

**Commander Steve Tatham Ph.D., M.Phil., Royal Navy
Commanding Officer HMS King Alfred**

Steve Tatham is the second member of his family to serve in HMS King Alfred; the first, Leading Seaman Alan Tatham, was drafted in 1941 to HMS King Alfred, to train RNVR Sub-Lieutenants, having spent a year at sea on Russian convoy duty aboard HMS Pozarica. Inspired by his grandfather, Steve joined Southampton University Royal Navy Unit in 1987, HMS Wessex RNR unit in 1988, the RN in 1990 and returned to the RNR after he resigned from the RN in 2014.

A specialist in Information Operations he has served afloat in HMS Shetland, Ariadne, Invincible, Illustrious and Plover; ashore in UKMCC staff in Bahrain; in the Cabinet Office Joint Intelligence Committee, twice in the MoD and once on exchange to the Royal New Zealand Navy (which included a short period in Paremoremo maximum security prison, Auckland, when the NZ Armed Forces were tasked to assist during the national prison officer's strike in 1996). Additionally, he has served as the New Entry Officer at HMS Raleigh, OIC of Artificer Training at HMS Collingwood, he was the RN's in-service student at the University of Cambridge in 2004 and, in 2013, Directing Staff on the Advanced Command and Staff Course.

His operational experience spans the Sierra Leone civil war in 2000, the 2003 invasion of Iraq, East and North Africa and Afghanistan. During the latter conflict he commanded 15 (UK) Psychological Operations Group, only the second RN Officer to command what was ostensibly an Army Battalion. Under his command the unit was awarded the Firmin Sword of Peace for its work in Helmand province. In addition to commanding in Helmand he deployed on a number of occasions to ISAF HQ in Kabul. Steve took command of HMS King Alfred in November 2021 and this will be his final appointment in the Royal Navy.

Steve holds an M.Phil in International Relations from St Johns' College Cambridge and a Ph.D. from the University of Southampton. He is the author of two published books; his first, *'Losing Arab Hearts and Minds'*, was a study of the US led coalition's relationship with the Al-Jazeera TV channel during the 2003 Iraq War (for which he was the Royal Navy Public Spokesman) and his second, *'Behavioural Conflict'*, which he co-authored with General Andrew Mackay and General Stanley McChrystal, a study of the Information War against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban.

A Saxophonist, Harley Davidson biker, dog lover and classic car owner he lives in the New Forest with his wife, a specialist cancer care nurse. When not on duty with the Royal Navy he is a defence consultant and independent academic and lecturer.