

New home for rehearsals, performances and musical collaboration

1 year ago



[Willmott Dixon](#) continues to establish a solid track-record for quality in the defence sector by handing over on a new c£12m Band facility for Army musicians at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS).

The purpose-built facility can now house all 54 musicians serving under British Army Band Sandhurst, offering a modern and acoustically optimised environment for rehearsals, performances and musical collaboration.

The project saw Willmott Dixon refurbish former stables dating from c1850 as well as old offices at RMAS to deliver an instrument store, music library, offices, rehearsal rooms, changing rooms, and a crew room. The facility also has sustainable features, with two of the blocks being installed with solar panels and heat source pumps.

Called the Joint Bands School project, which began in February 2023, Willmott Dixon worked with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) and Pick Everard. It was funded under the Defence Estate Optimisation (DEO) Army Programme, which is investing £3.35Bn over 10 years to improve living, working and training accommodation for soldiers.

Accelerated under the SCAPE framework, the completed work achieved Defence Related Environmental Assessment Methodology (DREAM) 'Very Good' and 'Excellent' ratings, contributing sustainably to the built environment.

Debs Thorne, Joint Bands School programme manager, said: "This project is a fantastic example of the significant investment underway across the Army estate, to support military training and future capability through delivery of modern, sustainable infrastructure. I have been really impressed by the quality of the

finished buildings and I trust that the British Army Band Sandhurst will soon feel at home in their new, purpose-built music facility.”

Aleksia Xhaferaj, DIO’s project manager, said: “We are proud to have delivered this new purpose-built facility, which will bring significant benefits to Army musicians. The successful completion of this project is testament to excellent collaboration between DIO, the Army and our contractors.”

Richard Poulter, managing director of Willmott Dixon in the South, said: “We take great pride in our contribution to the creation of this cutting-edge facility, dedicated to those who serve our nation. The building is truly exceptional, and I hope that the musicians find inspiration and flourish within the space. The Ensemble Band at RMAS will move into the building over the summer. An official opening event for the new Band facility is planned for autumn 2024. The DEO Army programme of work makes up a large proportion of the overarching DEO Portfolio, which is investing £5.1Bn in infrastructure across the Defence estate.”