



### Message from the Commanding Officer:



This newsletter covers a lengthy period of Squadron happenings. As always, the Squadron is busy providing activities and qualifications for the cadets to attend and earn. Without reproducing the content in this short introduction, a few highlights for myself are below.

In particular the Squadron's outstanding performance at Wing Activities Day in September comes to mind. We came an impressive 6th place; it is worth noting that all the Squadrons above us in the tables are larger in size. Yet more importantly many of the Squadrons below were larger also. Melksham Squadron truly continues to 'punch above its weight'.

November saw the whole Squadron parade for Remembrance Sunday; where cadets attended both the village parade in Seend and the main town parade in Melksham. I feel great pride not only to lead such a fine Squadron at this parade but also as Parade Commander for the entire town in this act of Remembrance.

This last few months has seen our staffing levels grow and we can now support more cadets on parade evenings and at weekend activities. I am particularly grateful to Mr and Mrs Tate and Mr Gale from the Civilian Committee who are in the process of becoming "Registered Civilian Committee Members" an appointment which will enable them to help at a greater number of events. Additionally, I am able to welcome the following 11 cadets to Squadron: Alston, Brown, Chan, Fulluck, Hooper, Hubbard, Paradise-Harding, Parsons-Green, Pieragostini, Price and Smith

2018 will see the Squadron moving into new areas of development and activities for the cadets. Our new Air Rifle range will become a reality. There will also be greater adventure training opportunities alongside the Duke of Edinburgh's Award from Summer onwards.

This coming year of 2018 will be a year of sustained growth, opportunity for cadets and volunteers alike and of course includes the historic 100th anniversary of the Royal Air Force.

I look forward to leading this fantastic Squadron into this year, knowing that with the support of all the cadets, volunteers, parents and public we have a year to look forward to with little out of our grasp.

Finally, I want to wish you all a very happy new year and look forward to your continued support into 2018.

### Interview with Corporal Burnell by Cadet Booth

#### What is your role on the Squadron?

I am a Service Instructor and volunteer my time to mentoring and developing the cadets.

#### How long have you been in the Corps?

Since I was 14 years old as a cadet; so about 14 years now.

#### What do you enjoy about working with the air cadets?

Insuring the youth of today meet RAF standards

#### What do you do outside of the Squadron?

I am in the Royal Air Force Police. Currently working in Legacy Investigations. In my spare time, I am a Spinning Instructor and the rest of the time I spend in the gym.

#### Can you please tell us your most exciting story from your time with the Air Cadets?

When I was a cadet; the International Air Cadet Exchange and went off to Canada.

#### What do you hope to see happen with 2385 (Melksham) Squadron this year?

To expand and become the best Squadron in the Wing!

Parade Night	Activity
26-Jan	Classes
31-Jan	Leadership
2-Feb	Classes
07-Feb	Adventure Training
09-Feb	Badges and Qualifications
14-Feb	Fieldcraft
16-Feb	Classes
21-Feb	Sports
23-Feb	Projects
28-Feb	Classes
02-Mar	Classes
07-Mar	Adventure Training
09-Mar	Badges and Qualifications
14-Mar	Fieldcraft

#### Upcoming Events:

- Melksham Mayor's Reception – 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2018
- Various Celebrations to mark 100 years of the RAF
- Flying and Gliding in the Spring

#### **"My Time in the ATC" – by Corporal Eccleston**

During my time in the cadets, I have learnt a lot of new skills. Some key skills I have learnt are in Leadership. This has helped me a lot in progressing in my cadet career as I am now a Corporal. Not only has it helped me progress, it has also helped my confidence.



Whilst in the cadets, I have done my activities such as shooting training, walking training and fieldcraft. Not only have I done cadet activities, I have also participated in charity events such as Castle Combe. Castle Combe, in my opinion, is the best charity event. It raises a lot of money for the Squadron and you also get to watch the racing during the day which is fun.



Role models I have come across in cadets include the Squadron staff such as Flight Lieutenant McKay who have done a lot for the Squadron; by improving the facilities at the Squadron and providing more activities and promotion processes. WO2 Booth and Mr. Gerrish have also been role models for me. With WO2 Booth assisting in the fieldcraft by sharing knowledge he has from his military career. Also, Mr. Gerrish always participates in charity events and increasing the morale of the cadets.



Overall, I have really enjoyed my time in the cadets.

#### **What has happened in the last few months?**

- Ramstein Camp
- Various Castle Combe Events
- Gliding
- Various Wing and Regional Sports Events
- Squadron Overnight Fieldcraft
- Dorset & Wiltshire Camp
- Remembrance Parade
- HMS Bristol Camp
- Melksham Food & River Festival
- Melksham Christmas Fayre and Lights Switch-On
- Wing Activities Day
- Bournemouth Air Show

#### **Promotions, Qualifications and Awards**

Congratulations to all of our cadets on their many achievements in 2017, both individual and their contributions to the success of the Squadron. There are too many to mention individually but here are some prime examples in the second part of this year:

- Promotions: Rudd from Corporal to Sergeant and Diggins and Green from Sergeant to Flight Sergeant
- Passing First Class: Hardiman, Coyle, Gale and Strong
- Heartstart Award: Alston, Brown, Hubbard, Parsons-Green, Price, Rabone, Rudd and Strong
- Activity First Aid Award: Green
- Music Awards: Booth (Blue) and Diggins (Silver)
- Flying and Gliding: Rabone (Bronze), Coyle (Blue) Tate (Blue), Hardiman (Blue)

#### **New Social Media Presence**



The Squadron is starting to develop its online presence and can now provide the new Twitter Feed: [@2385MelkshamATC](https://twitter.com/2385MelkshamATC)



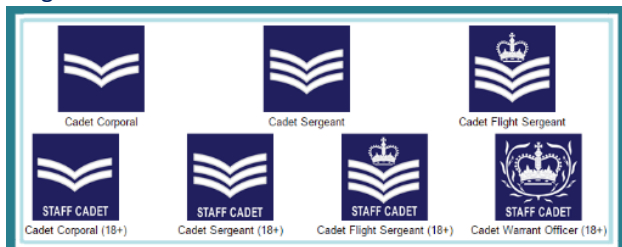
#### **We are currently looking for more Staff Volunteers**

Details of specific roles required can be found on the last page of this newsletter but any volunteers are very welcome; be it to offer administrative support; teaching; female cover; sports or just general assistance.

No experience is necessary as full training can be provided.

#### The difference between a Corporal and a Sergeant – by (then) Sergeant Green

Carrying on from Corporal Rudd's piece in Issue 9 of the newsletters *"The Difference between a Corporal and a Cadet"*, I will be explaining the transition from Corporal to Sergeant.



To qualify to become the most junior SNCO rank, you have to meet some criteria. Firstly, you have to pass the Dorset & Wiltshire Wing's JNCO course; which consists of Drill, Inspection, Leadership, Presentation Skills, General Service Knowledge (GSK) and the completion of the JNCO workbook on Uniform and Drill. You must also have a good attendance record and have been a Corporal for at least 6 months. You should have proved yourself a great cadet JNCO (Junior Non-Commissioned Officer) to become a cadet SNCO (Senior Non-Commissioned Officer).

Once promoted to Sergeant, you will be expected to take on new roles and responsibilities which are taught to you from ACP 40 on the SNCO course. The SNCO course includes an interview, presentation, inspection, a General Service Knowledge test, a leadership task and class discussions.

An SNCO will have responsibilities like looking after a whole Flight of cadets; monitoring cadets and JNCOs in development and the Cadet Development Course. Mainly, you will become a role model to the cadets, so you must be at the best of your abilities. SNCOs will work with their fellow cadet NCO team in many tasks; from ensuring a parade night runs smoothly; to making sure basic Health & Safety checks are done every month. Many SNCOs will also take up a specialised role on the Squadron like teacher or run things like Projects or tasks set by the staff.

Overall, the transition is hard, but rewarding and it is amazing to see how much of an impact you have on the younger cadets and other cadet NCOs. It is an experience I urge all cadets to aspire to.

#### Contact Details, Out of Hours, Authorised Absences, Website

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#### Ramstein Camp – by Corporal Chilcott

On the 18<sup>th</sup> of July, I went to MOD Boscombe Down to travel to Ramstein in Germany. The journey was meant to take 8 hours but actually took 12 due to unexpected diversions (slow driving) by coach.

During the time there, we went to visit 322 Squadron and watched and learnt about the different controls and maintenance of the various Tornado aircraft. Also, we went to fly in a C130 Hercules, it was amazing – the bits I can remember (I was having a good sleep during most of the flight).



On another day, we went on a walk, lasting about 2 hours, in the local area. We visited the historical town and wandered through tunnels before going on a McDonalds hunt!

We spent a day on an Assault Course with some German Soldiers. It was timed and similar to the ones we see the Royal Marines doing, with 7ft or so wall, which was amazing! I was so impressed that I was able to get over the wall – it was very physically demanding!

The accommodation consisted of huge dome tents. They had electrical hook-up, which was cool and had about 11 people in each one on bunk beds. They were not very comfortable, but I did get the top bunk. All of the guys in my tent were hilarious. RAF chefs provided the food and one of them was very funny. The food was actually alright.

We were able to visit the local shopping centre (KMC) where I bought an American patch and loads of Gummy Bears.

The journey home was good too; my mum got me KFC! Most of my spare time, I was sleeping because I needed the sleep. The camp was definitely alright – I would definitely go again.





#### Indoor Skydiving and Parachute Training – By Flight Sergeant Green

On the 21<sup>st</sup> of August, I was invited to go Indoor Skydiving as a replacement of my cancelled Parachute Camp. I went up to an Indoor Skydiving Centre in Hampshire with 4 other cadets from Bristol and Gloucestershire Wing and another cadet from Dorset and Wiltshire Wing.

Once we arrived, we had to sign a Consent Form to allow us to fly in the tunnel. Once we had been given our class number, we went upstairs to watch the current group that were in the tunnel. I looked rather scary! After a 10 to 20-minute period, we were called into a Briefing Room to watch a safety video and practice certain Skydiving positions under the supervision of Tunnel Staff, when during this time, the RAF Parachute Trainers from Brize Norton, who run the actual Parachute Camp, had turned up to take us for lessons within the tunnel. After our Briefings, we were separated into 2 groups of which I was in the first group and we were kitted out with flying overalls, ear defenders, goggles and a helmet for safety.

We then went into a separated area after the group before us had finished where we sat and took our turns in the tunnel. We all had 2-minute bursts which added up to 30 minutes each which is much longer than the usual time of 10 minutes per person, so we had 3 times as long as everyone else which allowed us to learn actual Skydiving manoeuvres and master the skills.

In my first session, I learnt how to turn left and right on the netting at the bottom of the tunnel and spent two sessions mastering that with the help of a Brize Norton Instructor. After that I spent another two sessions learning how to go backwards and forwards with just small bodily movements. The finally, I got to the hardest skill of all, going upwards and downwards unaided. This skill was the hardest because when you first start to move, you panic and eventually relax. Eventually, after learning these six skills, I was able to combine the skills and be able to touch different points in the tunnel at different heights unaided.

It was an amazing experience that I would love to do again, although 80mph winds are not good with long hair (I had many knots to untangle)! We then went to McDonalds to celebrate our hardwork and successes in the tunnel. Overall, an amazing day that I would recommend to any cadet.



#### Fieldcraft – By Cadet Gale



The Fieldcraft Overnight activity was on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September and was the first time I have been on a Fieldcraft activity overnight. The cadets had to set up their “Bashers” to sleep in and we all had a 24-hr Ration Pack for all of our food during the entire activity.



We had to work as a team throughout the day to set up the 12x12 and bashers quickly and effectively and all helped each other out to make sure that everything was done the best it could be.



The activity we had to carry out at night time, was to go as a team to “recon” a patrol and setup sentries to view when they patrol and find out where their base was. All whilst being as quiet as possible to ensure we were not spotted. We then had to use the information we gathered to create a model of what we saw. After we completed the activity we then went to sleep in our bashers. Overall, it was a fun night and I am excited about future activities like this one.



#### **Knook Camp (D&W Camp) – By Cadet Carter**

A couple of Air Cadet Squadrons' were offered to spend two weeks at Knook Camp doing team building and badge earning activities. When we got there, we were seated in a hall and shown the rules and information about what is going to happen and our safety. After all that we were split into three squads, A, B and C squad, then we were sent to our dorms which we looked after with people from other Squadrons.



Every day, after getting changed and washed by 7am, we all went to the canteen to get our breakfast. After we did that, the different Squads had to do different activities at different times; so for my squad, C Squad, we had to go through a long PowerPoint about radios and how to use them CORRECTLY. Halfway through we all had a small bag which was given to us which contained our lunch. We then finished off our PowerPoint the next day but we had to try to do a few radio checks and things like that.



After every activity we headed back to our dorms to make friends with fellow cadets. The dorms consisted of four rooms (Boys), a hallway, a broom cupboard and two rooms that consisted of about nine to ten beds per room. The girls got lucky and got the same but they got THEIR OWN TOILET + SINK! Every bed place had a desk next to it and consisted of a frame and a mattress, but no pillow so we brought our own sleeping bag with pillow.

The next thing we did was a day out at the most fun place ever, THORPE PARK! My Squadron was the first to go and we were given a pass that let us go on ANYTHING free. We had to stay in groups and were given six hours of fun to go and do whatever we pleased. The best ride for me was the ride Nemesis and even better, no grown-ups could hold us back!



After that we did two more activities; First we did a two-day course which is called the YFA (Youth First Aid) which gives us a badge and qualification. We first watched a bunch of slides then on the second day we did three tests, an awake casualty, a knocked-out casualty and CPR.



Finally, the BIG one, we did one and a half days in the field doing exercises. We had tiny tents and we ate out of ration packs. Sadly, I couldn't stay for the full time so that's all I could experience.

Finally, on the last night we had a very fancy dinner and GREAT FOOD as usual. After all this we had a mini-party at our dorms and hall. On the last day we packed our stuff. After tidying up we went to the largest number of simulators in one place in Europe. Once we arrived we had to get a driver and a gunner and we battled until we had to go home. THATS IT FOR THIS YEARS NOOK CAMP!

#### **HMS Bristol Camp – By Cadet Gerrish**



In September, me and Cadet Tate went on a camp to Portsmouth to stay on the type 82 Destroyer HMS Bristol.

As it was my first camp, I was very excited, but also very nervous as there was only one other cadet I knew going as well. Despite this, I made a lot of new friends on the camp so did not have to worry.

When we arrived, I was very nervous as I had never been so close to anything this large before, which made me a little scared, however, I got over it. The accommodation was not the best as I had been the last one to turn up to the room the males were staying in and due to this I was without a bed for 10 to 20 minutes which made me worried that I would have to sleep on the floor! However, despite this I was able to find a bed.

The food on the camp was amazing however we did have to march about 1 and ½ miles just to get to the mess every day but because the food was so good, I did not complain. The activities that I did on the camp were amazing; my favourite was the trip to the cinema despite me falling asleep midway through and waking up because of a scary bit in the film where everyone jumped. Overall, I think the camp was a good start for cadets that have not been on any camps before.



#### Remembrance Day Parade – By Cadet Parsons-Green

The Melksham Remembrance Day Parade is an important event for 2385 (Melksham) Squadron. We arrived at the car park in Melksham and performed a uniform inspection.



Corporal Chilcott then formed the Squadron up, preparing for us to march. Flight Lieutenant McKay, who led the parade, informed all of the groups attending what was going to happen. Flight Lieutenant McKay commenced the march and the Squadron marched towards the church with the Squadron Banner Party in front.



The Squadron entered the church and remained there throughout the service. After the service, we stood around the War Memorial in Melksham and Corporal Chilcott and Cadet Booth laid down wreathes. We then turned around and marched back towards the Town Hall with the Mayor and other important people watching over us (including our Mayor's Cadet, Cadet Gerrish). After the Parade was over, we had hot drinks and food in the Assembly Hall.



#### Gliding – By Corporal Rabone

Corporal Rabone here, this report is all about the fabulous time some of the cadets of 2385 (Melksham) squadron had at Gliding. The day started off very early and very cold but we had SI Booth's music keeping us going until we reached RAF Upavon.

We got to the base extremely early, but time flew and the staff arrived. We had individual briefings where we were told what each spec (job) each of us would be doing that day in the glider. Then we had a go on the PTT (Part Task Trainer), this is basically a simulator for the gliding. Then we got measured up with our gear, for example a parachute.



One of the best parts was sitting in a staff briefing where the members were all being allocated jobs. It felt like a movie; I was so excited! I absolutely loved it! After we gathered the weights and made our way down to the airfield where we got the gliders out and prepared to start.

I had butterflies so bad, but luckily, I had an amazing pilot who spoke to me about everything in the glider and what it would feel like. Then we flew up. I cannot explain how fab it was! I even got my Bronze Gliding Award, which is so cool. All the other cadets had a great time as well, even if they did feel a little queasy.



I would so recommend going, I will never forget the memory.



#### Wing Activity Day – By Cadet Booth

17<sup>th</sup> September, day of WAD (Wing Activities Day). Starting at the Squadron, everyone was up early with smart, top-notch Wedgewood's in suit carrier and wearing their Greens. Everyone was looking forward to a cracking day. Going to MOD Boscombe Down, where the event was taking place, the bus got hyped and everyone was ready to get out the bus at the place we were to setup base.

We saw many other Squadrons; but we were mainly focused on getting a good result at the end of the day. After being briefed on the day, the tent was setup in great time and everything was put inside the tent, including some yum-yum treats from the OC (Officer Commanding)!



After setting up and having time in the tent, the first group went to do the first activity – they came back with successful efforts! After everyone had completed their own events such as First Aid and Aircraft Recognition competitions and also come extensive time on breaks and the cadets and cadet NCOs had time going around the base taking part in the fun activities; we got sorted for the most important part of the day – Inspection and Drill!



We got a good standard on Inspection and our Drill was a good performance and other than some minor corrections in our sequence, our Squadron (and the important personnel reviewing us) was happy and in good cheer. Obviously, our OC was pleased with our Squadron turnout and all of the staff! The place we came was only 6 points behind our position last year – we came 5<sup>th</sup> last year and 8<sup>th</sup> this year – with much effort! A result at the end of the day and a reward ceremony, we were packed, we set off out of Boscombe Down and back to our Squadron to look forward to the celebration BBQ.



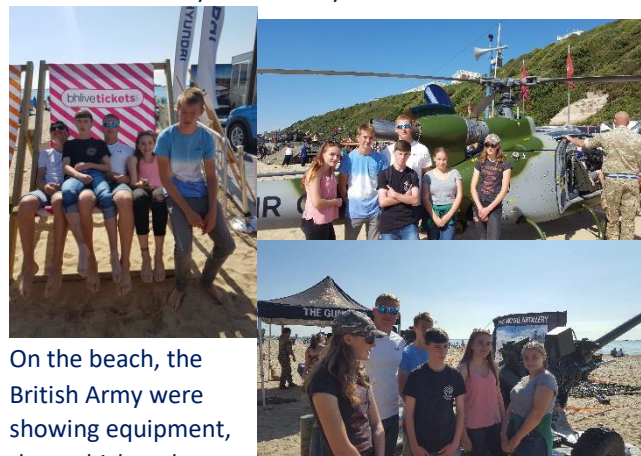
#### Melksham Christmas Fayre and Lights Switch-On

Well done to all of the Civilian Committee, Staff and Cadets who helped with the Melksham Christmas Fayre where you all raised a total of £303.19 for the Squadron.



#### Bournemouth Air Show – By Corporal Eccleston

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September, we went to Bournemouth Air Show. It was an excellent day where we got to see a range of different aircraft, doing a range of different stunts. We also saw the Army and the Royal Marines Commando.



On the beach, the British Army were showing equipment, the vehicles they use and they were also recruiting people. The Army showed us equipment such as artillery weapons and shells. There were also vehicles on the beach such as Landrovers, a Challenger 2 Tank and there was a Gazelle Helicopter.



We also saw an assortment of planes and helicopters when we went to the air show. Some of the

aircraft we saw were a Merlin, Chinook, Tornado, Hurricane and Hawk. We also saw the Royal Air Force Red Arrows' amazing performance of the low flying, flips, spins and all sorts of stunts. This was one of the best experiences, witnessing this performance.





#### Wing Sports – by Corporal Rabone

Let's just start and say that Sports was a great success! On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September, seven of our cadets went to Tidworth Oval to try and get a place on the Wing Sports Team. The boys were trying out in the Rugby and Football; and the girls were trying out for the Netball and Hockey.

When we arrived, there were many people who were ready to get transported to their selected venue. The Netball was on the base, so we had to go through Security. Hockey was also fun but the astro-turf is sandy so it is always in my shoes which is so annoying! I, Corporal Rabone, am the junior team because of my age so I compete with cadets aged between 12 to 15 and because I have been doing sports for a few years, I know all of the team, which is even better. The day went very fast and we listened to music non-stop. It is so nice seeing people from camp and other activities again! All of our cadets got a space on the Wing Team! I am on the Netball and Hockey Teams, so in the next few months you shall have to look out for the outcomes of the day.



**2018 Junior Football Team**

#### Food and River Festival 2017 - by Cadet Coyle

The Food and River Festival was on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of September, we were there to assist with setting up the trader's market stalls and at 12:30 to wash up after the cooking demonstration in the main tent. We also helped to put down the marquees after the festival had ended.

We also helped in any other way we could, like litter picking, pushing around trailers and regulating the car park. As a reward for our work, a bakery marquee had some leftover stock that they gave to us to take home; we even had to give some away! Overall, it was a good day and we got lots of thanks from the Mayor!



#### Corps Rugby – by Flight Sergeant Diggins



In September there were Wing Trials to get into the Wing Senior Rugby Team. Unfortunately, I had injured my finger so was unable to go to the Regional Trials. I wished the team luck and hoped they would win.



In the beginning of December, I received a phone call to see if I would like to represent the Region as someone could not make it. I went to the Regional Tournament in RAF Cranwell and managed to make the Senior Corps Team. This meant that on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May, I represented the ATC at RAF Cosford playing against Bromsgrove Rugby Club. I am the only person in the Dorset and Wiltshire Wing who made the Corps Team and there are only 5 of us in the whole of the South West Region.





## Time to Reflect on 2017 with 2385 (Melksham) Squadron and Look Towards 2018 – Some Thoughts and Reflections from our Cadets:



"2017 was a great year  
for the Squadron" Cpl  
Rabone



"A lot  
more stuff  
became  
available"  
Cdt Tate



"Too many injuries – but it did not stop me!"

"It was fun" Cdt Hubbard

"It was  
fantastic" Cdt  
Brown



"Absolutely banging year!" Cpl Chilcott



"Enjoyed trying new things" Cdt  
Parsons-Green

"It was great" Cdt Price

"ATC Saga 'a new hope'"  
Cdt Williams

"Enjoyed flying" Cdt Gerrish



"No trousers fit me" Cdt Paradise-  
Harding



"Enjoying Fieldcraft" Cdt Coyle



"The Squadron was  
Triumphant" FS Green

"Enjoyed gliding"  
Cdt Hardiman



"Fun and differentiate"  
Cdt Gale

"Can't wait to fly" Cdt Chan



"I like my uniform" Cdt Smith



"Actually got some badges"  
Cdt Alston

"I'm loving it!" Cdt Pieragostini





## **Request for Volunteers to support Melksham Squadron**

At the start of this newsletter I wrote about the developments the Squadron has made, in part due to the extra volunteers who have joined us over the last 6 months.

Whilst it is true that the Squadron has achieved a great deal, with a small amount of extra help we could more than double our "output". Of course "output" in this case refers to opportunities for the youth of Melksham, a worthwhile cause if anyone says so.

To this end I would be particularly interested in hearing from anybody (and please do share this little 'advert' as widely as possible) who would be willing to volunteer in any of the following capacities.

### **Volunteer website administrator - 1 Vacancy**

The Squadron website requires an update and occasional maintenance. Anybody with experience of creating and maintaining a website would be welcome to apply.

After the initial refresh, the expected monthly commitment would be 2-3 hours.

### **Volunteer Front of house and Office Manager - 1 Vacancy**

The Squadron requires an individual who is willing to volunteer on a regular basis on parade evenings (Wednesday and Fridays 1900-2130) who can cover the front office and act as Office Manager and administrator for the Squadron. Full training would be provided.

### **Volunteer IT Manager - 1 Vacancy**

As the Squadrons inventory of computer and other IT related equipment grows it is essential it is taken proper care of. The Squadron requires an IT savvy individual to fulfil this role. Tasks would include, routine software and security updates, providing training to other members of staff and also to advise on future purchases.

This role would have an expected monthly commitment of 1 parade evening a month (2.5 hours). This role could be combined with the Volunteer website administrator for the right applicant.

### **Volunteer Flight Simulator Instructor - 4 Vacancies**

This role is key to developing our aviation package on offer to the cadets. The Squadron owns a variety of flight simulation devices, including a large 2 seater aircraft mockup. Instructors would apply having a knowledge of flight simulation and or aircraft flying. Specific training can be provided, however a basic knowledge of flight simulation, computing and aircraft operation is crucial.

The eventual aim is to be able to run our flight simulators on every parade night in the month. With 4 instructors, that would be an expected commitment of 2 parade nights a month (5 hours).

These roles are all voluntary, but individuals giving their time are able to claim for certain expenses and substantial development opportunities also exist for volunteers.

Anyone who is interested in these roles or would like further information please in the first instance contact the Commanding Officer at [oc.2385@aircadets.org](mailto:oc.2385@aircadets.org)