

**Lieutenant Colonel Matt Churchward Royal Marines**  
**Commanding Officer Royal Marines Reserve Merseyside**



Lieutenant Colonel Matt Churchward joined the Royal Marines in 1994, serving initially as a Royal Marine Reservist at Bristol, before moving to the Regular Corps and Young Officer training in 1996. His first command with 45 Commando Group was varied, ranging from extreme cold weather warfare training in Norway through to jungle warfare training in Brunei and a disaster relief operation in Honduras. After a period training recruits, he specialised as a Landing Craft Officer, completing appointments at Royal Marines Poole and 539 Assault Squadron Royal Marines. Junior staff training followed, after which he joined Jungle Warfare Wing in Brunei, where he was responsible for delivering the Jungle Warfare Instructor and Tracking courses.

On return to the UK, he joined 40 Commando Royal Marines as Adjutant, deploying to Iraq in 2004. In 2006, he served with Commander United Kingdom Amphibious Forces as the intelligence staff officer for the 2\* headquarters; during this period he was selected for an operational deployment in Afghanistan, working for Regional Command South based in Kandahar. This appointment proved varied, working alongside the Afghan National Army, before taking on the role of Chief Operations within the Combined Joint Operations Cell. He was awarded the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service in 2007.

After an intelligence appointment with 3 Commando Brigade, he attended the Advanced Command and Staff Course, graduating in 2009 with a Master of Arts in Defence Studies from King's College. He then joined 1 Assault Group Royal Marines as the Operations Officer, during which time he commanded training teams in Lagos in support of the Nigerian Armed Forces, before deploying on Operation COUGAR as the Amphibious Operations Officer with Royal Fleet Auxiliary MOUNTS BAY. He completed sub-unit command with 40 Commando Royal Marines, which included a deployment to Afghanistan, based in Nahr-e Saraj over a period of transition to the Afghan National Security Forces. For this operation he was awarded a Chief of Joint Operations Commendation.

After a brief period covering the Plans and Policy desk with Commander United Kingdom Amphibious Forces, he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in 2014 and appointed as the lead staff officer for the Royal Marines Reserve within Navy Command Headquarters. He then completed an appointment as Directing Staff on the Advanced Command and Staff Course, before being selected as the United Kingdom Liaison Officer with the United States Joint Staff, responsible for the development of Joint Forces.

Following selection for unit command, he assumed the role of Commanding Officer Royal Marines Reserve in September 2017, with a geographical area of responsibility that includes Birmingham, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester and Nottingham.