

THE BLYTHE SAPPERS
MINUTES OF THE 18TH ANNUAL COUNCIL
MEETING
WEDNESDAY 29th MAY 2013

Present:	Sapper H Walker	Chairman 2013
	Sapper W Woodburn	Vice Chairman
	Sapper S Robinson	Chairman Elect 2014
	Sapper I Pearce	
	Sapper SGH Sinclair	
	Sapper G Sinclair	
	Sapper D Hamilton	Honorary Auditor
	Sapper RF Wilsher	
	Sapper J Evans	
	Sapper C Peacey	
	Sapper J Lewins	
	Sapper M Muller	
	Sapper J Tabener	
	Sapper J Evans	
	Sapper W Shackell	
	Sapper C Holman	
	Sapper C Bouwens	
	Sapper J R McLennan	Honorary Secretary

Chairman Sapper Hooky Walker welcomed all to the BS Council to the 2013 Council Meeting. He gave an extra warm welcome to Sapper Roy Wilsher to his first Council Meeting and thanked him for his years of work as treasurer in the past.

Item 1. Apologies. Received from Sappers J Moore-Bick, D Dennington, G Charlesworth, J Fitzmaurice, E Yarrow, B Pearce and Sapper P Clayton.

Item 2. Approval of the Minutes of 17th BS Council 2012. No comments had been received and the Minutes were duly signed and approved.

Carried

Item 3. Matters Arising. There were No Matters Arising.

Item 4. Summary of Decisions Taken by BS Management Committee

1. **BS Adventurous & Challenging Pursuits Fund.** The Chairman informed Council that there had been very little activity in the Fund as the Corps is so busy that not many exercises had required BS help. The Corps has sufficient funds (£3K) held and approved by Corps Colonel for the year if required.
2. **BS Honorary Treasurer.** Sapper Peter Clayton has taken over as Honorary Treasurer. The Chairman thanked Sapper Roy Wilsher for his endeavours over the years. It was confirmed that an arrangement for Internet Banking had been approved with the Clydesdale Bank.
3. **BS Charity Grants 2012.** The Hon Sec informed the meeting that Grants had been made to the following charities as approved by the BS Management Committee: Forces Children's Trust (£500), Army Widows Association (£1K), The Not Forgotten Association (1K).
4. **BS Sponsored Talk to Troop Commanders.** Bs sponsored a talk for the Troop Commanders that gave the opportunity to extol the virtues of BS to a younger group of the Corps. The talk went well and there could be more events in the future.
5. **Chairman's BS Representation.** The Chairman informed the meeting of his and the Hon Sec representation at the Final of the Corps Association Football Final, The Blythe Sappers Cup between 39 Engr Regt v 36 Engr Regt. He will be representing the BS at the 125th Anniversary of the Corps Team winning the FA Cup.

Item 5 SOFA Accounts 2012. The "independently reviewed" Accounts 2012 had been circulated prior to the meeting for information and approval.

Proposal: That the 2012 Accounts be put to the AGM 2013 for adoption.

Proposer: Sapper Stuart Sinclair

Seconder: Sapper John McLennan

Carried

The 2012 Accounts are attached to these Minutes **at Annex A**

Item 6. Review of Reports by Corps Colonel.

The most recent Corps Report is attached to these Minutes **at Annex B**

Item 7. Discussion on Chairman 2014 & 2015 & 2016. Council was informed of the various discussions that had taken place about the selection for Chairmen over the coming years. It was confirmed that Sapper Scott Robinson would be Chairman 2014 and Sapper Alasdair Wilson had agreed to be Chair 2015. Sapper I Pearce raised the topic of the selection of “Principal Guests” and offered assistance in suggesting names who could be invited. It was further agreed that it was the sole responsibility of the Chairman to choose and invite his Principal Guest for each of the BS Lunches.

Item 8. Attendance Arrangements for the May Lunch. There would be 90 attending this Lunch with 19 Guests. It was noted that some of the Senior Ranked Sappers are being invited and encouraged to join the Blythe Sappers.

Item 9. Any Other Business.

- a. The Chairman encouraged attendance at the BS Guest Night at the RE HQ Mess on 27th July. The Chairman thanked Sapper Larry Inge for his negotiating with the staff at Chatham for a good price and terms for the evening -- he encouraged all to attend.
- b. The provisional dates for the next Council meeting is Wednesday 28th May 2014
- c. Other dates for 2014 are as follows: 26 Feb, 28 May, 26 Jul (Guest Night), 25 Sept, 4 Dec.
- d. The Chairman wished to encourage all Members to be aware of the need to recruit new members into the BS. Council endorsed this encouragement.
- e. The Chairman informed the Council of the changeover of Honorary Secretary. Sapper John McLennan is to hand over the post to Sapper Carel Bouwens after the BS AGM in Sept. Council was informed that this arrangement had been agreed by BS Management Committee and sort the approval of this Council Meeting.

Agreed

Council gave a vote of thanks to the current Chairman and to the Honorary Secretary for much hard work over their tenure. It was gratefully received.

Prepared for Audit and the Management Meeting
To be held on 27 February 2013
at the Army Navy Club

THE BLYTHE SAPPERS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES



Year ended 31 December 2012

INCOME & EXPENDITURE

INCOMING RESOURCES	Notes	2012	2011
Lunches Fees		21,184.00	23,161.51
Lunch Refunds		-	
Dinner Fees		4,471.00	4,700.00
Subscriptions		3,330.00	3,265.00
Overpaid Subscriptions		-	30.00
Joining Fees	1	230.00	90.00
Sweepstake Ticket Sales		936.00	1,167.00
Donations to Adv & CP Fund		-	-
Bank Interest		-	-
Charity Grants:- AWA, FCT, VA		-	-
Donations & Honorariums	2	193.00	173.50
Debtor		-	-
TOTAL		30,344.00	32,587.01
RESOURCES EXPENDED			
Lunches		19,833.80	22,259.50
Lunch Refunds		736.00	324.00
Guest Night Dinner costs	3	4,656.58	4,285.74
Guests Lunches/Dinner	4	756.00	648.00
Dinner Refunds		-	126.00
Refund Subscriptions		-	-
Sweepstake Prizes		300.00	300.00
Charity Grants - AWA, FCT, VA	5	2,500.00	3,000.00
Sundries	6	704.28	69.81
Grants/Honorarium: Adv & CP Fund	7	-	150.00
Committee Exp/Room Hire		745.74	409.18
Treasurer Expenditure	8	347.11	134.91
Secretary Expenditure	8	548.85	337.38
TOTAL		31,128.36	32,044.52
Net Incoming/ (Outgoing) Resources for the Year		784.36	542.49
Net movement in funds		784.36	542.49
Balance as at 01 January		5,450.85	
		4,666.49	542.49
Adjustment		54.00	9.30
Balance as at 31 December		4,720.49	551.79

All income and expenditure arises from the continuing activities of The Blythe Sappers. There are no recognised gains or losses in the current or preceding year other than shown above.

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THE BLYTHE SAPPERS

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2012

2012 **2011**

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash at Clydesdale Bank **4,720.49** **551.79**

DEBTORS

NET ASSETS **4,720.49**

Bank Reconciliation
Statement as at 31 December 2012 -
As shown in account **4,720.49** -

Approved by The Blythe Sappers Management Committee
at the Management Committee Meeting on 27 February 2013
and signed on the behalf of the Committee by:

Harold Walker

SAPPER SIR HAROLD WALKER KCMG
Chairman

Roy F Wilsher

SAPPER ROY WILSHER
Honorary Treasurer

Originals signed:

DATED 27 FEBRUARY 2013

26/02/2013

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
Year ended 31 December 2012

ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Accounting Convention

The accounts are prepared under the historical cost convention. Income and expenditure has been accounted for on an accruals basis.

Fund accounting

The Blythe Sappers Association's funds comprise general unrestricted funds that are dispensable at the discretion of the Council in furtherance of the objectives of The Blythe Sappers. Such funds may be held in order to finance both working capital and capital investments.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE COUNCIL AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

No Council or Committee Members, nor connected person or party, received any remuneration from The Blythe Sappers during the current or preceding year.

NUMBERED NOTES

1. **Joining Fees.** 23 New members
2. **Donations.** From Blythe Sappers, Walker, Lloyd-Owen, Fitzmaurice, Dove plus 3 no. RIP
3. **Guest Night** costs were above the contractors original estimates.
4. **Guest Lunches.** Four Guest Speakers and Hon Sec and Hon Treas's lunches
5. **Grants.** Forces' Childred's Trust, Army Widows Association, Not Forgotten Association
6. **Sundries.** Purchase of ten salvers, engraving of one salver, place cards, Tao Everest teas.
7. **Adv and CP Fund Grant. / Honorarium**
 - a. In 2012 there was no allocation to the Blythe Sappers' Adventurous and Challenging Pursuits Fund
 - b. The total donated to the Fund to date is £31,950 (2009 £31,950).
 - c. Three A&CP applications were approved in 2010, grants totalling £1063.00 were made.
 - d. The balance of the Fund granted to RECCT as at 31 Dec 12 stood at £3726.40
8. **Hon Sec and Hon Treasurer expenditure.** Travel, postage, copying, stationery, Website maint.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

I have examined the accounts for the year 2012 together with supporting papers. I am satisfied that the accounts have been properly maintained and that the foregoing statement of income and expenditure gives a true and fair view of the transactions during the year and of the financial state of affairs of The Blythe Sappers as at 31 December 2012.

Original signed by:

David N Hamilton

Date: 27 February 2013

SAPPER DAVID N HAMILTON MBE
Hon Independent Examiner

20 May 13

8 Force Engineer Brigade Report to the Corps June 2013 (Abridged)

G3 OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY

OP HERRICK

1. **Overview.** Afghanistan remains Defence's Main Effort and significant progress continues to be made by the ANSF (Afghan National Security Forces). As a result the UK has been able to cease mentoring at the Tolay (company) level. In 2013 mentoring at the Kandak (battalion) and District levels for the Afghan National Army and Police respectively will also cease. This will leave mentors solely at the Brigade and Province level by the end of 2013. The success of the ANSF in assuming the lead role in delivering security in Helmand province will allow, on current planning, British troop levels to reduce to around 5,200 by the end of 2013 as announced by the Prime Minister last December.
2. **Redeployment.** In parallel to Transition, Redeployment has now formally begun, with Reverse Supply Chain facilities in Camp Bastion complete and initial trial 'proof of principle' movements undertaken. It is planned to redeploy materiel by a combination of air, road, land and sea, and rail movement. By the end of 2014 the UK will have completed its combat role in Afghanistan, although there will still be a small residual presence to assist our Afghan partners. It is anticipated that Afghan, US and NATO plans for enduring operations will continue to mature this year, which will allow the UK to confirm its longer term commitment in detail, centred in Kabul at the Afghan National Army Officers' Academy and other key locations.
3. **Engr Wks Gp.** The Engr Wks Gp has begun to reduce as the Helmand Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) has also decreased in size. Afghan Assistant Supervisory Officers (ASOs) have started to replace the RE NCOs undertaking this role in overseeing contractor construction work, and UK ASO numbers will be reduced through 2013. The Infrastructure surges (Ops TETHYS (Irrigation), IODINE (Water), VESICA (Fuels), FARADAY (Power), CASTRA (FP) and EUNOMIA (ISP Oversight)) are now approaching their last iterations and are increasingly focussed on rationalising the UK infrastructure estate. As the UK looks towards longer term tasks in Kabul, so the Engr Wks Gp effort has also begun to switch with an increasing number of tasks outside of the Helmand Area of Operations.
4. **TFH Engr Gp and EOD&S TF.** The major C2 change in mid 2013 will be the merger of the Task Force Helmand (TFH) Engr Gp and the EOD&S TF during Op HERRICK 18. The remaining number of EOD&S teams and ANSF CIED mentors will form a single EOD&S Sqn within the Engr Gp. ANSF CIED capability development continues to progress and the ANSF now hold a significant number of Explosive Hazard Reduction Teams (EHRT) and IEDD teams across the various ANSF branches. This is a significant step forward in ANSF capability allowing for a reduction in the number of UK BRIMSTONE teams deployed. The

reduction in overall troop numbers and bases will also result in there being a requirement for only one CS Engr Sqn in theatre by the end of 2013. Base Realignment and Closure/Transition (BRAC/T) has dominated the workload of the TFH Engr Gp during recent months, with UK bases in Helmand now reduced significantly. Those remaining are mainly the larger level 3 bases, which will be closed through the remainder of 2013 and into 2014. However, the recent emphasis on Force Protection has seen an additional Op CASTRA surge deploy and as the BRAC/T workload has reduced, the Force Protection workload has increased significantly implementing their recommendations. By the end of the year HQ TFH will relocate from Lashkar Gar to Bastion, including the HQ elements of TFH Engr Gp.

5. **RE Geo Sp Gp.** RE Geo elements within HQ TFH and JF Sp(A) will reduce and merge to form a single team at Camp Bastion during Op HERRICK 18. UK Geo elements within HQ RC(SW) will also reduce, with greater synergy across all elements within Camps Leatherneck and Bastion and investment in the Afghan Regional Corps Battle School (RCBS) for the continued training and development of the ANSF.

6. The Op HERRICK GeoViewer continues to provide access to 'live' data from the OVERTASK RE Intelligence Application (ORIENT) database, widely exploited by BGEs, Int Offrs and MSSTs.

7. **Slowed Tour Rotations.** As the Afghan Campaign draws to a close, there will be slowed tour rotations for some Force Elements, resulting in longer deployments of up to nine months. This is likely to include the TFH Engr Gp and some EOD&S elements. Further details such as the level of individual roulement within units are still being refined.

OTHER COMMITMENTS

8. **Op VOCATE (Libya).** The UK remains committed to the development of the Libyan armed forces. 29 EOD&Search Gp will deploy a Short Term Training Team (STTT) and project manager in support the development of Libyan CIED and EOD&Search capabilities.

9. **Op VERDITER (Pakistan).** The Corps continues to support the delivery of CIED and EOD&Search development in Pakistan through the deployment of STTTs.

10. **Op NEWCOMBE (Mali).** The UK has assisted French, Ghanaian and Nigerian Forces to deploy into Mali using C17 aircraft, and provided ISTAR support. The Army has also deployed an Infantry Training Team as part of the longer term EU Training Mission to assist the Malian Armed Forces. 29 EOD&Search Gp supported these operations with Ammunition Technicians to inspect and consign ammunition for the follow on forces.

11. **Op BACKWELL (Somalia).** The Army continues to provide assistance to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) through a small team of military stabilisation, intelligence, communications and infrastructure specialists.

12. **Op TOSCA (Cyprus).** 28 Engr Regt will undertake Op TOSCA as the main deploying unit from Oct 13-Mar 14. The E1 RE commitment of five personnel continues to rotate between 1 (UK) Div and 3 (UK) Div Engr Gps (DEG).

13. **Op KIPION (Middle East).** Support provided to AIR assets across the Middle East region by 12 (Air Sp) Engr Gp. This area is likely to grow over the coming months with increasing emphasis on the Broader Middle East for both redeployment of materiel from Op HERRICK under Op CATALINA, and in support of the UK government strengthening of partnerships in the Middle East.

14. **Falkland Islands.** No change. The RE commitment is for a Maintenance Team of eleven personnel managed centrally by APC Glasgow.

15. **Kenya.** The Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) in Kenya continues to be the focus for the Joint Force Enabling exercises (JFEs). More on the specifics can be found in the G7 element of this report.

16. **Upstream Capacity Building (UCB).** Multiple in-roads are being made into UCB through: the work of the DfID Liaison Officer providing subject matter advice and deployments to East Africa in support of DfID; ongoing MSSG deployments (including the planned deployment to Chile for Ex CIVIL BRIDGE 13B); 170 (Infra Sp) deployment to Sierra Leone on a well drilling task in support of IMATT; the support of charity organisations such as the Prince's Foundation where 12 (Air Sp) Gp recently deployed artisan tradesmen into the local community to assist in a charity project; and participation in overseas exercises such as Ex AJEYA WARRIOR, an Anglo/Indian exchange exercise supported by Infrastructure and EOD specialists.

17. **International Engagement.** The renewed emphasis on Defence Engagement and partnering has reinvigorated the relationship with our closest military partners. The established Bonds of Friendship between UK Sapper Regiments and their French equivalents is part of this and the relationships have been adjusted in line with A2020 roles. This area is expected to grow along with opportunities to strengthen bonds with France as well as the US and other countries such as Denmark, where we have built valuable relationships during operational deployments over the last 10 years.

G5

18. **Knowledge Management.** A Corps Knowledge Management working group has been established to provide a forum for sharing best practice and 8 Bde guidance to RE unit info managers. This and the preservation of the Corps Back Brief beyond Op HERRICK are steps currently being taken towards ensuring that the Corps is a learning organisation.

19. **A2020.** The decision to delete sub-Units this year was a necessary evil that has put the Corps in a better place to weather the effects of Tranche 3 Redundancy. The Corps has already taken some significant steps to integrate the Reserve through Hybrid Regiments and wholly transferring the Wide Wet Gap crossing capability to the Reserves.

G7 Training Activity

20. **Reserves.** Precursor activity to ensure the Reserves are integrated appropriately with their future Regular counterparts has occurred to pre-empt Reserve growth and maintain seed corn capabilities. Opportunities for Regular / Reserve collective training integration include deployments of Sect to Tps on FTXs, JFEs and plant concentrations to BATUK, BATUS and Cyprus.

21. **Force Sp Construction Tasks.** The first RE Construction Working Group sat at the end of May 13 to deal specifically with the growth and maintenance of sufficient HFT Force Support Engineering training opportunity. It collated customer aspirations for military design and military construction that are of mutual training benefit and economic value to a range of customers (DTE, PJOs, Sp Comd, BATUK, Charities and non-profit organisations). Forward programming design work for 2014

– 2016 and construction work for 2015 – 2017 will seek to generate up to 10 CT2 Joint Force Enabling Exercises (JFEs) per year.

22. **Ex LION STAR.** 71 Engr Regt and R Mon RE (M) deployed individuals to Cyprus to deliver the construction tasks funded for British Forces Cyprus.

G1

23. **Army Redundancy Tranche 3 (T3).** The Army announced the Tranche 3 redundancy selections on 18 Jun 13. T3 has been designed to ensure it underpins the future structural integrity of the Army.

24. **Deaths.** The following members of the Corps have died since the last report:

Ser	Rank	Name	Unit	Date of Death	Remarks
(a)	(b)	(c)	(e)	(f)	(g)
1	Spr	Richard Walker	28 Engr Regt	7 Jan 13	KIA – Insider attack shot by a member of the ANA
2	Cpl	Colin Clark	42 Engr Regt	31 Jan 13	Non Operational Death
3	SSgt	Gary Hill	101 Engr Regt	27 Mar 13	Non Operational Death
4	LCpl	G Coleman	22 Engr Regt	10 Apr 13	Non Operational Death
5	WO2	John Marley	BATUK Nairobi	26 Apr 13	Non Operational Death
6	Spr	Josh Thomas	1 RSME	29 Apr 13	Non Operational Death

G4 Engineer Logistics.

25. **Overview.** There has been significant progress into how the Corps conducts future engineer logistic business ranging from current operations to Joint Force Enabling Exercises (JFEE) and looking ahead to A2020 and the restructuring of Engineer Logistic Nodes within HQ & Sp Sqns. The main work strands are:

a. Doctrine. Starting with the development of the Engineer Logistic Concept of Operations and Concept of Employment, a review of doctrine is underway. Engineer Logistic Guidance Notes (ELGNs) have been produced and published. ELGNs have replaced Engineer Logistic Policy Statements (ELPS).

b. Personnel. There is a manning shortfall at Engineer Logistic JNCO level. To date there are insufficient Logistic Specialists qualified for promotion to Lance corporal. This is being addressed through the provision of more PNCO Cadre places.

c. Equipment. With the return to ‘Contingency’, it has been identified that current operational stocks may not be fit for future requirements. Engineer units, currently held at readiness, are in the process of identifying tasks that they will be required to or are likely to achieve on various types of deployment. Once all tasks have been ratified by this HQ, Special Purpose Operational Stocks (SPOS) will be generated and endorsed at the agreed level of readiness for future deployments.