

MEDWAY MESSENGER

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Autumn Newsletter

Over the past three months, HMS Medway has been acting as an ambassador for the Royal Navy around the UK, strengthening ties with local communities and upholding the Royal Navy's good name. Additionally she took part and successfully completed a challenging period of training known within the fleet as Operational Sea Training (OST).



Taking place in the challenging confines of the Lochs of Western Scotland, one of the scenarios even included defending the UK's nuclear storage facilities.

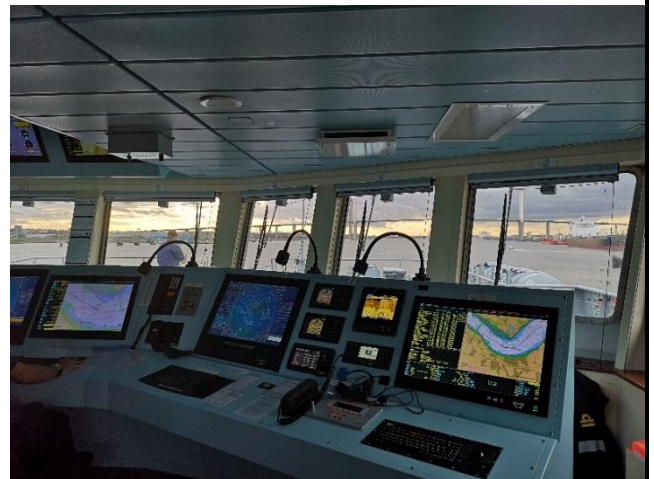
Successful completion of OST means Medway has proven herself as a capable and ever developing platform that is now at the forefront of the UK's foreign policy, ready to serve the Royal Navy's and the United Kingdom's interests overseas and in home waters.

An example of a firefighting team during a challenging OST fire exercise.



Returning from a well-deserved summer leave and going straight into OST was a difficult test for Ships Company but they rose to the challenge, being assessed on every aspect of the ship's ability and passing with flying colours, despite having the quickest generation programme of any ship since the end of WW2.

Tests on OST ranged from firefighting, navigation, defending the ship and dealing with a wide-range of realistic scenarios



Bridge during the River Thames transit.

WHAT IS A COMMISSIONING CEREMONY?

The act of commissioning is the ceremony marking a ship being assigned to active duty within the Royal Navy.

The ceremony is steeped in history and tradition and stems from the age of sail.



Following OST, Medway sailed down the Thames during a rewarding 7 hour pilotage in order to attend the Defence, Security, Equipment International (DSEI) conference.

Held at London's Excel conference Centre on the waterfront, DSEI proved to be a busy time for Medway given the large amount of interest and excitement surrounding the Royal Navy's new class of patrol vessel. Throughout the week, a number of VVIPs came on board for a tour including the First Sea Lord and Rt Hon Liz Truss MP, the Secretary of State for International Trade.

During this time alongside in London, some members of Ship's Company got the opportunity to visit the Houses of Parliament and House of Lords, courtesy of our Lady sponsor, Lady Fallon. This also proved to be a great opportunity for Ships Company to learn more about the wider defence industry with stalls at the conference ranging from unmanned drones to AI missile defence systems.

This period proved just how important the presence of Royal Navy personnel is at these events with the Type 26 frigates being announced by the Prime Minister Boris Johnson at this event.



On Tuesday 17th September, HMS MEDWAY sailed through the waterway she is named after – the River Medway – to a grand reception from the local population of Chatham.

On Thursday 19th, the Ship welcomed hundreds of distinguished guests and families from across the Naval Service and the Medway region in a ceremony to celebrate the commissioning of HMS Medway.

A brilliant service followed by tours of the ship followed with many turning out just to have a glance at the newly commissioned vessel.

In the evening, Ships Company and



Members of Ships company in Parliament alongside Lady

In the evening, Ships Company and valued guests were treated to an evening reception at the Historic Dockyard Chatham, celebrating Chatham's deep naval roots with a 3 course dinner and some questionable dance moves.

On Saturday the 21st Ships Company were given the honour of the Freedom of the City, involving a parade through the town in which thousands of the locals turned out to support their HMS Medway.

In the afternoon, Gillingham FC treated the ship to VIP tickets to their match against Ipswich. Unfortunately resulting in a loss for the home team, the lap of honour and fantastic hospitality provided by the club will be remembered by all members of Ships Company for years to come.

It may be a sometime before we return to our namesake river, but we will continue to build on the connections and affiliations built over the past month. Even as the crew change over the course of the ship's life, our affiliation to Medway will remain a constant theme.



With the Ship being as busy as she has been, time spent in a maintenance period during October and November in will allow the Ship to conduct vital preparations for the coming deployment.

Forward Together Medway!



September proved to be a very special month for all connected to HMS MEDWAY, with the fantastic Commissioning ceremony and the Freedom of the City Parade providing *two* once-in-a-lifetime events for the Ship's Company and their families to enjoy.

The past year has been a demanding one for all on board, which made the Commissioning week the perfect occasion to say thanks to my team, their families and our affiliates for your support throughout. I hope you all enjoyed it as much as I did.

The coming months will focus our attention on best preparing ourselves for future tasking in 2020. I look forward to your continued support in ensuring HMS Medway builds upon the fantastic start she has had throughout 2019.

Best wishes,

Cdr Ben Power RN

It has certainly been a monumental couple of months since the last Medway Messenger, with the Ship achieving a number of huge milestones in her lifetime.

The first major head mark ticked off has been the completion of our Operational Sea Training in August, certifying us capable of conducting a multitude of operational tasking over the coming years. We even managed to create a new record for the fastest ship to generate since WW2!