

THE MERCIAN REGIMENT

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Q1 2026

Print-friendly Edition

1 MERCIAN - VISIT FROM THE COLONEL-IN-CHIEF

On Thursday 26th March 2026, His Royal Highness, The Prince of Wales, visited soldiers in the 1st Battalion at Bulford Barracks in Salisbury.

His Royal Highness had the opportunity to observe the use of the Regiment's bespoke urban training facility, where drones are trialled and experimented with in urban combat, as well as speaking with soldiers, officers, and family members of the Battalion.



During his visit, His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales took part in a conversation with a female network, which gave him the chance to hear women's experiences of serving with the Armed Forces.

WO2 Crease received his warrant from His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, a proud moment reflecting an exceptional career.



His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales also spoke with soldiers, officers, and family members from B (MALTA) Company, where they discussed with him their winter deployment to Estonia on Operation CABRIT.

The Company recently returned following a 6-month deployment with The Royal Tank Regiment battlegroup.

His Royal Highness then presented three Long Service and Good Conduct medals to soldiers.



1 MERCIAN - GAUNTLET

Soldiers from 1 MERCIAN cutting through faults on the WARRIOR stand with precision and lethal professionalism.



B (Malta) Company digging deep and driving forward through the arduous MERCIAN Gauntlet, showcasing grit and discipline.



A soldier from C (Kohima) Company demonstrating the sharp eye and unwavering diligence required to detect the enemy even in the most demanding conditions.



Cpl Smith of C (Kohima) Company demonstrates his seasoned expertise as one of 1 MERCIAN's most experienced soldiers, showcasing exceptional communication skills honed over years of hard work and discipline.



DRAGON Company had the winning section-driven by grit and precision.

They dug deep on the final 2 km of the MERCIAN Gauntlet under the relentless leadership of Cpl Noone.



1 MERCIAN - Ex EAGLE STRIKE

Pte Tyson delivers a clear and confident set of orders while acting as Section Commander during a live section attack, ensuring his team understands the plan before stepping off.



Warrior Live firing during at Castlemartin Ranges. C (Kohima) Company achieved a 100% first time pass rate on Annual Crew Test (ACT).



GPMG gunner Pte Shaw provides sustained fire support during a live platoon attack, enabling manoeuvre elements to close with and clear.



1 MERCIAN - IRON WARRIOR CHALLENGE 2026

Representatives from 1 MERCIAN entered two teams to compete at 3XX Iron Warrior Challenge, Mar 26 (IWC 26). During a busy training cycle individuals were flown in last minute from all over the country to compete, as far afield as CMR.

The morning started with a weigh in and the team tactics talk. The event consisted of 5 RMT's with 1.2km weighted run between each RMT (total six runs). A Team of four carried 80kg between them.



Both teams worked incredible hard, with 1 Mercian A Team finishing 12th and the B Team coming 18th.

Team A got off to a great start after the first RMT.



Capt Rhodes from the B Team bringing up the rear.



Team B casually running the 5th 1.2km loop.



Sgt Sparks pushing Team A.

4 MERCIAN - Ex FIRM PATROL

4 MERCIAN went back to basics when it deployed to Catterick training area for its most recent exercise, Ex FIRM PATROL led by C (Kohima) Company in April. The start of a new training year offered soldiers the opportunity to reset and go back to the fundamentals of patrolling and fieldcraft.

Running in the background of Ex FIRM PATROL was a Battlegroup HQ's planning exercise. Utilising additional SNCOs and Officers back at Battalion HQs in Wolverhampton to help prepare them for likely roles should they be mobilised in the future to support the Regular Army. There, members were introduced to Battlegroup planning cycles, the orders and estimate process. A theme that is going to be running on more upcoming exercises.

Overall, a very well enjoyed exercise by all those who took part and my thanks to the team at C (Kohima) Company and in particular Sgt Kyle Smith CGC for pulling it together.



Saturday morning saw soldier's breakdown into sections and deploy onto the area to conduct low level skills and drills whilst moving through a series of RVs and stands covering first aid and obstacle crossing.

Section Commanders enjoyed the freedom of action to train with their own sections, which is always a challenge on a reserve exercise due to the far-reaching geographical spread of where our soldiers come from, whilst soldiers enjoyed developing and practicing section level SOPs.

1 Section prepare to step off on their patrol action.



The afternoon saw the exercising troops form into a Platoon and occupy a harbour area. Discussing and looking at lessons learned from Ukraine, how we operate in a dispersed harbour area, the command-and-control issues that brings as opposed to the traditional close triangular harbour area.

Following some orders the evening saw sections deploy on patrol actions, practicing the vital skill of being able to operate and navigate effectively at night, with an active enemy location for them to observe.



After a stormy night, Sunday saw soldiers make use of the extensive trench network that has been constructed at ITC Catterick, undertaking a lesson on trench clearance delivered by Cpl Ward of C Company's Assault Pioneer Section, before delving into serials. A highlight for the troops and which certainly got their blood pumping.

Directing Staff (DS) observe the sections conducting trench clearance drills.

4 MERCIAN - NAVIGATION



4 MERCIAN ran a successful navigation weekend during January on Leek training area.



For those people who have not been to Leek, it is like a mini-Brecon, with lots of moorland which poses a navigational challenge.



The weather also posed a navigational challenge, with thick fog throughout the weekend resulting in personnel testing their micro nav and ensuring that they had to put the lessons they were taught into practice.



A very successful Reservist-delivered weekend.

4 MERCIAN - Ex CHALLENGE EAGLE

Ex CHALLENGE EAGLE delivered a demanding pairs-level exercise designed to test fundamental infantry skills and build confidence to act decisively without immediate direction from the chain of command.



Junior commanders and soldiers were tested across 18 stands spread throughout the area. SNCOs and Officers ran the stands and were given freedom of action to design realistic and thought-provoking serials.

The Ops Room managed movement across the area and provided junior officers an opportunity to practice command and control in a dynamic, hybrid environment.



The CO Lt Col Lawson awarded the Richardson trophy to the top Pte Soldier in the Battalion; this was awarded to Pte Ransome HQ Coy.

The Trophy for the competition is sponsored by the Honorary Colonel Carl Richardson, and his Family.

The competition is held annually and In line with the Battalion Training Directive.



STAFFORDSHIRE REGIMENT ASSOCIATION



Branch Standard Carried at the Birmingham International Tattoo

Hednesford Branch member Tony Hopley was invited to take part in this year's Birmingham Tattoo in February.



WORCESTERSHIRE & SHERWOOD FORESTERS REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

If anyone wishes to join a branch, they are asked to contact the Assistant Regimental Secretary cindy.clark247@mod.gov.uk for more information.

Derby Branch

Gordon Carran has given up the post of Standard Bearer, and we thank Gordon for his dedicated service.

Craig Payne came to the rescue and volunteered to take on the position, his first event being at the grave rededication of Adeline Vickers, mother of Pte Jacob Rivers VC in Nottingham Road Cemetery, Derby, with our second Standard being paraded by Cadet CSM Harry Parker.

Our thanks go to both for representing the Branch, and to the other Branch members who attended the service.



The Derby Branch offers a warm welcome to new members, whether from the Mercian Regiment, the antecedent regiments, or other arms.

We continue to meet at the Army Reserve Centre, Sinfin Lane, Derby. DE24 9GL. The gates are manned from 1915hrs- 1940hrs to allow access, with the meeting commencing at 1945hrs. The dress at meetings is casual.

Worcester Branch

On Sunday 15th March a small group from Worcester Branch left for France to attend two rededication services on Tuesday 17th March.

The first being at CWGC Pargny British Military Cemetery, for Capt Martin Warren, of Worcester, late of the Worcestershire Regiment, KIA on 24 March 1918.



In the afternoon at CWGC Joncourt East British Cemetery, a service was held for LCpl Arthur Mantle of Nottingham, 1/8th Bn The Sherwood Foresters (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment) KIA on 3 October 1918.



Both services were conducted by Father Terkura Igbe CF Chaplain to 1st Bn Mercian Regiment. Also present was the RSM & a WOII of 4 Mercian Worcester Branch President, Lt Col (Retd.) Mark Jackson OBE laid a wreath at both services on behalf of all in WFRA.

The group visited various cemeteries laying crosses on as many Worcestershire Regiment and Sherwood Forester Regiment as possible.



ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA

Regimental Headquarters often has several personnel getting in touch asking “**How do I become a Chelsea Pensioner?**” To be eligible for admission, a candidate must be a former non-commissioned officer or soldier of the British Army who is:

1. Over 65 years or of State Pension age (whichever is higher).
2. Either in receipt of an Army Service Pension or War Disability Pension which you would be required to surrender upon entry to the Royal Hospital **OR** if you do not receive an Army Pension you would be required to make a weekly financial contribution (payable by Standing Order) towards your living costs. This contribution will be based on an assessment of affordability completed during the application process. Please note if you are in receipt of an Army Service Pension and/or War Disability Pension you may also be required to make a top-up contribution (also based on an assessment of affordability).
3. Free of any financial obligation to support a spouse or family.

To be able to live independently in the sheltered accommodation (Long Wards) – the Royal Hospital Chelsea is unable to accept direct entries to the nursing wards. If you have lost your partner / wife and have felt lonely and would like more information about living at The Royal

Hospital Chelsea, please contact Lt Col (Retd) Bill Temminck on Philip.Temminck100@mod.gov.uk More information about The Royal Hospital Chelsea can also be found [here](#).