

Chief Executive Officer  
Stockton Borough Council  
Municipal Buildings  
Church Road  
Stockton-on-Tees

53 Queens Drive  
BILLINGHAM  
TS22 5JL

22 March 2011

Dear Sir,

**Freedom of the Town to 1 Close Support Battalion REME**

REME (Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers) are the forgotten heroes of any military action quietly going about their job often in great danger. Recently in both Iraq and Afghanistan, Recovery Mechanics and Vehicle Mechanics were frequently out on combat logistic patrols providing support as tradesmen. Technicians had to climb watch towers fully exposed to enemy fire to repair surveillance equipment. It takes great courage to repair or recover a vehicle when being fired upon, when you cannot return fire.

One Close Support Battalion REME Commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Fraser-Hitchen is based in Megiddo Lines Catterick The Battalion moved from Osnabruck Germany to Catterick in April 2008 and expect to stay in Catterick indefinitely. The Battalion has a diverse and varied history which dates back from WW2 when 12 Infantry Brigade Workshop was formed in March 1943. It is currently made up of three companies; 4 Armoured Company , 12 Armoured Company, and 24 Field Company. Not only does The Battalion maintain and repair all land based equipment for all units within 4<sup>th</sup> Mechanised Brigade and Catterick Garrison, but provide support to a wider geographic region including all local TA Units. They have recently returned from operations in Afghanistan.

Four officers in the Battalion are from the Stockton Area and a further three officers who have bought houses and permanently settled here. I do not know how many soldiers are from Teesside. Catterick is a particularly attractive posting because of its proximity to the North East which is of course one of the Army's key providers of recruits. They therefore get a lot of young soldiers who are keen to be close to home requesting a Catterick posting. Also a lot of the older soldiers in their last

few years request a posting to Catterick and finally settle in the Area. Presently a large number of soldiers have bought houses in the Teesside area and intend to settle permanently with their families in and around Stockton, as I have done moving up from Hampshire in 1983.

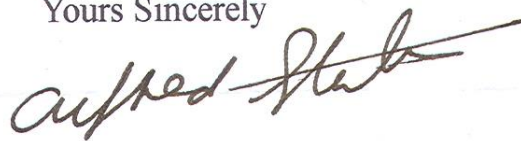
Many of the soldiers and officers shop at Teesside Park which is the closest main shopping area to the Garrison with a lot of the shops offering REME soldiers discounts. It is ideal for them to buy hi-tech electrical goods and the modern electronic gadgets so popular with young people. The night clubs of Stockton and Yarm are often frequented by them at weekends.

Routinely the Battalion uses the Military supply chain for goods and services but do occasionally have to source outside the army for goods and services and on those occasions have turned to Teesside factory workshops and suppliers for assistance.

The Battalion are keen to support all communities within the Northeast and would be honoured to have a representative presence at the Stockton Remembrance Parade in November and the Annual Mayors Parade. In 2010 a small number from the Battalion took part in the Billingham Remembrance Parade as Guests of Teesside REME Association and also attended the Unveiling of the new Billingham War Memorial in September 2009

**I can strongly recommend that One Close Support Battalion REME be considered for the Freedom of The Borough of Stockton**

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alfred G Stubbs', written in a cursive style.

Alfred G Stubbs