**COLONEL GA McDADE (GARY)**

**COMMANDER SOUTH WEST**

Now wearing his fourth cap badge, Colonel Gary McDade commissioned in 1993 as one of the last officers to join The Glosters. Shortly after this the regiment amalgamated into The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment which subsequently became The Rifles. Taking over as Commander South West therefore sees him back in his regimental heartland.

He undertook a range of posts at Regimental Duty in Mechanised, Air Mobile and Armoured Infantry roles, with deployments to Bosnia, Northern Ireland and Iraq.  Notable positions on the staff include two years working for two Chiefs of the General Staff, and operational planning roles at HQ 1(UK) Armoured Division in Germany, and, more recently, with HQ 3(UK) Division in Bulford.  A graduate of the Advanced Command and Staff Course, his Masters degree dissertation focussed on mental health.

In 2012/13 he deployed to Afghanistan as Military Assistant to Deputy Commander Regional Command (South West), embedded with the United States Marine Corps in Helmand Province. In 2017 he spent 6 months as Executive Officer to the European Union Training Mission in Mali and he returned to Africa three years later when posted to Nairobi on Loan Service. Promoted from there, he undertook a further deployment to Afghanistan in March 2021, lasting just three months due to the coalition withdrawal.

Training has been a constant throughout Colonel McDade’s career; he has been an instructor at the Army Training Regiment Lichfield, Britannia Royal Naval College, the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and the UK Defence Academy.  His command saw him responsible for the rehabilitation of Service offenders as Commandant of the Military Corrective Training Centre - a memorable and truly rewarding role.

Colonel McDade assumed command of the South West Region in February 2022.  He is also the Joint Military Commander for UK operations across the South West and Channel Islands during moments of crisis.  Married to Annabel, they have two teenage daughters and an energetic Border Terrier.  Interests lie in all sports, but particularly cricket and rugby, and he is Chair of the Army Rugby Union Referees Society.  He took up long distance running a few years ago and is looking for his next endurance challenge.