



REPORT FROM WATTISHAM FLYING STATION

My apologies for not presenting in person, but this perhaps demonstrates, in part, the current position within the Civil Service, Ministry of Defence and wider Government... we are all feeling the strain with headcount reductions and significant post gapping.... do same/more with less!

The Station has been a hectic place over the last year, receiving into service a number of new model Apaches and, at the end of March 2024, flying the last sortie of the original Mk 1 type helicopters. Receipt of the new model has concurrently required significant training and upskilling for both air and ground crews, as they convert to the new model. At the same time, Wattisham units have supported numerous exercises throughout the year travelling to Oman, Estonia (twice), Norway and most counties within the UK!

Life on the Station has continued at the same pace, with significant construction activity particularly over the Autumn and Winter with three major projects starting; replacement of the 1950 era ring main electric cables, pipework for the District heating mains and crucially, the demolition of 168 bedspaces, part of a program to modernise the Single Living Accommodation for our soldiers. I look forward to later in the year when the Station returns to a form of steady state and we stop resembling a building site.. albeit briefly. There remain plans to improve the estate over the next ten years.

We held a Families Day in August, kindly supported by a number of visiting aircraft, including a full display by the Red Arrows. Attended by some 5000 family members and friends, a fantastic event, but not sadly to be repeated this year, due to other commitments.

1 May 2024

MJ KINSEY
Station Staff Officer
Wattisham Flying Station