining the best of what we did before March 2020 with the IT systems and practices that have kept so many in touch and productive, albeit remotely, in the subsequent 16 months.



I am optimistic that the resulting combination of both physical and digital options for client interaction, combined with the new support systems will offer all our beneficiaries, partners and supporters even better access to and assistance from the WEA.

Finally I am delighted to welcome three new trustees to the Council of Management. The charity is hugely fortunate that the distinguished QC Caroline Haughey, the eminent industrialist and chair of the Babcock International Group Ruth Cairnie, and the prominent shipping and asset finance lawyer Harry Theochari, have all generously agreed to serve on the trustee board and help guide and influence the strategic objectives and direction of the Association for the next few years.



**John Lavery**  
Chief Executive

*“Custodem Custodire”*  
Guarding the Quadrum

**MPGS | THE BRITISH ARMY**  
MILITARY PROVOST GUARD SERVICE



**IN NUMBERS**

Established

**24**  
years ago

Strength

**2851**

Maximum age for joining

**57**

Guard

**108** locations across the UK

Serve until

**60**

Days Annual Leave

**38**

Starting Salary

**£21,082**

**DID YOU KNOW**

- Soldiers serve on a Military Local Service Engagement
- Retain full-time Regular status
- Entitlement to accommodation, free health and dental care
- MPGS recruits from all 3 services (service leavers, transferees and re-joiners), and Reserves
- MPGS service is pensionable and you can retain your Immediate Pension

**DEFENCE CONNECT**

The MPGS group page contains links to all relevant documents on career, benefits, transfers and updates, (requires Defence Gateway login)



**FACEBOOK**

The Facebook MPGS Recruitment Group host live chats, post weekly vacancy lists, provide advice including posting Frequently Asked Questions

**RECRUITING NOW**



**CONTACT THE MPGS RECRUITMENT TEAM**



**ARMY**  
BE THE BEST



# babcock<sup>TM</sup>

## Be part of Something Big

The Marine Sector of Babcock International Group is continually evolving. We design and build complex naval platforms and marine systems, developing intellectual property for the future. Our Marine Engineering and Systems teams are experts in naval architecture, marine system engineering, electrical engineering design and provide project support services to the marine and defence markets worldwide. We have vast experience in engineering through life support for a wide range of front line naval and auxiliary support vessels.

We work on high-profile defence projects including the Type 31 Frigate Design & Build Programme and the Successor Submarine Programme, as well as providing engineering services to the UK Surface Ship and Submarine fleet. Opportunities include electrical engineering, structural design engineering and safety management.

**To find out more please visit**

<https://jobs.babcockinternational.com/>  
and search “Energy & Marine”

[Facebook Careers](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Babcock Careers](#)

If you would like to view current vacancies  
or sign up for job alerts please visit: [jobs.babcockinternational.com](https://jobs.babcockinternational.com)



## Engineer Surveyor – Pressure discipline

**Location:** Home based, across the UK

### Remuneration

- Highly Competitive salary
- Company Car or Car Allowance with Fuel Card
- Up to 12% Contribution Pension scheme
- Private Medical Cover
- Flexible benefits scheme



## BUILD ON YOUR EXPERIENCE

Develop your skills in the exciting world of inspections by putting your experience and qualifications to better use with a prestigious and rewarding inspection role within a global-leading organisation.

Be the embodiment of our goal “to make the world a safer place”. You could be working with some of the world’s most recognisable brands, helping to ensure compliance, improve safety and boost performance by inspecting lifting equipment to the latest standards.

All backed by a competitive salary, excellent benefits package and structured development programme from an award-winning employer.

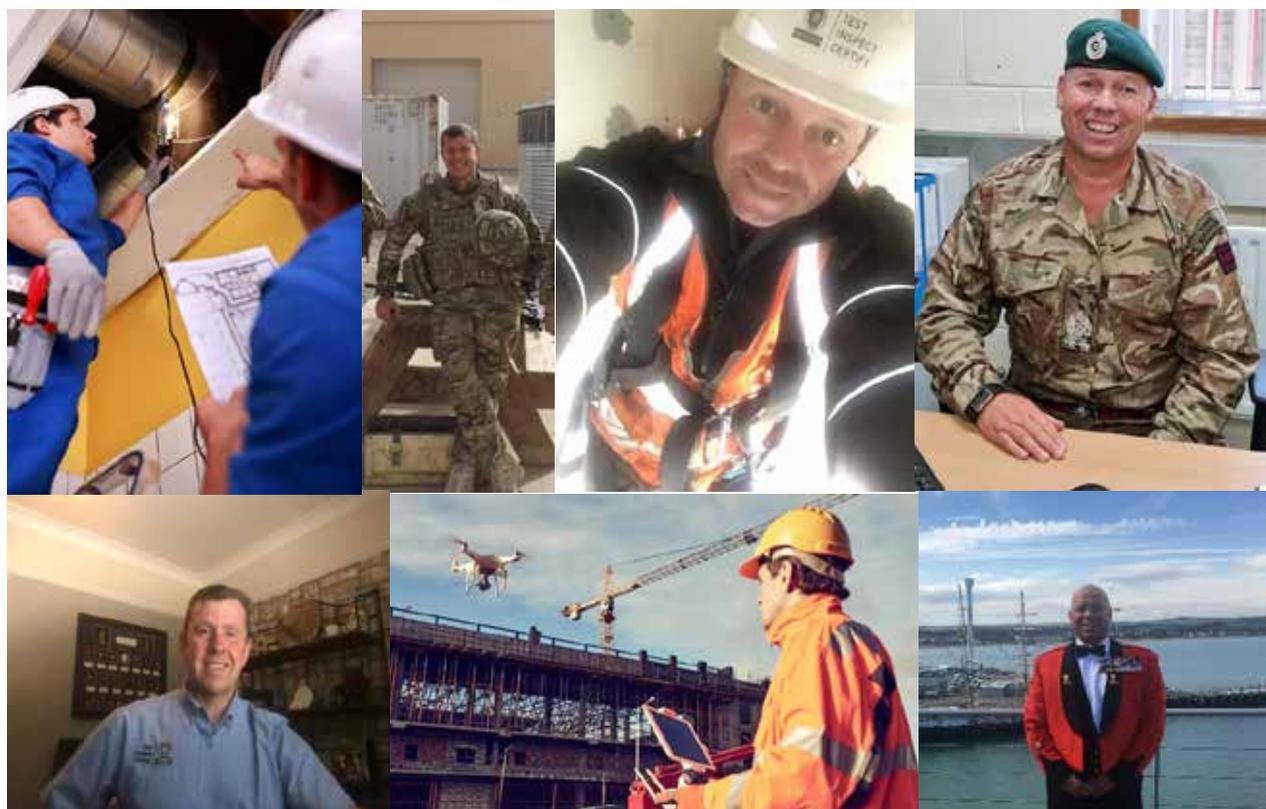
## JOIN FORCES

Bureau Veritas has worked closely with the Armed Forces and related charities for a number of years to help support the transition of ex-services personnel into civilian roles. We have built a structured strategic partnership with these organisations, which offers new career opportunities, practical work experience and training opportunities for those leaving the armed forces.

As part of this, we signed the Armed Forces Covenant in 2015, and became Gold engagement Award winner in 2016 which underlines our commitment to support the wider Armed Forces community and to recognise its contribution to the business and our country

The programme has developed with support from the WEA and in total, more than 100 ex-service personnel have completed their resettlement journey with a role at Bureau Veritas, while many more have been supported through work placements and/or advice.

The Royal Navy has a world leading reputation for training and development of individuals, Bureau Veritas wants to build on this expertise and transition your skills into a second career with Bureau Veritas.



## ROLE PURPOSE

To carry out high quality inspections ensuring various pressure equipment is compliant with current regulatory and statutory requirements. You will operate within agreed authorities, inspection and H&S standards with a clear customer focus and drive to achieve optimal service delivery. You will be working in a busy and varied client facing environment and will be expected to be customer focused and professional at all times.

## SERVICE & TECHNICAL EXCELLENCE

Responsibilities include:

- To carry out high quality, consistent and professional inspections, ensuring various pressure equipment is compliant with current regulatory and statutory requirements
- To produce and deliver inspection reports using Bureau Veritas's best in class tools for on-site reporting and immediate client access
- To keep abreast of changes in relevant standards and legislation, acting as an advisor to high-profile clients
- To deliver customer excellence, operating in the professional, friendly and authoritative manner expected of all client-facing Bureau Veritas surveyors

## **MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR ATTRIBUTES**

Candidate requirements include:

- Minimum NVQ3, HNC, HND or equivalent mechanical engineering qualification
- Minimum three to five years' relevant industry experience working with pressure vessels, steam pressure equipment, piping, air receivers and heat exchangers etc
- Current UK driving licence

Personal attributes required:

- Proven technical knowledge of pressure equipment
- Excellent customer service manner, with strong listening and interpersonal skills
- Ability to build lasting relationships with clients

## **PRESTIGE, SUPPORT & REWARDS**

Only Bureau Veritas can offer:

- Structured development programmes, from apprentice to chartered engineer, to help you fulfil your potential, including face to face and e-learning programmes
- The opportunity to deliver excellence for high profile clients, including some of the world's most recognised brands
- A long list of awards recognition including Top Employer seven years in a row and continued success in the RoSPA Occupational Health and Safety Awards

Plus:

- Comprehensive financial package including competitive salary and allowances, defined contribution pension, 33 days holiday including statutory, various insurances including Private Health Insurance and other flexible benefits to suit individual requirements

Please be aware that all roles within Bureau Veritas UK&I may require the successful pass of a DBS/credit check or attained relevant security clearances.

Bureau Veritas is an equal opportunity employer. No job applicant or employee shall receive less favourable treatment because of their gender, marital or civil partnership status, sexual orientation, colour, race, ethnic origin, religion, disability or age.

Bureau Veritas operates a strict Code of Ethics that ensures the proper conduct of our day-to-day business. Each employee or prospective employee of the Group must know and apply our Code of Ethics. Please visit the 'About Us' section of the website to view our Code of Ethics.

# *From the Royal Marines to Amazon*

*Ryan Wells – Royal Marine  
Engineer to Senior Maintenance  
Engineer with Amazon*

## *What did you do in the military?*

During my Service as a Royal Marines Commando (RM), I operated as a Viking vehicle mechanic for 2 tours of Afghanistan, I then moved to 40 Commando in Taunton where I was as a workshop Corporal. When deployed on my third tour to Sangin DC, I was in location with four engineers operating in the surrounding FOBs and PBs, on my fourth and final tour I ran the Workshop at FOB Ouellette maintaining a vehicle fleet, camp power distribution and worked with the guard commanders. I did this with one other RM and a mixed team of Army REME engineers and Tels tech. Prior to my departure, I was back working with the Royal Marines Viking and I was filling two roles in the support elements within the Engineering space; this was between retro fits, rebuilds and maintaining a deployable fleet, along with a standby and training fleet.

## *Why did you apply to Amazon?*

Due to injury sustained whilst training, I had to have half my right replaced with metal work meaning I could no longer function as a Royal Marnie's Commando or as a Vehicles Mechanic class 1, I was then subsequently medically discharged. I wasn't looking for a role at Amazon as I just thought that where civvies shop, However whilst at the Army Vs Navy rugby game, a lovely Scottish lady came over and said something about Amazon and "what do you do in the military?" I replied vehicles engineer, she said 'great' and thrust some paper in my pocket. My wife found this paper and submitted my application on my behalf as I didn't think I'd hit the prerequisites, this was for a Level 3 RME role at LTN1 (Luton - a site just 5 miles from my home at the time).



## *What role are you doing?*

My phone screen with Imran Khaliq (LV5 @LTN4) made me feel at ease and actually boosted my confidence for the role. He explained I'd have to do 4 x 45 minute interviews based on the STAR format, I was slightly perplexed because my research showed me that a Level 3 only needed 1 interview? I turned out that I had smashed the phone panel and Imran had bumped me up for the Level 4 role but sneakily didn't sort of tell me as he thought it may affect my confidence. This led to 4x45 minute interviews that again I did well on and got the role as a Senior Maintenance Technician at LTN4 (not the role I applied for but I couldn't be happier). In my role as Senior RME Technician, I lead other Engineering Technicians, design solutions for challenging problems, I manage outside contractors, am on call for emergencies, handle multiple projects and daily activities, and meet tough time lines. It's a varied, fast paced role!

***How did you find the recruitment process?  
Any advice for candidates?***

I found the process very informative and the teams were genuinely intrigued by my Service. They also understood that my last interview was 17 years ago in a careers office and they genuinely had an interest to help get me into the business. Many of the jobs are available through the military recruiting team and have 'military' in the title so they're easy to search for on [www.amazon.jobs](http://www.amazon.jobs).

The advice I would give someone is, give yourself time to de-militarise. I was medically discharged on a Wednesday and had the permissions to start working at Amazon the following Monday. In hindsight, at least 2 weeks off would have helped a lot with easing the stress on being MD'd and starting a whole new job in charge of a team of experienced engineers.

What have you learnt in your time at Amazon?  
Appreciate what we have to offer. Our experiences as military personnel give us skills that not many civilians really have. We tend to be a lot better at noticing changes in people in our immediate teams, I have also learnt that we're not "all singing, all dancing" and the

learning curve is very steep, hard and at times, almost infuriating, but once you become less military and relax into Civvi Street and the Amazon ways you will get on and realise how lucky we are to be at Amazon.

***What has been the biggest difference between the Military & Amazon?***

For me it is the people. Amazonians are so happy to be at work every day and they love to explore your ideas and develop them and you. For me at the end of my time in the military I was getting so frustrated with having great ideas for improvements and not having the time or resources to implement them.

***Useful links:***

Our events & more:

<https://amazonmilitaryeu.splashthat.com/>

Register for our Military Talent Pool:

<https://amazon-emea-military.splashthat.com/>

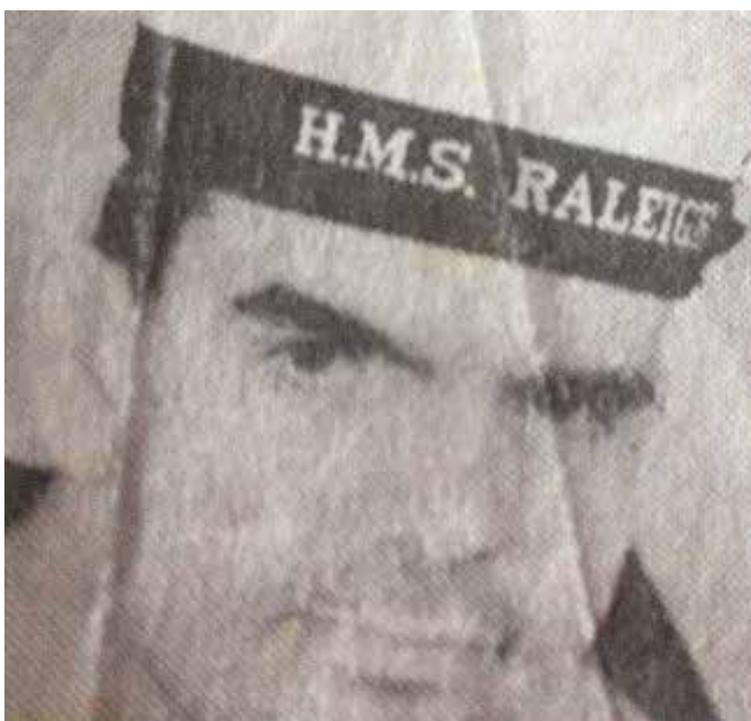
Eloise Cheales, UK Military Operations Recruiter:

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/eloisecheales/>





## *From the Forces to Fostering*



Wide eyed and ready for adventure Mike, aged 21, set off on an adventure with the Royal Navy. He signed up as a Radar Operator in 1989 and set sail on the high seas. His job allowed him to travel the world and recalls the adrenaline and fast pace of the job which included active service in the Gulf War.

The highs and lows of active service remain with him and the camaraderie and fun times, especially off shore, are recalled with great fondness. Mike hugely enjoyed his time in the Navy and worked up the ranks in his latter career enjoying supporting others to develop their skills and competencies. However, the call of a more stable life came when he met his current wife Rosemary. The need to put down firm roots and be together was strong and in 2008 Mike made the decision to leave the Navy after 19 loyal years.

When Mike left the Navy he was supported to gain his Heavy Goods Vehicle licence and has enjoyed stable employment as a truck driver since. Life was good. However, as he and his family matured his partner started to bring up the idea of fostering. Both Mike and Rosemary love children and felt that they had the emotional and physical availability to care for a young person that wasn't able to live with their birth family. In 2020 Mike and Rosemary approached The Children's Family Trust fostering agency asking questions about fostering and haven't looked back since. They were approved as foster carers late 2020 and were quickly united with a young person to fill their time and hearts. They are both still in the infancy of their fostering journey and the task is not without significant challenges. However, they are finding the role hugely rewarding and find joy watching their foster child develop and grow.

Mike has reflected on his past career and noted how many transferable skills he has taken from the Navy that help him navigate fostering. First and foremost he feels that being able to listen to advice and follow instructions is essential in both roles. Whether you are working as a team to manoeuvre a large ship or working out how best to respond to a traumatized child you need to listen to others and work together to get to your shared goal. Perseverance is also a shared skill as you need to be able to stick with things during both the good and bad times - whether that be getting to the end of a tour or working through the tantrums of the terrible twos; having the resilience to stick at things is a must. Being flexible and adaptable

is something that Mike learnt from having to be ready to galvanize himself at a moments notice to go to sea. Every foster child's journey is so different, as is their response to situations, so being accepting of these differences and coping with constant change of direction is hugely beneficial. Mike also identified that the skill of patience and humour - to remain positive when things are tough - is only a good thing when faced with difficult times and is as relevant in the Navy as it is in fostering. Routine and predictability are of course skills that are indoctrinated in the Navy, but this has in turn has led to him being able to offer stability to a child which needs it to feel safe and secure. Learning the skill of self care whilst away at sea for a long period is also relevant to fostering as being able to look after yourself both physically and emotionally is so important. If you are not well yourself then how can you be expected to look after someone else well? Team work is must both for the smooth running of a large ship as much as in a busy household and working with all the professionals involved in the life of a foster child means that multi agency working is essential. Finally Mike reflected that learning how to accept all the different cultures, races and religions that were present in the ships company has helped him become tolerant of different ways of doing things and therefore less judgemental of others. Again, this skill is so helpful in fostering as every child and their previous experiences of being parented are unique and need an individualised response.

The skills that Mike learnt in the Navy are significant and are demonstrable in his life's positive journey. He is thankful for the experiences he had and how they shaped him to be the person he is today. Mike would advise anyone who is thinking of fostering "to go for it". He feels that the benefits you can give to children are "phenomenal" and that the role "benefits you as well as the child". We are very thankful for people like Mike and Rosemary as there is a real need in the UK for foster carers and the unique job they do in our community. I

f you would like further information about fostering please visit our website [www.thecft.org.uk](http://www.thecft.org.uk) or call 01730 770750 to speak to one of our friendly team.





## Investing in the future.

As well as our highly experienced founders, who each have over 30 years' experience in the industry, RJC has developed a tightknit team of highly skilled engineers who deliver the very best Heating and Mechanical Services, Air Conditioning, Ventilation, and Electrical Services. We are continually investing in our team so that they get the most out of their careers and we can ensure you receive the very best solutions, workmanship, and quick turnarounds.



## Who We Are.

Since the foundation of RJC Mechanical & Electrical in 2018, we have quickly become a leading name in the mechanical engineering industry, specialising in the design, supply and installation of air conditioning, heating, plumbing and electrical services. Based in Fareham, Portsmouth, on the South Coast of England, we can provide our services nationwide and within a range of sectors, including defence, hospitality, retail, healthcare, government, and education.

To find out more about what we can offer your company, or to discuss your project's needs, contact RJC Mechanical & Electrical today on [0333 577 6645](tel:03335776645) or [info@rjcme.com](mailto:info@rjcme.com)

## Leaders in Mechanical Engineering.

Paving the way for better service, solutions, and workmanship in the mechanical engineering industry, RJC is built on honesty, professionalism, and commitment. Our excellent reputation precedes us throughout the industry, and it is our determination to deliver exactly what you need, on time and within budget, that has kept customers coming back to us time and again. It has also led to us being one of only two approved Samsung certified partners in the entire country, so you know when you choose RJC, you are partnering with the very best.

Our professional pride means we do not create problems; we solve them, and you can be sure we will always tell you exactly how it is, in order to deliver what you need.

## Our Services.

Specialising in large-scale mechanical and electrical services and air conditioning, from conceptual design to installation and aftercare support, RJC Mechanical & Electrical offers a complete range of services, including: Design, Air conditioning VRF/ splits, Heat pumps systems, Commercial heating systems, Air handling units, Ventilation & ductwork, Chiller systems.

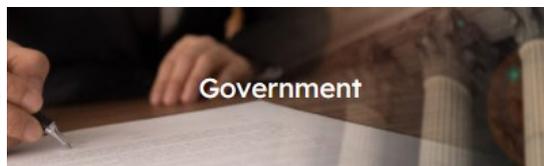
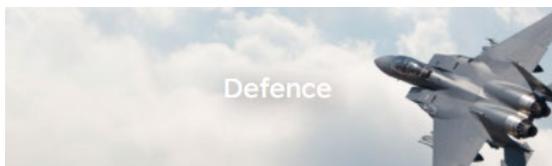
Working closely with you, our experienced team will find the best solution according to your needs, budget and timescale and deliver exactly what we say.

To discuss your project with a member of our experienced team, get in touch with the RJC team today.



## Who We Work With.

RJC has earned an outstanding reputation within the mechanical engineering industry for our reliability, expertise and delivering exactly what you need. This has led to us becoming the number one trusted mechanical, electrical and air conditioning partner for a variety of businesses and organisations in a range of different sectors, such as Defence, Government, Industry, Business, Retail, Health & Residential.



## Our Commitment to The Armed Forces Community.

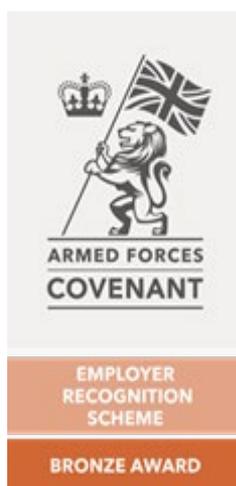
RJC (Mechanical) Ltd signed the Armed Forces Covenant in 2019 to show our commitment to honour the covenant and to support the Armed Forces Community.

At present 3 of our team are Armed Forces veterans – 2 Royal Navy and 1 Royal Airforce.

We recently entered an Employment Partnership with the White Ensign Association, so that we could develop a network which would give service leavers and veterans access to potential employment opportunities at RJC.

Part of our commitment is to actively consider members of the Armed Forces community in our selection and recruitment process, as we recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and military families contribute to our business and our country.

RJC (Mechanical) Ltd are also registered with the Career Transition Partnership (CTP).



**Dan Duncum -  
HVACR  
Trainee –  
(Former RN  
Engineer)**

*“The management and team at RJC were very welcoming and helped me to settle into my role quickly. My RN training helped me transition into civilian life, and the transferrable skills and knowledge gained allows me to help my colleagues especially when carrying out work on military establishments”.*

## Would you like to join the RJC team?

**As RJC (Mechanical) Ltd continue to grow, we are looking for enthusiastic and committed Electricians:**

- Must have experience within Industrial and Commercial sectors.
- 18th Edition certification is preferred - City & Guilds 2360 Part 1 & 2.
- City & Guilds 2391-52, or equivalent preferred but not essential.
- Hold a full valid UK driving license.
- Responsible for delivering electrical planned and small project works.
- A comprehensive understanding of Electrical Health and Safety regulations.
- Ability to effectively manage time and have a positive attitude.
- Good organisational skills.

**Neil Miller –  
HSEQ Manager  
(Former RN  
Chef)**

*“The transferrable skills that the RN provided me have enabled me to progress in my career as an HSEQ Manager. In my short time at RJC, the Management team have shown that they actively encourage and value the transferable skills of both myself and my fellow veteran employees.*

# *Brea Woods Army Days*



**Growth Hub**  
SWINDON & WILTSHIRE LEP



Having spent my entire life in a military family, which was something that I was incredibly proud of – so much so that I decided to pursue a career that would give something back to the Forces community, I joined the Army.

My father was in the Army, and I spent my whole childhood moving round to various postings that he was sent to, which was a total of 7. At the age of 14 and after 3 primary schools and 3 secondary schools, we finally settled in Stafford. I found excitement in moving, meeting new people, and starting something new but this was going to be our last move and that brought about new opportunities in staying in one location and building lifelong friendships.

After a few years and finishing secondary school, I was not sure what I wanted to do. Most of my friends were going to the local college but I had started to get the itch again, I wanted to go and meet new people and see something or somewhere different, so I enrolled at Stoke-On-Trent college on a GNVQ Health and Social Care course.

At the age of 18 I watched my brother leave home to go to the Army foundation college at Harrogate and start his Army career with the Royal Artillery. I loved hearing about his training stories, all the antics and the new friends he was making, (who would become his friends for life). This made me think about doing something like this for myself, couldn't be that tough, right?

I absolutely loved my 13 years of service in the Army, where I served in the Royal Corps of Signals, and was fortunate to get many postings and attachments, including 7 months in Tampa Bay. But when redundancies were being made, I had the opportunity to volunteer to take it and see where my next journey would take me, and what a journey these past 8 years have been!

I was able to use my enhanced learning credits to go to Staffordshire University, where I studied and gained a First-Class Hons in Events Management, I also stayed on and completed a Masters in Digital Marketing Management. During these 4 years of study, I found the skillset gained from the Army was extremely transferable and enabled me to work 3 jobs around my studies, all whilst volunteering at many events across the County, to gain valuable experience within the events and marketing sector.

My final posting was in Bulford, Wiltshire and I honestly did not think I would be living back in Wiltshire 8 years on, but here I am, working as a Project Manager - Peer Networks, at the Swindon and Wiltshire Growth Hub. Making a genuine difference is what motivates me and being able to do that in your everyday role helps you get up in the morning with a spring in your step.

This role allows me to draw on all my skillsets that I not only gained in the Army but what I learned and developed by being a Pad Brat. Peer Networks is a national peer-to-peer networking programme for SME leaders who want to grow and develop their organisation for future success and allows business owners & senior managers from within their market sector to collaboratively work through common business issues or challenges that have been brought on by the impacts of Covid-19.

Through project management skills, I create diverse cohorts of 11 business leaders from the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) region, who will interact through action learning discussions, to gain and reflect on valuable feedback and implement practical solutions.

When I took redundancy all those years ago, I had many say to me that it was wrong and I should have stayed in the Army, few said I would find it hard in Civi Street and others said you cannot transfer your skills. It was hard, yes it was challenging but we are trained in the Armed Forces to be agile and adapt to our surroundings, work in teams, problem solve and communicate at every opportunity. The support is out there, we just need to ask for it.



ST. JAMES'S PLACE  
ACADEMY

[www.sjp.co.uk/academy](http://www.sjp.co.uk/academy)

## CHANGE YOUR CAREER... NOT YOUR SKILLS

Leadership. Discipline. Communication.

The skills you acquired to become an officer or NCO within the Royal Navy or Royal Marines are shared by many of our Academy graduates. The St. James's Place Academy provides a two-year career change opportunity for outstanding military officers and NCOs, with no previous experience of delivering financial advice, to become qualified financial planners. Use your skills to build and manage your own successful financial planning and wealth management business or join one of our many established St. James's Place Practices as an Adviser. You will be backed by a FTSE 100 company and one of the UK's leading and most prestigious wealth management firms, St. James's Place Wealth Management.

To find out how we can help you take control of your future career,  
email [sjpacademyuk@sjp.co.uk](mailto:sjpacademyuk@sjp.co.uk) or visit [www.sjp.co.uk/academy](http://www.sjp.co.uk/academy)

# The Royal Agricultural University



The [Royal Agricultural University](#) (RAU), based in Cirencester UK, has been at the forefront of agricultural education and a key contributor to the land-based sector for 175 years.



They have a long history of supporting the armed forces & are an approved [ELCAS learning provider](#), offering a number of [undergraduate](#), [postgraduate](#) and short courses covering subjects such as business, agriculture, equine and real estate, which may be of interest to service leavers.

They are also proud to pledge their support to members of the Armed Forces by signing the Armed Forces Covenant; read more [here](#).

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact [opendays@rau.ac.uk](mailto:opendays@rau.ac.uk).



# LCpl Green RN to MPGS



When I left school at 16 years old, I decided to join the Royal Navy as the option of travelling the world whilst getting paid for it was very appealing at the time. It did not disappoint; I had some great runs ashore and met friends for life that I'm still very much in touch with.

After 6 years of Service my partner and I decided that we wanted to start a family. I wanted to be a full time mum, so I made the decision to leave and went on to have two boys.

I got a part time job in retail when the boys went to school, the hours worked well as I would always be there to drop them off and pick them up from school. It wasn't very challenging though and I was quite bored, so I knew it would not be my 'forever' job.

Unfortunately, things didn't work out for me and my partner, so we decided to split and all of a sudden, I found myself alone with two children to bring up (wasn't in the plan) which left me quite anxious about the future.

I heard about the MPGS through a friend, so I decided to look into it. I got quite excited by the thought of the job because of all the benefits and it was like a snippet of my old life but still being there for my children (perfect). I was pretty

disappointed when I was told that I had been out of the service too long to re-join! There was an option though of joining the reserves for three years, I could get in this way. That is what I did, I joined the Royal Artillery Reserves and transferred over to the MPGS when I reached the 3-year mark. I found the transition to be very quick once I put my papers in, it only took about 3 weeks for me to transfer across to the MPGS.

There is a RM base in my hometown so this was perfect, it means that I have lots of support regarding childcare with family. This has made working shifts a lot easier and I know my roster up to a year in advance as well as knowing I'm not going to deploy anywhere! The 4 days/4 nights and then 4 days off also means I get plenty of quality time with my boys and the 38 days leave a year is very appealing too as I can plan to be off in the school holidays and I don't feel like I miss out. I was still in the family home at the time I applied to transfer to the MPGS but the move across meant that I was entitled to a married quarter, so that was a big weight off my mind knowing that I had somewhere to go. The rent is very affordable, which has allowed me to save for a deposit for my own home.

I found myself the only female soldier at my site. Although initially daunting, I think I fit in well with my peers and I find it helps with healthy competition when it comes to the training. When it comes to the fitness test I train hard to ensure I'm not at the back on any runs and I can definitely beat a few of them now! There is plenty of banter about that.

I have been in the MPGS for 4 years now and I've reached the age where I'm thirsty to start learning more. This job has lots of opportunities for you to do this and there is plenty of funding available too; bonus!! I picked up promotion last year and I feel my own personal development has come on leaps and bounds and I am excited about my future in the MPGS.

# *The I do's and don'ts of divorce law in Scotland*

Thorntons Family Law helps you with clear, expert legal advice on all family law matters. Through our network of offices, our team is on hand to ensure you understand the choices for your situation and the likely costs, helping deliver the best outcomes for you and your family.

Some of us love reading about celebrity divorce cases – they can give us a glimpse into the lives of the rich and famous. However, if you're in Scotland you should be wary of what you see in the press, because divorce law in Scotland is very different from that in England and Wales. Don't assume that what you read about English law will apply north of the border.

There are lots of areas where the two systems diverge. These are just some of them.

## ***No fault divorce***

There was a long running campaign spearheaded by the English family lawyers' association, Resolution, to introduce no fault divorce. This was eventually successful and the new rules are expected to come into force in England and Wales in the Autumn.

The sole ground for divorce in Scotland and England is the same – irretrievable breakdown of the marriage. The facts required to prove irretrievable breakdown are the also the same, with one crucial variation. Currently, to be divorced in England you must prove that your marriage has broken down irretrievably, because of one party's adultery, unreasonable behaviour or desertion, or because you have lived apart for two years (or five years if one spouse doesn't agree to the divorce). However, in Scotland the separation periods are different - one year if both spouses agree to divorce, or two years if they don't. These periods were reduced from two and five years in 2006. (At the same time desertion was also abolished as it was considered to be an anachronistic and obsolete concept.) The result was dramatic and the difference is not just a small matter of numbers - 60% of divorces in England and Wales are on fault-based grounds (adultery or unreasonable behaviour). By contrast, in Scotland over 90% of divorces are on one or other of the separation grounds, which undoubtedly reduces the potential for increased conflict and acrimony, which was the primary driving factor in Resolution's campaign to change the law in England.

When the new English rules come into effect there will not longer be any need to prove blame and it will be possible for couples to apply for divorce jointly simply by telling the court that they agree that their marriage has broken down irretrievably. This will undoubtedly be a huge improvement on the old fault based rules.

## ***Timing and clean breaks***

In Scotland the financial arrangements between spouses must be resolved before divorce is granted. The money side of things is sorted out by agreement, or if that isn't possible by the court. Only after that is done can divorce be granted, which makes divorce absolutely the final line drawn under the marriage. By contrast, the grant of divorce in England can come before the financial settlement.

## ***Matrimonial property and splitting it***

In Scotland the concept of matrimonial property is crucial. This simply doesn't arise in English law. The Scottish regime aims to define the assets to be divided on divorce and distinguish them from assets belonging to the spouses as individuals. In England, there is much more of a focus on the parties' needs and the courts have a much wider discretion to make orders which meet them. The plus of the Scottish system is that it produces certainty, but often at the expense of flexibility and the ability to account for future needs.

Lucy Metcalf is a specialist family law Solicitor at Thorntons. Thorntons offers a 10% discount to clients referred to us by WEA. If you would like to discuss any of the issues raised in the article, please contact Lucy.



Lucy Metcalf  
Family Law Partner  
Email: [lmetcalf@thorntons-law.co.uk](mailto:lmetcalf@thorntons-law.co.uk)  
Telephone: 0131 225 8705.



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The White Ensign Association was created almost 60 years ago in a collaboration between senior figures in the City of London and the Board of the Admiralty, and the makeup of its council of trustees today still very much reflects its maritime and financial roots with a mix of influential figures from the City and distinguished retired senior officers. They charge the small staff of the WEA with the performance of four key roles in support of serving and former members of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, and their families:

- Guidance and advice on the transition from a career and life in the Royal Navy to one out of uniform.
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Tel: 0207 407 8658

email: [office@whiteensign.co.uk](mailto:office@whiteensign.co.uk)