



Commodore R J A Bellfield MA Royal Navy

Commander Devonport Flotilla

A Surface Warfare Officer, with a specialisation in Anti-submarine Operations, Commodore Robert Bellfield took command of the Devonport Flotilla in August 2017.

A career of over 30 years has largely been at sea and supporting operations, much of it based in the West Country. In 2013 and 2014 he spent 9 months in Bahrain as the Deputy Commander for all RN maritime operations in the Gulf and Middle East, working closely with the United States Fifth Fleet staff to integrate RN and USN warfighting capability in a highly intense operational theatre. His last sea appointment was as the Executive Officer of Ark Royal for her final commission, which involved the regeneration of the UK's maritime fixed wing flying capability with the Harrier, until her retirement in late 2010. Previous sea time included command of the Type 23 frigates Grafton, Portland and Argyll, and second-in-command of Sutherland. His early career included time in minehunters, fishery protection vessels and frigates; operating in every sphere of RN maritime operations in UK waters, the Far East, the Gulf, South Atlantic and the West Indies.

A fascinating year prior to returning to the West Country was spent at the Royal College of Defence Studies in London, where he studied global security, stability and prosperity at the National Strategic level, along with students from 57 different nations. This course built upon other staff training on the Advanced Staff Course at the Joint Services Command Staff College and an MA with King's College London. Shore appointments have been demanding and varied; including the planning and execution of covert anti-submarine, counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism operations from the Fleet Operations Centre at Northwood; training young officers at BRNC Dartmouth, with specific responsibilities for leadership, seamanship and navigation; on the strategic planning staff in the Ministry of Defence in London (with particular responsibility for Africa) and the Capability Manager for all surface ships, weapons and sensors in Navy Command HQ in Portsmouth. More recently he commanded HMS Raleigh in Torpoint, leading a first class multi-school training establishment that produces the fine young sailors to operate and maintain our ships, submarines and aircraft.

Originally from Woodbridge in Suffolk, Commodore Bellfield, along with his wife and two daughters, currently lives near Portsmouth. The family spends much of its time on the water, either in their yacht, or racing in a variety of sailing dinghies, as well as taking the girls to National, and International, sailing events. Robert is Chairman of the GBR 420 class youth dinghy association, dedicated to producing future Olympic medallists, and a qualified RYA Yachtmaster Offshore and Dinghy Race Coach. Running, cycling and walking the dog, contribute to fitness. Regrettably his rugby playing days are over but he is keen supporter on the touchline. Robert is a Liveryman of the Honourable Company of Leathersellers, an ancient trade guild in London, a Freeman of the Honourable Company of Shipwrights and a Freeman of the City of London.