



THE WARRIOR



Newsletter for ESVH & the Military Community In East Sussex

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AND all other essential services, postmen, milkmen, paperboys (and ladies) waste collectors, etc., plus all volunteers across the County

Coronavirus: Vaccine Roll Out Continues

The NHS COVID-19 vaccination programme, the biggest in health service history, continued its rollout to people in their thirties, opening to people aged 36 and 37 from 18 May with more than a million more people eligible for a life-saving COVID-19 jab with nhs.uk.

Texts inviting people to book a vaccination were sent to those aged 37 on Tuesday and to 36 year olds on Wednesday.

The texts will allow people to access the national booking service at the touch of a button and arrange an appointment at an NHS vaccination centre, pharmacy or GP vaccination site.

The move to the next age group comes as more than 930,000 appointments were made in the days since the NHS COVID-19 vaccination programmes opened to 38 and 39 year olds. More than three out of four people aged 40 to 49 – over five and a half million people – have also received a vital first dose of protection.

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Support Services Telephone Contact Numbers

NHS 111 Any suspicion of flu or new cough, stay at home for 7 days, ring 111 IMMEDIATELY, for advice. Some GPs have a telephone triage service as well.

ESVH 07884263824/01424 446292/Freephone 0330 1077 808

STAR Freephone 0300 303 81600

ESRA 01424 435318

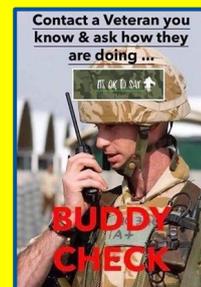
Seaview 01424 717981

Job Centre Plus Hastings 0800 169 190

Samaritans Hastings Freephone 0330 094 5717

Bexhill Caring Community 01424 215116

Hastings Covid-19 Community Support Hotline 01424 451019



East Sussex Veterans Hub 99/100 Group, 5 Harold Place. Hastings TN34 1JA
01424 446292 Email: ESVH99100@esvh99100.onmicrosoft.com

Registered with Charity Commission 1183583



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Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said: "Our phenomenal vaccination programme continues to go from strength to strength, with the UK having one of the highest uptake rates in the world and almost 57 million doses administered so far.

"I'm thrilled people aged 36 and 37 can book their appointments and I urge everybody to take up the offer as soon as you're eligible.

"Vaccines are the best way out of this pandemic and we can beat it together by getting our jobs."

NHS National Medical Director Professor Stephen Powis, said: "Bookings for the fastest and most successful NHS vaccination programme in history continue to surge with more than 930,000 appointments made in a matter of days since opening up to 38 and 39 year olds.

"With well over 30 million first doses of vital protection against coronavirus delivered just six months into the NHS vaccination drive, the NHS is able to open up to 36 and 37 year olds as the programme continues at pace.

"On the advice of the government and Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), people aged 50 and over and the clinically vulnerable are having their second doses brought forward to counter the spread of the Indian variant.

"Nobody needs to contact the NHS. You will be told how to rebook if you need to.

"Getting vaccinated is the most important step we can take to protect ourselves, our families and our communities against COVID-19, so when it is your turn to get your first or second dose please do so."

The government and the JCVI announced that second dose appointments will be brought forward from 12 to 8 weeks for those aged 50 and over who have yet to received theirs.

Nobody needs to contact the NHS. People should continue to attend their appointments unless told otherwise.

NHS England's lead for the NHS vaccination programme, Dr Emily Lawson said: "The success of

the NHS vaccination programme is not a happy accident – it's the result of exceptional planning, targeted delivery and people's determination to protect their patients, friends and communities as fast as possible."

People 39 and under who are eligible and pregnant women will be offered the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine in line with recently updated JCVI guidance.



RBL Centenary

The Royal British Legion marked the exact moment of its formation 100 years ago at 9am on Saturday 15 May, with the laying of wreaths at the Cenotaph in London and other towns, cities and villages across the UK.

Representatives of the Royal Navy, British Army, Royal Air Force and Merchant Navy laid wreaths at the Cenotaph to replicate the same actions of that time and day a century ago.



The ceremony was led by retired Lieutenant General James Bashall, who is national president of the RBL.

In a video message to celebrate the charity's centenary, the Prince of Wales hailed its "constant" support of the Armed Forces community.

"For one hundred years, the Royal British Legion has been a constant, through the annual Poppy Appeal, leading the nation in remembrance and providing a life-long commitment to every veteran and their families.

"Therefore, I wanted, above all, to offer my sincere and heartfelt gratitude to all those who have helped build this wonderful organisation we know today, and to all those who will be part of its future."

RBL director general Charles Byrne said: "In this, our centenary year, we are focused firmly on our future. Our proud heritage and 100 years of experience supporting the Armed Forces community have built the strong foundations of an organisation fit for the next 100.

"We remain committed to our mission to ensure that those who have given so much for their country get the fair treatment, support and recognition they deserve."



Introducing Challenger 3

The British Army's new Challenger 3 tanks are set to be delivered this decade, as part of an £800m contract, boasting significant and extensive improvement of numerous features.

The deal with Rheinmetall BAE Systems Land (RBSL) will see 148 of the service's existing Challenger 2 main battle tanks upgraded to Challenger 3s. The remaining Challenger 2s will be retired.

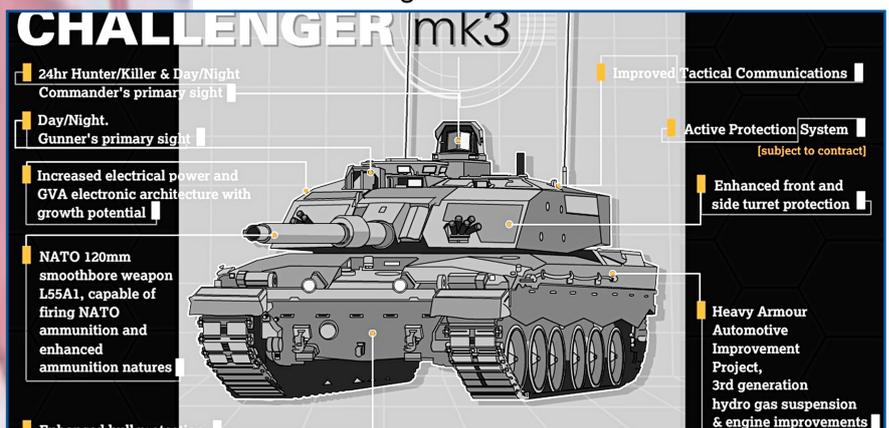
The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is already predicting that the new tanks will be "the most deadly in Europe" in a significant leap forward from their predecessor.

Challenger 3 benefits from the following upgrades.



- In terms of weight, the Challenger 2 and 3 are similar with the newer model weighing in at 66 tonnes, just one tonne more than its previous iteration.
- Both tanks are similar sizes, intended for four-man crews, the traditional setup of a commander, a gunner, a loader and a driver.
- One of the most obvious upgrades on display is the upgraded tank's available sighting systems. Challenger 2 only had a single thermal imager, whereas its more modern counterpart will have two independent new thermal imagers and fully integrated automatic target tracking, wide-area search and assisted target detection.
- Challenger 3 will also have a new driver's sight with front and rear thermal imager cameras.
- Challenger 3 boasts an all-new turret and new main armament, a 120mm L55A1 smoothbore and the latest generation programmable ammunition (high explosive and kinetic energy), bringing the new model in line with the NATO standard.

- This is a significant improvement over the Challenger 2 which had an L30 rifled bore gun as well as an original turret, limiting the distance it could fire and its overall effectiveness in battle zones. Its all-new turret can be fitted to the tanks of allies and global partners.
- In terms of survivability, the Challenger 3 tank is also vastly improved between generations with enhanced armour, a new laser warning system and an active protection system option. This is a leap forward over its previous iteration, as Challenger 2 has far fewer survivability features relying much more solely on its embedded special armour.
- The Challenger 3 is also set to be much more mobile with the newest generation of hydrogas suspension and an upgraded engine with improved cooling, all adding up to a reduced through-life cost.
- The Ministry of Defence says the new main battle tank will have a top speed of 60mph, compared to the Challenger 2's limit of around 37mph.
- One of the most lauded changes is that the Challenger 3 tank will be fully digitised, with new features improving communication and data-sharing with other vehicles and ISTAR (intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition, and reconnaissance) assets, such as drones, during future deployments. In a recent interview, Deputy Chief of the General Staff Lieutenant General Chris Tickell said that this greater data sharing capability will allow commanders "to identify the enemy" and "move that information seamlessly to other platforms".
- It will have generic vehicle architecture, an open system and new digital crew-stations compared to Challenger 2's point-to-point bespoke architecture and a closed system, which can lead to integration conflicts.





Victory's Mast in Conservation

A 32-metre mast belonging to the world's oldest naval ship still in commission has been lifted for the first time in almost 130 years.

HMS Victory's main lower mast, one of the earliest surviving examples of a wrought iron mast in the Royal Navy, was removed on May 14 as part of a 20-year long conservation project.

The mast of the historic war ship, which sits in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, was taken down as it needs to be assessed and conserved to ensure it is structurally secure and materially stable to be fully rigged.

The highly complex engineering challenge lasted three days. The 105 ft and 26-tonne mast was lifted by an enormous crane, before being positioned alongside the ship.

It was moved carefully through the ship's four decks from its anchor point in the orlop deck, where it has been secured since 1894. It was the first time the mast has been lifted since it was put in the ship.



HMS Victory's original masts were wooden, but in 1893 a survey concluded they were rotten and should be replaced with wrought iron masts from the decommissioned HMS Shah.

The three lower masts, made in Portsmouth, are important artefacts in their own right and were installed into Victory 127 years ago. They are thought to be the only surviving iron masts of the 19th century still in use.

Andrew Baines, HMS Victory project director at the National Museum of the Royal Navy, said: "Removing the lower mainmast has been an incredibly complex project. Add in HMS Victory's

iconic status, her age and our desire to keep her open to visitors as much as possible, and we have been faced with some unenviable engineering challenges.

"We have conducted ultrasonic thickness testing on the mast to understand its strength. Structural analysis has calculated the stresses in the mast from the lift and allowed us to develop a method to keep them within allowable, safe levels."

The mast was hoisted aloft 42 metres before being placed safely on the ground. Mr Baines added: "We know how strongly our visitors feel about Victory being without masts, but it is essential that we are able to complete this next stage of conservation, so she can remain open for the next 250 years."

It is thought the same exercise will need to be repeated for the other two lower masts and the bowsprit.

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard will be reopening from Monday May 17 and despite it lacking a mast, visitors will still be able to climb onboard and learn about the ship's 256-year history.

There is a newly-opened dry dock walkway and the lower mizzen and foremasts remain in place. A new exhibition called 'HMS Victory: The Nation's Flagship' can be found opposite the ship.



Front Line Support in Iraq

The RAF's Commander for Middle East operations has said that the so-called Islamic State (IS) has "nowhere to hide" as the RAF conducts more strikes against fighters in Iraq.

Air Commodore Simon Strasdin, UK Air Component Commander to the Middle East, said the latest strike on IS was made after militants came into contact with Iraqi Security Forces in northern Iraq.

After coming under fire, the Iraqi troops called for support from international coalition forces and two RAF Typhoons were deployed, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) said.

The jets then dropped two Paveway IV precision-guided bombs, the MOD added.

In an exclusive interview, Air Cdre Strasdin said it was "a direct strike" against the fighters who were "shooting at Iraqi forces."

"And that's really why we're there, we're there to support the Iraqis as they take ever-increasing control of Iraq," he said.

Jets based at RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus have been flying missions against IS, sometimes referred to as Daesh, for seven



years as part of Operation Shader – the UK's contribution to the fight against IS in Iraq and Syria.

The RAF role is to support the Iraqi forces, as they continue to stabilise and secure their country and it has been over two years since former US President Donald Trump claimed all territory held by IS in Syria had been "100%" eliminated.

However, a report published in December last year said IS was still "driving" the UK's terror threat.

Air Cdre Strasdin has said "Daesh are defeated territorially, but there are still pockets that are out there, however, the group is definitely in retreat.

"The threat that they pose to Iraq and to the wider globe in their ability to export terrorism is reducing," he said.

"Really, the message to Daesh is that there is nowhere to hide. So, whilst you remain on the run and you potentially pose a threat to us, we're watching, we're understanding, we're working closely with the Iraqi government and there is genuinely nowhere to hide.

The air strikes by the Typhoons come after the RAF helped to clear an IS stronghold in northern Iraq in March. The RAF supported Iraqi Security Forces ground operations during that 10-day mission.



New Entrant for Household Cavalry

The Household Cavalry has welcomed its latest recruit – a Shire horse from Wales.

Standing at 18.2 hands, or just under 2m tall, eight-year-old Willa Rose is the Household Cavalry's pick to become its new drum horse, leaving her farm in Pembrokeshire for a new career in the Army.

Initially, she wasn't pegged for service because she is female, but her temperament and gentle nature caught the eye of the visiting service personnel from London.

"We came here to buy another horse," said Captain "Skip" Nicholls, riding master at the Household Cavalry, explaining why Willa Rose could be perfect for her new role.

"We saw her and we rode her on the beach... and we don't normally take mares, as mares don't always work out in training.

"I'm pretty hopeful she'll work out, she's got the size and stamina that we want and she's got a really nice nature and hopefully she'll join the other drum horses. We've got two more in training, so this will be our third in training."

The duties of drum horses can often be overwhelming to those not suited for the role and Capt Nicholls outlined the qualities needed.



"Temperament is absolutely everything because they have to do everything in walk, they have to carry the drums, they have to be ridden off side-reins, they're in the middle of a band on parade or at the front of a banding parade.

"They'll have footguards around them, large crowds around them and they're a centrepiece as well, so a

lot of the work they do, is on their own, which is a big ask for a herd animal.

"So the drum horses absolutely have to have the right character to stand there and be confident on their own and she has exhibited all those characteristics in the time, twice we've seen her before, so hopefully that will carry through and she'll be successful."

Huw Murphy, Willa Rose's previous owner at Dyfed Shire Horse Farm, said he was proud to be supplying the regiment with the new horse and explained why Shire horses, in particular, are so special.



Willa Rose's Arrival from Wales

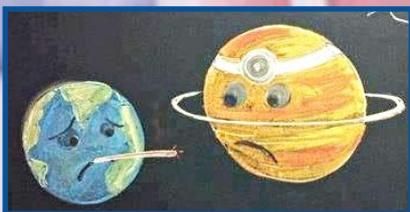
"It's Britain's largest mammal and the largest mammal that's walked this island since the ice age. "I think it's beholden of me and other hardcore Shire horse breeders and owners of this nation to keep this horse and keep breeding it because this country would not be the country it is today but for the Shire horse. That is my opinion."

If successful in her training, Willa Rose will receive a new name from the Queen, befitting her new role and title.

In the past, drum horses have had very classical names, and Capt Nicholls says it will be no different in Willa Rose's case, except, of course, this time it will be a female name.

He said: "So the names go off to Her Majesty The Queen and she decides on which one. We will present three or four, they're generally battle honours, Greek gods, Roman gods that sort of thing, so an old historic name.

"Boadicea wouldn't be a bad bet!"



I'M AFRAID YOU HAVE HUMANS!



New Deal for Chinooks

A new deal worth £1.4 billion will see the UK's Chinook helicopter fleet upgraded over a 10-year period.

The heavy-lift aircraft, which in November reached 40 years of Royal Air Force service, will be modernised to include a digital cockpit and automatic flight control system, allowing pilots to hover safely in areas with poor visibility.

The 14 new H-47(ER) aircraft will have a top speed of 300 kilometers per hour, and will be made available to the UK Armed Forces over the next decade. They will also have a modernised airframe to increase stability.

The new Chinooks will be based at RAF Odiham in Hampshire, the home of the fleet. It is hoped the H-47(ER) variants will be delivered from 2026.



Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said: "From assisting emergency repairs to UK flood defences, providing vital logistics support during COVID-19 to its warfighting role on Afghan battlefields, the Chinook has been the workhorse of the Armed Forces for over 40 years.

"The cutting edge H-47(ER) will be at the forefront of our specialist requirements in dealing with threats and logistic support.

"Our £1.4bn investment will mean we will be one of very few air forces with this capability."

The defence contract was signed with the United States through a Foreign Military Sales agreement, the Ministry of Defence confirmed.

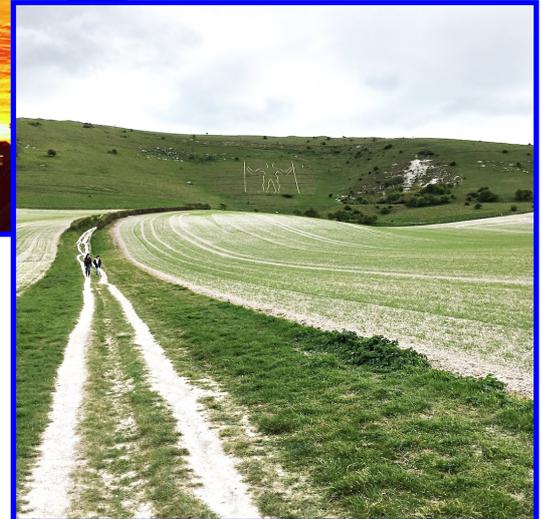
Four decades in service have seen the Chinook operate in every major conflict since the Falklands War, transporting cargo and personnel in a host of conditions. Most recently, the aircraft have been deployed in Mali, with the RAF sending its own force to the African country, with around 100 personnel and three Chinooks supporting the French-led counter-insurgency mission, Operation BARKHANE, since 2018.

More recently, it was part of the Joint Helicopter Aviation Task Force which transported NHS paramedics, equipment and patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Commander Joint Helicopter Command, Air-Vice Marshal Nigel Colman said: "This announcement assures Chinook operations for the decades ahead and is representative of our commitment to modernise capabilities whilst maintaining interoperability with key allies."

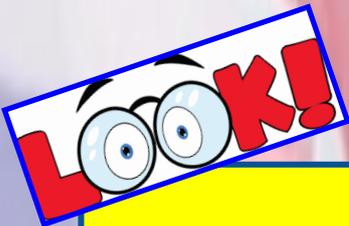


**Milo Says:
Sussex
A Good Place to Be**



Places to go...

**Photos by
Stuart &
Amanda**



ESVH Update

- **New Office:** By the end of the month ESVH will be working from the first floor of 5 Harold Place. It may take some time to get everything set up but we will be operating as soon as possible, with sessions as early as 5 June.
- Help moving office kit and furniture would be welcomed on 25th May.
- It is not possible to begin holding the **Veterans' Drop In** as yet due to non availability of Central Hall but hopefully come July that may be a possibility.
- ESVH will continue to have days 'on the farm' whilst a more permanent arrangement is negotiated.
- ESVH, pursuing a policy of 'giving back' to the community are working with East Sussex County Council and other organisations supporting those vulnerable groups in HM Prisons and the local community, addressing alcohol and substance issues. This will involve opportunities to volunteer in the future.
- David P is now following up on the necessary admin arrangements to get the **sea fishing trip(s)** underway, hopefully the first one in June.
- **ESVH will have a stall at Armed Forces Day in Eastbourne on 26 June and help will be required for that.**
- **The opportunity of a camping weekend is being considered and more will be published nearer the time. Again June/early July is possible.**

Steve's Special Peanut Butter Smoothie

Serves 2



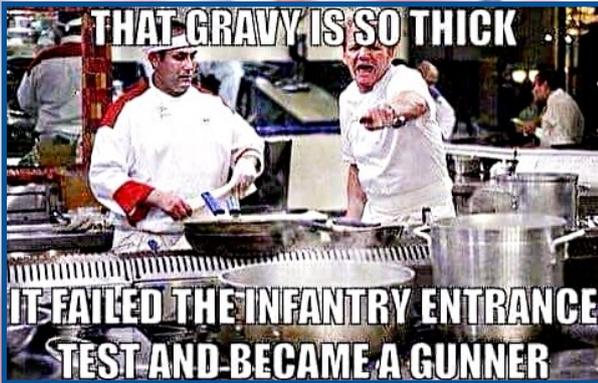
Ingredients:

- 2 overripe frozen large bananas
- 4-6 tbsp peanut butter or PB2 or allergy-friendly substitute
- 250ml milk of choice
- 1/8 tsp salt
- Optional 1/3 cup quick oats or rolled oats
- Sweetener of choice, to taste
- Optional scoop protein powder

'Mixologist' says:

Blend the oats until a fine powder forms, add all remaining ingredients and blend again until smooth.

You know the rest, but then go for a workout!



Ooooooo...Backlash from Jason?

I've always assumed ironing boards were surfboards that stopped pursuing their dreams and got real jobs.



BEFORE YOU START TAKING THE 'P' OUT OF THE RMP



PUT YOURSELF IN THEIR SHOES

