

Sword & Shield

HMS DEFENDER's Quarterly News

Issue 02 | July 2018



A proud Moment – Our Sailors gather to receive an address from Commodore C Wood RN as DEFENDER is officially accepted back in to the Fleet.

The Story Continued...

After sailing for the first time since coming out of an extensive refit period, DEFENDER has spent many days and nights at sea. The main effort as a whole has been in preparing the ship for being accepted back in to the Fleet.

The start of this period was focused on post upkeep trials where almost every element of the Ship has been put through its paces (including our sailors) to ensure reliability and maximum operational effectiveness.

As well as periods at Sea allowing DEFENDER to achieve key milestones for aviation and gunnery currency, the Ship has spent time in Portsmouth allowing time for essential system improvement and ironing out of any issues that inevitably arise from extensive periods of such engineering complexity.

DEFENDER also conducted her first foreign port visit in Brest, France which was a great opportunity for the Ship's Company to bond and reflect on their significant achievements to date.

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER

This edition of *Sword & Shield* details the tremendous work that the men and women of HMS DEFENDER have carried out during the second quarter of 2018.

On Thursday 26 July HMS DEFENDER was officially accepted back in to the Fleet by Commodore Wood (Commodore Portsmouth Flotilla) which marked the culmination of all the hard work getting the Ship to the required standard. This was an extremely proud day for me as I looked over the members of my Ship's Company who have sacrificed a great deal to get to this point, but also who remain positive and enthusiastic about the challenges ahead of us. I have full confidence that by the time you receive the next edition of 'Sword & Shield' DEFENDER will be ready in all respects to undertake our essential Operational Sea Training package and achieve the next milestone toward becoming a fully operationally capable Air Defence Destroyer.

To all of our wider family, as you can see your continued support has allowed us to make great strides during this period and it is much appreciated by everybody on board. We will soon be undertaking longer periods away from HMNB Portsmouth and during these times your support will again underpin the valuable contribution of everyone on board.

Cdr Richard Hewitt MBE RN
Commanding Officer

SISTERS IN ARMS!

HMS DEFENDER and HMS DIAMOND cross paths in the South Coast Exercise Areas as Cdr Hewitt MBE wishes his counterpart fair winds and following seas!





Successful aviation MOT leads to Green Deck!

In May DEFENDER achieved a significant moment in the journey to become a fully operational warship; the Flight Deck was passed 'green' for operational use.

Once the equipment was proven the Ship's Company were put to the test, seeing if they could deal with an aircraft crashing on the Flight Deck. The Crash on Deck Exercise (CODEX) simulates fires, floods and multiple casualties to test the Ship's reactions and to practice the damage control procedures.

A Wildcat helicopter from 815 Sqn (call sign 'Rascal') conducted day and night 'deck-bashing', ie landing and launching from the Ship multiple times whilst simulating aviation emergencies from fuel spills to the catastrophic scenario of, the aircraft ditching at sea.

What Next?

Many members of DEFENDER's Ship's Company will now be able to take some well deserved summer leave, with just a minimal 'Duty Watch' remaining on board ensuring the safety of the ship. The rest and recuperation is definitely required as the autumn brings with it the most intense period of activity DEFENDER will have seen for a long time.

Initially there will be a 3 week 'Fleet Time Support Period' where the Ship will have the remaining essential works conducted before she sails again to begin a work-up package on the road to Operational Sea Training (OST) toward the end of October. This period will be high intensity training on board in the South Coast Exercise Areas, continually testing whole ship reactions to emergencies and war fighting scenarios as well as more detailed and complex serials for each individual department. Once DEFENDER completes this the Fleet Operational Sea Training (FOST) staff will endorse her as ready for operations.



Gunnery Trials go with a BLAST!

DEFENDER has successfully re-commissioned all of her gunnery systems by conducting test firings on all weapons from the General Purpose Machine Guns to the 4.5 inch Medium Calibre Gun with live ammunition. This was the culmination of complex alignment checks and safety training that is required to fire live ordnance at sea.

A variety of targets were used throughout the trial including a giant orange inflatable float termed as the 'Killer Tomato' and a simulated missile towed by an aircraft just above the waves!

DEFENDER has fired over 150 rounds of 4.5 inch ammunition, 3700 rounds of 20mm ammunition and over 10000 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition in completing her calibration trials.



Monthly Focus

PETTY OFFICER CATERING SERVICES (POCS)

POCS Green joined the Royal Navy in May 2008 as an Able Seamen Chef and throughout his career has served in a number of Her Majesty's Ships including Frigates, Destroyers, a Survey vessel and Mine Counter Measure Ships. He has enjoyed many foreign runs ashore and a highlight was when HMS PROTECTOR broke through the ice and disembarked the Ships Company to play a midnight football match while the sun was still up!

POCS Green promoted to Petty Officer in Jul 18 during the same week that he became a father and received the Keith Collick Memorial Trophy as the highest performing member of his Qualifying Course, and was welcomed onboard DEFENDER as the catering sub department Senior Rate. Life onboard can be challenging for Chefs, usually the first up to work long days, providing 3 meals a day for the whole Ship's Company for just £3.11 per person, but POCS Green remains constantly upbeat and determined to make the atmosphere in the Galley one that can be enjoyed by all.



The Ship is now on Twitter as [@HMSDefender](https://twitter.com/HMSDefender), follow us as we complete our sea trials!