



Independent Advisory Panel (IAP)

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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IAP Chair's Forward



I am delighted once again to write the introduction to this year's Annual Report of the Independent Advisory Panel (IAP) at the Army Foundation College, Harrogate (AFC(H)).

The aim of the IAP is to provide an independent, non-statutory source of advice, challenge, and support to the AFC(H); to hold the commanding officer and his senior leadership team to account and support them in their continual aim to improve the lived experience of the Junior Soldiers (JS) whilst in training. We are proud, as an independent body of volunteer and unpaid civilians, of the role we play in supporting the JS and instructors by bringing a 'fresh pair of eyes' and a 'critical friend' approach to the Army's safeguarding and duty of care to them all.

Throughout the year we have observed the tremendous effort, hard work and support the instructors put into turning the lives of recruits, many of whom come from a wide section of society and often bring with them a huge breadth and depth of issues, from civilians into respectful, well trained junior soldiers. We particularly notice how much the JS mature during their time at the College, how they become confident and proud of what they have achieved. Graduating successfully at the end of their courses they are ready and equipped to progress their Army careers.

The IAP has unfettered access to the college, and during 2024 we have visited the college over 100 times, with 39 visit reports being generated. Throughout the year panel members have spoken to JS and instructors in different parts of the college, in the chaplaincy, the education block, in Company lines where the JS sleep, in the dining facilities, and on field exercises (where a panel member stayed overnight) to name a few. We report on what we observe and in our discussions with JS and military personnel. The success of the IAP role is largely dependent upon JS and instructors flagging any issues as and when the IAP meets with them and to the openness and transparency of the Army in their response to any issues raised and their keenness to understand, learn and improve.

Our regular visits demonstrate that JS are well-informed about how to access help and are encouraged to do so without hesitation. The IAP welcomes the recent introduction of a welfare QR code mechanism which JS can scan and use to report welfare concerns if they do not feel confident to do so face to face. Scanning the QR code on a welfare keyring, given to all JS, and completing the short form, results in the selected member of staff receiving an email, after which they will seek out the JS who needs help. We look forward to observing how this initiative continues to develop.

In our opinion the college takes its safeguarding and duty of care responsibilities very

seriously. Such is the seriousness with which this is taken that the Commanding Officer personally briefs all new JS, and all members of staff to re-affirm at least twice annually, at the start of each new intake plus during every staff induction period, on the high expectations of an instructor at the College. IAP panel members have attended these intake briefings. They are always thorough and to the point, stressing the meaning of unacceptable behaviour, encouraging them to report if they are subjected to it and assuring them that all allegations will be handled quickly and taken seriously.

Throughout my experience as Chair, the college has reported promptly when a JS or instructor has fallen short of the very clear standards of behaviour expected. I am always briefed quickly and thoroughly by the Commanding Office (CO) on any allegation made against a Junior Soldier or a member of the permanent staff.

The IAP is increasingly aware of the need to ensure appropriate help and support for JS who display emotional, psychological, or mental health needs. It is understood that a significant proportion of young people in schools and colleges require some specific help to manage such problems. The AFC(H) is not immune to these issues, and we wish to support the College and the wider army in any way we can to address these concerns for the good of the JS. From our observations and feedback from the JS, all the evidence suggests the Welfare Team at AFC(H) do an amazing job at supporting young people and I pay tribute to them all for the incredible job they do. I am very grateful to IAP members for the great enthusiasm, expertise, experience, and commitment they bring in helping to ensure that all JS are safe, well supported and given every encouragement and opportunity to succeed. In other words, that the Duty of Care is properly in place.

I was particularly pleased when this year His Majesty the King gave his approval to appoint explorer and adventurer Bear Grylls to be the new Honorary Colonel of AFC(H). Bear is a great role model for young people and someone who understands and embraces the values and standards of the British Army. We look forward very much to assisting him in any way we can over the coming years.

I am extremely grateful to the permanent staff, both military and civilian for their willingness to engage with us, to explain what they do and how they do it and to listen to any ideas and questions we may have about making improvements. As Chair of the panel, I am regularly invited by AFC(H) to meet with other agencies and organisations who, like the IAP, have a keen interest in the college and what it does to support young people. Most importantly, I would like to thank the JS at the College for their openness about what they enjoy and what they find challenging, and for their cheerful readiness to talk to us.

This report is aimed at current parents and families of JS in training, at any teenager thinking of coming to the Army Foundation College in the future, and to anyone who wants to know about the IAP at AFC(H) and our role. We are a group of civilians who are committed to help the College continuously improve for the benefit of all. I hope you will find the Annual Report for 2024 to be useful, interesting, and reassuring.

Finally, at the end of 2024 I made the difficult decision to step down as chair of the

panel, having spent almost 4 years at the helm. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the panel members, both past and present who have worked hard to support me during my tenure. And of course, a big thank you must also go to the Commanding officer Lt Col Mike Butler for all his support. Having a constructive and professional working relationship with the Commanding Officer, whose door is always open and who is always willing to speak openly, honestly and transparently is a vital component in ensuring we have an effective IAP. His support has been very much appreciated.

Kenny Primrose IAP (Chair)

December 2024

The Army Foundation College

The Army Foundation College (Harrogate), Uniacke Barracks North Yorkshire, trains future soldiers for the majority of the Arms and Services of the British Army (less the Royal Military Police, Intelligence Corps and Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps).

AFC(H) is a purpose-built facility which opened in 1998 on the site of the former Royal Signals Army Apprentice College. Any school leaver aged between 16.5 years and 17.2 years can attend, providing they meet the entry criteria (see [The British Army | Army Jobs and Recruitment](#)).

At any time, there are up to 1344 male and female JS in training at AFC(H), overseen by over 375 permanent military and civilian staff. Non-military education and training of Junior Soldiers at AFC(H) is provided by TQ Pearson in the specialist Vocational Education Wing at the College.

There are two full-time residential courses at AFC(H):

- **A 49-week Long Course** (including eight weeks' holiday) for those Junior Soldiers joining the Household Cavalry, Royal Armoured Corps, Royal Artillery, Infantry and some Royal Logistic Corps roles. There are two different entry points - September and March. Junior Soldiers who graduate from AFC(H) will progress to a short Initial Trade Training course (Phase 2) and then move into the Field Army as 18-year-old adult soldiers.
- **A 23-week Short Course** (including three weeks' holiday) for those Junior Soldiers joining the more technical branches of the Army. These are Royal Engineers, Royal Signals, Army Air Corps, Royal Army Medical Corps, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Corps of Army Music and some Royal Logistic Corps roles. There are two different entry points - September and March. Junior Soldiers who graduate from AFC(H) will progress to a longer Initial Trade Training course (Phase 2) and then move into the Field Army as 18-year-old adult soldiers

JS graduate from AFC(H) every February or September each year, depending on when they joined a Short or Long Course.



The IAP

In 2006 the Ministry of Defence held an inquiry into the deaths of four young soldiers at Princess Royal Barracks, Deepcut, Surrey. As a result of the Inquiry's recommendations all training of under-18-year-old JS, which had until that time been run alongside adult recruits, was moved to separate establishments. The AFC(H) is the only army training establishment in the United Kingdom where all recruits are over 16 but under 18 years of age on arrival, throughout the course and on departure. Under British law, anyone under 18 is a minor, not an adult. There is, therefore, an even greater legal requirement and responsibility to protect them from harm. The role of the IAP is to help the Army focus on that duty of care, whether it is being delivered in the daily life of JS, which includes in training, in the classroom, on the parade ground, in the gym, out on military exercises or in the living accommodation at AFC (H). The Independent Advisory Panel (IAP) at AFC(H) was created in 2007 as a source of assurance to JS, their families and the Army that this duty of care was and continues to be fulfilled.

Two IAP members are attached to each of the five Training Companies at the AFC(H). We are free to visit the College, or any off-site training activity, whenever we choose. These visits can be pre-arranged so that the IAP can speak with JS within a normal training day. However, the visits can also be informal, taking place during evenings or at weekends. On every visit a key part will be talking directly with the JS themselves about their experiences so far. This includes observing how they live and work successfully as Junior Soldiers, how their educational achievement develops and also how they mature as 'young adults'. After each visit a written report is produced by the IAP member and any issues identified will be forwarded to the Panel to be discussed to ascertain if further action needs to be taken.

IAP members

IAP members are unpaid civilian volunteers, totally independent of the college and are recruited by the panel to reflect a range of experience in commerce, education and the public services. All members have Enhanced DBS (Disclosure Barring Service) clearance to allow us to visit and speak unsupervised with under 18's.



Overview of IAP activities in 2024

Following our Annual Report in 2023, our agreed priorities in 2024 were:

- **Duty of Care:** Our priority and primary responsibility will always be our focus on the Duty of Care and welfare for JS at AFC(H). We will continue to provide every support we can to the Commanding Officer, his leadership teams and the Welfare team to ensure continued positive outcomes and experience for the JS. This includes supporting the work done by the College to continually scrutinise and improve mental health provision where required, and by establishing open and effective dialogue with Permanent Staff.
- **Mental Resilience:** To focus on the work of Project Titan and its aim of enhancing the mental resilience of JS and staff. To check that organisational values and a shared vocabulary and culture of mental resilience is embedded consistently across AFC(H).
- **Financial Education:** the IAP has highlighted to the Commanding Officer and senior leadership team the case for the college to provide financial education to JS on areas such as budget planning, opening bank and savings accounts, interest rates, credit scoring etc and to explain to JS why, for their own financial welfare, they are so important to understand. The college has already refined the 'Serve and Protect Credit Union' briefing that is given to JS on financial resilience to make it better suited. IAP welcomes this and will continue its discussions with the college about financial education throughout 2025.
- **Permanent Staff:** If permanent staff are valued and feel happy in their work then this can only have a positive effect on the life of the Junior Soldier. To this end the IAP will continue to take an interest in the welfare and lived experience of permanent staff at AFC(H).
- **AFC (H) Command Plan:** The IAP actively supports the College Command Plan, its aim of developing a culture of diversity and inclusivity, of everyone acting as one team, of all staff knowing they are contributing to the mission and feeling valued for what they do and enjoying their work.

Over the last twelve months, IAP members have visited the college more than 100 times to meet and talk with JS and instructors, of these visits 39 reports were submitted. These reports included numerous queries, recommendations for improvement, as well as highlighting good practise, which after discussion and reflection lead to actions in response, recorded in the IAP Action Log. This Action Log is discussed at each meeting between the IAP, the Commanding Officer, the Company Commanders and other members of the College Leadership Team.

Duty of Care

The IAP consistently focuses on Duty of Care as a key priority to support positive outcomes and experience for the JS. The IAP looks to provide a consistent schedule of visits to the Harrogate Army College. Two IAP members are allocated to each company. The focus provided is evident in all visits made by the IAP members to which both JS and instructors are questioned and probed about the welfare support and provision as well as the access to specific support services available for the JS created by AFC(H).

Any issue of concern that is observed by an IAP member can be flagged immediately to the Commanding Officer of the relevant Company. The concern and the ensuing response are recorded in the visit report and raised as a matter of course at a quarterly meeting with the Colonel and all the Company Commanding Officers. Should the immediate response not fully reassure the IAP member, and fully resolve the issue, the IAP member would immediately escalate this to the IAP Chair and the Colonel directly.

During more than 100 IAP visits, and 39 formal reports produced in 2024, 2 issues were raised through the standard reporting process:

- A query about one of the instructors swearing a few times during a briefing, which was observed by an IAP member, was raised and resolved satisfactorily.
- Some JS raised a concern about 'blanket punishments' (a group punishment due to the misbehaviour of an individual) during a discussion with an IAP member. This issue was followed up by the IAP member and resolved satisfactorily.

One issue was directly escalated to the IAP Chair and the Colonel:

- A concern was raised by an IAP member about how a JS who had been disrespectful to an instructor was dealt with. The incident was fully investigated, and the IAP was provided with evidence that there was an appropriate resolution and that learning had been taken from the incident.

During the quarterly IAP meeting, members are also briefed about any disciplinary issues and able to question, check and test procedures to ensure that appropriate action plans and escalations are being followed.

Specific developments implemented to support JS welfare that the IAP has been reassured by are;

- the introduction of the QR code system for reporting any concerns anonymously
- the improvements to Week Zero instructor training
- the planned increased Welfare provision.

Across 2024 the IAP has been reassured that the welfare of the JS remains a clear priority at AFC(H) and that the College has been found to be open and transparent in their response to any issues raised, keen to understand, learn and improve. This was also recognised during a visit from Ofsted in March where AFC(H) was awarded a grading of 'Outstanding' in all areas.

The success of the IAP role is completely dependent upon JS flagging any issues as and when and IAP meets with them. As such this is not intended to be a comprehensive support mechanism for the JS. However, in tandem with AFC(H) various programs have been implemented to ensure that the JS have the necessary support mechanisms and escalation process if so required outside of the IAP remit.

“All JS knew how to access help and support should they need it. All said they felt safe in camp. They would be confident in approaching their section commanders and other members of instructors should they have a problem. They mentioned friends, chain of command, welfare centre, padre, QR code on key ring.” Quote from IAP report.

Mental Resilience – Project Titan

The IAP consistently focuses on mental resilience as a key priority to support positive outcomes and experience for the JS. Project Titan is a bespoke programme devised and implemented by the AFC(H) with the aim of enhancing the mental resilience of JS and staff at the College. As an IAP priority, the panel checks that organisational values and a shared vocabulary and culture of mental resilience is embedded consistently across AFC(H).

As part of the IAP visits, the mental resilience of the JS is a priority and focus during visits made by the IAP members. Both JS and instructors are questioned and probed about the mental resilience provision provided; how it is implemented for the JS; and the impact of the training on the JS and Staff at the College.

The IAP has regular updates about Project Titan reassured the College recognises the importance of building and supporting the mental resilience of junior soldiers.

The Officer who leads Project Titan stated: *MRT (Mental Resilience Training) is a continuous process which commences on joining the Army with OC Fox Company discussing the formalisation of this process and through life and career skills.*

- Training all instructors is continuous
- JS are given the experience of applying the MRT practically – for example when using the high ropes.
- MRT training is monitored and adapted

Across 2024, the IAP has been reassured that the mental resilience of the JS remains a clear priority at AFC(H). This has been further supported by the purchase of a 90-acre training area, which will allow the easing of JS into training, and it will increase confidence in their physical ability to help their mental resilience and preparedness for Phase 2 training.

“Putting into practise what they have learnt in theory gives them a better sense of what they may have to face and do in reality. This helps to build their confidence and mental resilience. The JS said the BCD test (battlefield medical scenario) helped them to learn more about themselves and how they would react in a real-life situation. Many of them realised they knew more than they thought they did and reacted well to the situation. This boosted their confidence.” Comment from member of Permanent Staff to IAP member

Financial Literacy

“The JS thought they got paid very well for what they were doing. There was a mixture of those who ‘blow all their money on stuff like clothes, trainers etc and are ‘skint’ at the end of the month and some who are saving.”

Comment from member of Permanent Staff to IAP member

The opportunity for a young person joining the army, c.13% many of whom are recruited from come from the most deprived postcodes nationally, in terms of social mobility, cited by the army as being significant in its potential for change and growth. As of November 2024, the disposable income of our Junior Soldier, after deductions are made for their food, accommodation and council tax, is calculated as £1597.

Given this, it was felt that it was important to map this opportunity to an accessible programme of education and training. And whilst many of the Junior Soldiers will enjoy a full career, inevitably many will leave and return to civilian life whilst still in their early 20's. So, it is essential that the financial circumstances that they have secured for themselves through joining, are fully capitalized upon and recognized.

Consequently, with the full support of the AFC Command Team, the IAP and the AFC(H) collaboratively produced a financial literacy package that, since October 2024, is being delivered to all Junior Soldiers and the feedback, from both the Junior Soldiers and the Permanent Staff, has been outstanding. It is intended to validate the programme prior to graduation and by assessing the financial behaviours established at this stage.

Instructors

The IAP spoke regularly to instructors throughout the year and raised, with the college leadership team, any issues where we felt concern.

These included:-

- Ensuring staff had a supportive introduction to the college and a package of continual development.

The IAP has witnessed the commanding officer's introduction to staff, during week 1, and praise both the content of his message and his positive enthusiasm to do the best for the JS. The IAP feels this has contributed to the positivity displayed by instructors during IAP visits. A two-part instructor development package has also

been introduced this year. The IAP feels this has been a positive contribution.

- Ensuring the instructor to JS ratio is maintained, to include weekend cover.

The IAP feels that this has been maintained and continues to be monitored during visits.

“Instructors all seemed in good spirits and were happy to talk. The previous week’s Exercise had gone well and the JS had coped with the weather conditions. The instructors talked with knowledge about the individual JS my impression was that the instructors are invested in their JS and spend time talking to them and trying to understand them Asked if the instructors felt supported by their Coy leadership team they said they did.” Quote from IAP report

Additional IAP Support

IAP members attended the various Open Days, Arrival Days, Passing-In and Graduation Ceremonies throughout the year which gave us the opportunity not only to speak to JS but also to their parents, guardians and family.

The IAP visited the Companies whilst on different field training exercises in Catterick, Ripon and Otterburn and witnessed JS being taken through, amongst other scenarios, weapon handling tests, bayonet, respirator, skill at arms training and live firing at Strensall Ranges . In all our observations we have been satisfied that the duty of care to JS both physically and emotionally is prioritised in everything they do.

“I was able to listen to the briefings given by the instructors and observe how the JS were organised with their weapons. At no time were any of the JS allowed to have their weapons and ammunition together until they had all taken up their positions on the range. There was one member of instructors to every four JS watching over them and giving instructions.”

Quote from IAP Report

In our visits to the education department the IAP continues to be impressed with the support, care and strategies that go into helping JS find confidence in learning. Many JS have gained qualifications at AFC(H) they never felt they could achieve. In the words of the JS this is down to the ‘care, respect, support and excellent teaching of the college staff.’

Summary for 2024

On the basis of our observations on IAP visits to AFC(H) during 2024, the IAP is confident that the Duty of Care to Junior Soldiers is actively prioritised throughout the College.

The culture of openness at AFC(H) has continued, led from the top down. This benefits all and enables us to undertake our role in a more informed way. The IAP would hope this continues with successive Commanding Officers.

IAP Priorities 2025

- **Duty of Care:** Our priority and primary responsibility is the Duty of Care and the welfare of the JS at AFC(H). Therefore, during visits the IAP will focus on the provision of welfare, the well-being of the JS, the compliance with welfare policy, procedure and good practice, highlighting any potential areas of concern and areas of good practise.
- **Mental Resilience:** During visits the IAP will continue to focus on the mental resilience of JS. Therefore, during visits the IAP will focus on the support the JS receive to increase confidence, resilience and preparedness for training, from pre-arrival at AFC(H) to the onward move to Phase 2.
- **Culture:** The AFC(H) Command Plan is clear in its ambition to create a culture that values diversity, equity and inclusion. Therefore, during visits the IAP will seek to understand the areas of college life that impact of the JS in terms of them feeling both valued and included as well as how AFC(H) promotes and ensures the important role the JS themselves have in contributing to a positive culture of valuing difference and their impact on others.
- **Financial Education:** During visits the IAP will continue to focus on the access to and quality of the provision of financial education to JS, encouraging and supporting an integrated approach to this alongside JS Education.
- **Instructors:** If instructors are valued and feel happy in their work then this can only have a positive effect on the life of the Junior Soldier. To this end the IAP will continue to take an interest in the welfare and lived experience of permanent staff at AFC(H).
- **Supporting AFC(H) in learning from and benchmarking against other external settings:** the IAP assist with advising, signposting and supporting development of relationships with SMEs, in relation to areas where AFC(H) are seeking continuous improvement e.g. communication with parents / guardians, information management, management of inappropriate sexual behaviour for U18s).

1. Commanding Officer's Response



Huge thanks to the IAP for their 2024 report and for their ongoing work at the College. As I stated last year, the IAP's role at AFC(H) is an important one. Their independent observation and voice - without agenda - is a key element in our unrelenting pursuit of excellence, helping ensure the best possible training experience and welfare of junior soldiers (JS). A special mention to Kenny Primrose for his significant efforts over the past years, both as member and then chair of the Panel. Kenny has served the interests of thousands of junior soldiers during his tenure, helping set them up for success in our nation's Army.

As ever, I am pleased to see the IAP's report highlight some key achievements from the last year as we continued to pursue excellence in welfare and duty of care. 2024 was a busy year in which the College was oversubscribed, the site physically grew, we launched a new training syllabus, and saw a growth in staff numbers to ensure welfare and duty of care remains at the forefront of all we do.

DUTY OF CARE

Outstanding independent feedback. The IAP's top priority is, rightly, duty of care. Following over 100 IAP visits and 39 formal reports it is great to see the Panel conclude we take our safeguarding and duty of care responsibilities very seriously. Mar 2024 also saw another full welfare and duty of care inspection from Ofsted. Seven inspectors, including a quality assurance lead, spent 48hrs at the College delving deeply into all areas of welfare and duty of care. This included a very large number of 'no notice' interviews with JS. I was delighted to see, once again, that Ofsted judged us Outstanding in all four judgement areas: Quality of training and support; Professional and personal development; Facilities, infrastructure, and resources; and Effectiveness of leadership and management. As ever, we do not take such positive feedback for granted and will use our effective assurance mechanisms to keep driving improvement in all areas.

Reporting of concerns. The ability of JS to report any welfare concern was further enhanced in 2024. The IAP and Ofsted both confirm JS feel confident reporting any concerns they may have, and I take pride that when asked how they would raise a concern the most common reply from JS is 'I would tell my section commander'. Though any member of the AFC(H) team, military or civilian, can be approached should a JS have a concern to share, an anonymous welfare reporting mechanism launched in 2024 now offers JS yet another option, enabling them to reach out to someone who will then come to them. JS and staff remain frequently and strongly encouraged to speak up should they see or be subject to inappropriate behaviour, enabling us to deal with any concerns at the lowest possible level. We hold ourselves to an extremely high standard in this regard, with all concerns investigated swiftly, thoroughly, and transparently.

Welfare uplift. At the end of 2024 the College recruited into seven new civil service welfare posts created at AFC(H), including a full-time Designated Safeguarding Lead and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. Strong evidence of the Army's commitment to safeguarding and duty of care, these staff will provide additional points of advice and enhance the tracking and onward sharing of information, strengthening even further our

outstanding welfare support to JS. Their work will be complemented by the increased number of senior military staff now qualified through the NSPCC's Designated Safeguarding Lead course.

Financial wellbeing. I am particularly grateful to the IAP for their support and interest in enhancing the financial wellbeing of JS, who are now better paid – even in relative terms – than at any other point in history, clearing c.£1.6k per month after tax, accommodation, and food charges. Though stopping short of giving financial advice, training created with the IAP's help now encourages JS to consider the benefits saving money. This work has already seen JS saving competitively, banking money for house deposits and cars. To be able to buy a house at such a young age and after such a short time in the Army is truly remarkable.

MENTAL RESILIENCE

Qualifying more staff as 'mental resilience trainers' in 2024 has increased expertise in this area. The benefits from the tools and techniques of Mental Resilience Training (or 'MRT') are not limited to adventurous activities and can apply in all aspects of our lives. Qualifying more staff as MRT trainers is helping ensure the vocabulary and tools are used across all areas of training. The training experience has been enhanced too, with a new high-ropes course installed last summer enabling JS to put these tools into practice during the first weeks of training. Appointed in 2024, our Honorary Colonel, Colonel Bear Grylls OBE, has been exceptional at sharing with JS his message of 'courage, kindness, and never give up' helping them grow in confidence and resilience.

Pre-arrivals visits. 2024 saw us welcome thousands of people interested in applying to the College, with our open days consistently over-subscribed. More JS than ever now visit the College before starting on Day 1, giving them the opportunity to see the site and speak with current JS about their experience. These events will continue in 2025 and beyond as we work hard to service the significant demand for places here. It is inspiring to see more and more young people volunteering to serve their country and I am enormously proud of every JS for volunteering to write themselves into the British Army's story of teamwork, challenge, opportunity, and adventure.

Land purchase. Another significant boost to both mental and physical resilience is the recent purchase of 90 acres of land adjacent to the College, opened by the Chief of the General Staff (the professional head of the Army) in December 2024. For the first time since a training establishment was created on the site in 1947 we now have access to our own 90 acre 'back door training area'. This land, both flat and undulating, will have huge value for generations of JS to come, enabling fieldcraft and physical training on our doorstep which will build confidence and physical robustness. It will also allow external groups to train here, enhancing our engagement across the region.

STAFF TRAINING

The IAP has rightly been interested in the training and preparation of AFC(H) instructors. Following the creation of the Army Instructor School, staff across the Soldier Academy will complete a refreshed programme of training before arrival in post, supplemented on arrival at AFC(H) with specific-to-site training through our staff development programme, the focal point for induction and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) during an instructor's time at the College. To further enhance CPD we continued in 2024 to forge relationships

and share experience with schools, with visits always valuable for discussing common challenges and opportunities. We will deepen these relationships in 2025 as well as conducting more competitive sport with local school teams.

FINAL THOUGHTS

As I come to the end of my tenure as commanding officer I would like once again to thank all members of the IAP for giving their time so generously in support of our junior soldiers. AFC(H), like any high-performing team, welcomes constructive challenge and independent insight from critical friends. The IAP helps JS succeed in their chosen career in the service of our nation, makes our team stronger, and helps us step into 2025 with positivity and optimism.

I finish, as ever, by paying tribute to the AFC(H) staff. Military and civilian alike, the exciting and rewarding careers on offer through the College are brought to life by the selfless commitment and professionalism of the staff. They continue to play a transformative role, setting the standards to which JS aspire and role-modelling the behaviours expected of a British Army soldier. The AFC(H) staff, supported by the wider Army team, are genuinely remarkable and I am enormously grateful for what they do in the service of others.



**Lt Col Mike Butler AGC(ETS) BA(Hons) MSc MSt PGCE(PCET)
Commanding Officer Army Foundation College**