



## **Commander James Coleman**

**Commanding Officer 846 Naval Air Squadron**

**Commando Helicopter Force**

James joined the Royal Navy in Nov 2003 as a Direct Graduate Entrant (Pilot) completing Sea Time in HMS CORNWALL and employed as a Helicopter Controller and Flight Deck Officer in HMS ENDURANCE, deployed to South America, South Georgia and Antarctica. Awarded Wings on the Mk4 Commando Sea King in 2008 he served his first tour on 846 NAS during a busy four deployments on OP HERRICK, deployed on exercise in HMS' ILLUSTRIOUS, OCEAN and BULWARK, and completed Arctic flying qualifications in Norway - for his efforts during these 2 years Coleman was awarded the Darren Chapman Award and CO CHF Commendation.

An exchange with 78 Sqn (RAF) flying the Mk3/3A Merlin included a further Op tour to Afghanistan and multiple exercises across Europe and the Middle East. Graduating from Central Flying School as a Qualified Helicopter Instructor (QHI) he instructed new CHF Merlin pilots on 28 (AC) Sqn RAF as part of the RN takeover of this asset. Upon stand-up of 845 NAS as a Merlin Sqn, he served as Sqn Ops Officer and environmental specialist during a busy 12 months coordinating and delivering deployments to the USA, Norway, NATO Ex BALTOPS and, the first Joint Expeditionary Force (Maritime) deployment to the Mediterranean.

Away from the cockpit he served as the Amphibious and Aviation J5 planner for the UKs 2\* Standing Joint Force Headquarters (SJFHQ), taught Operational level planning to the Omani Joint Staff for Ex Saif Sareea 3 and was seconded to the MOD Ops Dir as a member of the first Special Mission Team (SMT) delivering projects to counter threats from the UK's near abroad. Returning to Afghanistan for a 6th time as the Aviation Ops Officer to the 1\* COMBRITFOR (A), he was additionally responsible for J5 security planning in Kabul under NATO Op RESOLUTE SUPPORT. On return he completed the UK's Advanced Command and Staff Course with distinction, whilst also achieving an MA in Defence Studies with Merit.

His most recent post was as the RNs Enhanced Carrier Cooperation Liaison to the USN 4\* Fleet Forces Command in Norfolk Virginia, responsible for the generation of UK Fast Jet capability in the USA and support to the UK/US Statement of Intent for Enhanced Carrier Cooperation.

As CO 846 he is responsible for the aviation delivery to UK Maritime Counter Terrorism and is the Training Provider to all CHF Merlin Mk4 Pilots, Aircrewmen and Engineers.

James lives in Oxfordshire with his wife Susie and children Daisy (2008) and Rupert (2010). Outside of work he is Secretary to the Army Vs Navy Rugby Match, a keen outdoorsman, paddleboarder, and fisherman.