

Captain E L Ablett MBE Royal Navy

The daughter of an RAF Officer, Captain Ellie Ablett read Modern History at Somerville College, Oxford and joined the Royal Navy in 1993, in the first wave of women joining a fully integrated service on the closure of the Women's Royal Naval Service.

Following initial training which included experience of amphibious operations on board HMS Fearless, her early career ranged from providing executive support to Flag and Commanding Officers in Portsmouth Naval Base, HMS Neptune, the Defence Procurement Agency and the Maritime Warfare School to sea appointments in HMS Brave and HMS Edinburgh; she was promoted to Lieutenant Commander in 2002.

Her first role in Professional Logistics Command was on board HMS Newcastle, and her second Command assignment followed in HMS Invincible as the ship prepared for the Trafalgar 200 celebrations. From 2005 she worked in the Ministry of Defence, responsible for developing the Naval Service's pay, allowances and pensions policy. This was followed by an operational tour in Iraq in support of a 3-star General and UK personnel serving in Baghdad. Selected for the Advanced Command and Staff Course 2008-09, she achieved a Master of Arts in Defence Studies from King's College London and awarded a Cormorant Fellowship for academic excellence. Thereafter she joined the Permanent Joint HQ in J5 Plans with responsibility for international partnerships and planning for the UK contribution to operations in Afghanistan.

2010 saw her promoted to Commander and appointed to Navy Command HQ as Executive Assistant to the Deputy Commander in Chief Fleet. This was followed by two years as the Logistics Branch Manager managing the delivery and impact of the Naval Service Redundancy Programme, Defence-wide change programmes, Mixed Manning in Submarines and the RN/RM Braiding initiative. Selected for Professional Command, she joined HMS Bulwark as Commander Logistics in Oct 13, leading her department through a deployment East of Suez, Tier 1 and Tier 2 Operational Sea Training and high profile events in support of RM 350 and the 70th anniversary of D Day. She joined the Naval Staff in July 2014 to take up her current appointment as Secretary to the First Sea Lord in the rank of Captain. In 2015 she was substantively promoted to Captain and then selected to Command HMS Raleigh with effect from September 2016.

A keen interest in promoting effective talent management and an inclusive culture across the organisation, she established a professional network for women in the Naval Service in 2013. She was awarded the MBE in the 2014 New Year's Honours List.

Captain Ablett is married to Simon, a former Royal Navy Weapon Engineer Officer, who now runs his own outdoor sports coaching and guiding business from their home in the Brecon Beacons National Park. A keen sportswoman with a passion for mountain and road biking and stand-up paddleboarding, she enjoys any remaining spare time in her garden.