

## **Torch Relay News Release**

Cadets from Plymouth and Cornwall Wing will take part in a national torch relay to celebrate the RAF Air Cadets 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The special anniversary torch will arrive at Okehampton Camp on Saturday 26 August at 12noon. This is the final part of its six week tour through the country, with cadets, adult volunteers and veterans finding unique and adventurous ways to celebrate its journey.

Starting in John O'Groats and finishing in Cornwall, the torch has visited prominent addresses such as 10 Downing Street and Blackpool Tower, as well local landmarks and cadet activities such as gliding schools, shooting ranges and RAF bases and more.

The torch will leave Okehampton and travel to nearby Meldon Quarry where it will be abseiled down the Quarry by an air cadet, courtesy of Adventure Okehampton. By road it will travel to Harrowbeer, a former RAF airfield where cadets and staff from Tavistock will take the salute by the old air traffic control building. It will then travel to the Hoe at Plymouth for photo opportunities at Smeaton's Tower at 1445hrs. The torch then travels to the Tamar Bridge for a handover between the Devon and Cornwall cadets. Deputy Mayor of Saltash, Cllr Jean Dent will see it safely on to the train at 1612hrs at Saltash Station. Courtesy of GWR it will arrive in St Austell where it will go on the Eden Project for photo opportunities from 1730hrs. At Eden it will travel down the zip wire with cadets who will have won the trip as a prize in a national raffle thanks to the generosity of Hangloose.

The torch will then stay overnight at RAF St Mawgan and travel on Sunday morning to Perranporth where it will be accompanied by another cadet or staff member prize winner, this time being parachuted out of an aircraft by Cornwall Parachute Club. It will then make its way to Lands End for photographs before heading to Predannack airfield for 12noon for the final party. The torch will be received on this historic occasion by Chief of Defence Staff, Air Chief Marshall Sir Stuart Peach.

Officer Commanding of Plymouth and Cornwall Wing, Wing Commander Francis Reis comments: "Although Predannack airfield is now under the Royal Navy, it first opened as a Royal Air Force base in 1941, the same year that the Air Training Corps was formed. Today 626 Volunteer Gliding Squadron are based here, providing opportunities for Air Cadets to get their first taste of being in the air. It seems a rather fitting location for the anniversary torch to end its journey."

The torch has even been fitted with a tracking device so its progress can be followed around the country at <http://atc75.mapyx.com/>

More information about the RAF Air Cadets, including how to join, can be found at [www.raf.mod.uk/aircadets](http://www.raf.mod.uk/aircadets).

## **ENDS**

### **Notes:**

The torch is from the symbol on the back of the Cadet Force Medal, it is also a symbol of enlightenment towards training; an ethos of the RAF Air Cadets

On Twitter follow #ATC75Torch for the latest movements

For further information contact Squadron Leader Laura Bushell Hawke - 07775560681 - [media.pcw@aircadets.org](mailto:media.pcw@aircadets.org)

Photo opportunities are available at Plymouth Hoe at 1445hrs and the Eden Project at 1730hrs.

### **Background notes:**

- The RAF Air Cadets are aged from 12-19yrs old and have great opportunities like their predecessors, cadets today enjoy a wide range of exciting and challenging activities, ranging from flying and gliding to target shooting, camping, sport, expeditions, music, community service, drill and ceremonial as well as academic subjects leading to nationally recognised qualifications.
- The aims of the RAF Air Cadets echo those from the foundation of the Corps:
  1. Promote and encourage a practical interest in aviation and the Royal Air Force among young people
  2. Provide training which will be useful in the Services and civilian life
  3. Encourage the spirit of adventure and develop qualities of leadership and good citizenship
- The Duke of Edinburgh's Award, adventure training, leadership and teamwork are all part of the programme for cadets. Adult volunteers can also gain valuable life skills and qualifications.
- An estimated 2 million UK citizens are either former air cadets or associated with the ATC and CCF (RAF).
- Currently, Plymouth and Cornwall Wing consists of 23 units, 730 cadets and 190 volunteer staff. One of the key messages in this 75th year is the need for more volunteers, in a wide variety of roles, across the country to keep these units open to continue to give young people amazing opportunities.
- If you are aged 20 or over and feel you can help inspire the next generation please contact the Wing Headquarters on 01637 857419 or visit [www.raf.mod.uk/aircadets](http://www.raf.mod.uk/aircadets). Previous military or aviation experience is not required