

Welcome to Britain

COMMUNITY RELATIONS ADVISER

To enjoy a tour in a foreign country, the visitors need to meet the people and learn something of how they live, work and play. The person who can best assist you in this is the Community Relations Adviser. The Community Relations Adviser (CRA) is a British woman appointed to the staff of the Wing Commander by the Ministry of Defense (Air). Her job is to make your tour of duty as happy and rewarding as possible, and to provide a link between American military and civilian personnel and dependents and the British community. She coordinates Anglo-American activities in order to promote and maintain good community relations. Traveling in the U.K.? The CRA will help you by providing information about different parts of the country, points of interest, what to see and do. Interested in fishing? boating? golfing? dining out? She can provide information on any of these activities as well as assisting you in finding British people who have similar interests to your own. She can also help you with advice on joining local clubs and anything to do with the local community and on Britain in general.

The CRA for Bentwaters and Woodbridge bases is Miss Jacquie Errington. Make her office one of the first places you visit when you arrive. It is located in the Wing Headquarters area.

BRITAIN BELONGS TO THE BRITISH

One of the most important things you need to remember while here is that RAF Bentwaters/RAF Woodbridge are Royal Air Force stations and belong to the British. We Americans are here as the guests of the British Government under the Status of Forces Agreement. As guests we have the responsibility of abiding by British laws and customs.

Your presence in Great Britain automatically places you in a role of unofficial ambassador of our country and the Air Force. The British have seen a great many Americans: military personnel, their families and tourists. They have already formed many different impressions of us and our way of life. Those of us who were good ambassadors of the United States in the past helped to build a bond of common understanding and respect with the British people. You have the opportunity to strengthen these bonds.

You are subject to British law. The NATO Status of Forces Agreement provides that military personnel of the United States assigned in the United Kingdom are subject to the jurisdiction of the civil and criminal courts of that country. In some cases offenses committed by military personnel are tried by U.S. military courts-martial. You may obtain detailed information on these matters from the base legal office.

Speaking the same language, you may expect to find everything the same as in the States, but it isn't so please don't try to change the British - They like things the way they are or they'd change them themselves.

HOST NATION SENSITIVITIES

Those of you who will be stationed in England will notice that there are differences between our two countries. The first thing that we should remember is that we, as American military personnel and dependents, are guests of the British in their country and we should conduct ourselves as if we were guests in someone's home.

As in any country, it would be inappropriate for us to make critical remarks about the host nation, its government and political system, traditions, social institutions, national and local leaders, foreign and domestic policies and most importantly about the Queen and members of the Royal Family.

It would also be inappropriate for us to criticize the British military forces or those of any one of our NATO allies. Any suggestion of a dominant U.S. military should be avoided.

The political situations in Northern Ireland and in Africa are sensitive issues and any comments pro or con should be avoided. It is also advised not to be associated with any known dissident or protest groups and to stay away from areas where these groups meet.

The recent decline in the value of the pound sterling has resulted in increased purchasing power for us. However, we should not show pleasure over the economic situation when shopping in the local stores.

The British Race Relations Act makes discrimination in any form illegal. If you feel that you have been subject to unfair treatment, it should be immediately reported to the base social actions office who will, in turn, work with our community relations adviser and bring the matter to the attention of the appropriate British officials.

There is a possibility that you may be asked to obtain items from the Base Exchange, Class VI store or the Commissary. These are rationed items and are not authorized to be resold or given away as any form of gift. Black Marketing is illegal and prohibited by both Air Force Regulations and British Customs laws. This, of course, does not stop us from inviting British Guests into our homes and offering normal hospitality.

U.S. Forces overseas do not receive an unlimited allowance of gasoline. We do receive enough gasoline which is duty free to allow us to commute to and from work. We should not give any indication that we receive an unlimited supply of gasoline and that we purchase our fuel at prices lower than the British public.

Non-payment of debts is always a major irritation and can hurt our Anglo-American relations. We are all obliged to pay our just debts on time and especially before leaving the country.

Driving in England is not quite the same as in the U.S. While we may drive on the "wrong side" of the road and must adapt to narrower roads and different highway markings, we should also remember that our conduct behind the wheel is equally important in promoting good community relations.

The British have very strict laws regarding the possession and sale of illegal drugs. While we are stationed here in England, we are subject to British law and are subject to both fines and imprisonment for conviction of possession and selling of illegal drugs.

As new arrivals in Britain, you will probably notice the strong feeling of national pride. We should avoid saying "British" when we mean Scottish, Welsh or Irish.

In conclusion, we must remember that we are the guests of the British. Don't assume that the American way is best, and try to convince the British to change their ways. Britain was here long before the discovery of our country and has a long and proud history. The U.S. forces still enjoy much goodwill as a result of World War II and through a strong community relations program. A special relationship has developed over the years as both Americans and British have worked together to form a lasting friendship between our two countries. Remember that while you are here and anywhere in Europe, you are unofficial ambassadors of our service and our Nation.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland consists of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. These are countries full of tradition and rich in culture and the history of our civilization. You will find plenty to interest you and you should enjoy your tour in the United Kingdom.

GOVERNMENT

Great Britain is one of the world's greatest democracies and the cradle of many American liberties and institutions. The supreme legislative authority in the United Kingdom is the

Queen in Parliament; that is to say, the Queen and the two Houses of Parliament - the House of Lords and the elected House of Commons. The Queen reigns, she does not rule, and acts only on the advice of her Ministers, which she cannot constitutionally ignore.

Of the two Houses of Parliament, the House of Commons, the members which are elected in much the same way as our Congress, is the more powerful body. The members of the House of Lords are not elected, but are hereditary and life peers and bishops. In matters of legislation, the House of Lords can do little more than add its approval to laws passed by the Commons although it can return a bill to the Commons, with amendments, for further consideration. However, in practice, it cannot delay any Commons bill for more than six months. The House of Lords is noted for the excellence of its debates.

The two main political parties are the Conservatives (sometimes called Tories) and Labor (Socialists). There is a small Liberal Party which is occasionally able to stand in the balance. The party which wins the majority of seats (although not necessarily the majority of votes) at a General Election forms the Government. By tradition, the Leader of the majority party is appointed Prime Minister by the Queen.

GEOGRAPHY

Great Britain lies much further north than most Americans realize. In fact, it lies more or less along the same latitude as Winnipeg, Canada. From the south coast of Britain to the extreme north is a distance of just under 600 miles, while the widest part is just over 300 miles across. No part of Britain is more than 100 miles from the sea. There is a rich variety of scenery and surprising contrasts are found within short distances. Britain's population density is one of the highest in the world. The whole of the United Kingdom is hardly bigger than Minnesota, yet it has a population of more than 55 million people.

ENGLAND. England is about the size of Alabama with a population of approximately 46 million. It is the largest of the countries forming the United Kingdom. London, the capital, is one of the largest cities in the world. The widely differing scenery of England includes lakelands, woodlands, moors and agricultural land with large industrial towns mainly in the North and Midlands.

WALES. Wales, with about 8,000 square miles of territory and a population of approximately 3 million is about the size of New Jersey. Its climate is comparable to that of Southern New England. While its coal mining areas are grim and bleak, many parts of central and northern Wales have great scenic beauty. The coastal areas have fine beaches.

SCOTLAND. The population of just over 5 million roughly equals the combined population of Philadelphia, Los Angeles and Baltimore. Scotland occupies the northern part of Britain and in size can be compared to South Carolina. While London is the capital of Great Britain, Edinburgh is the recognized and constituted capital of Scotland. The country is famous for the Highlands with its glens and lochs. Its climate is rarely very warm, and northern Scotland is likely to be as cool as Maine.

NORTHERN IRELAND. With a population of approximately one and one-half million people, Northern Ireland is characterized by soft, green terrain, steep wooded valleys, waterfalls and swift mountain streams. The climate is similar to that of Scotland.

CLIMATE

Although Britain lies along the same latitude as Winnipeg, Canada, it is affected by the warm waters of the Gulf Stream. This results in a generally mild and temperate climate subject to frequent changes, but few extremes of temperature. Normal summer temperatures range between 55 degrees and 75 degrees Fahrenheit and winter temperatures from 25 to 45 degrees. A summer temperature of 80 degrees causes comment. The mild summer weather lasts from June to September, but even this period is not without cool, damp days. While it is possible for rain to fall on any day, on the average March to June are the driest and October

to January are the wettest months. Fog occurs several times a year and may reduce visibility to zero. Snow can be expected any time between December and March but does not normally stay for very long.

INDUSTRY

The United Kingdom was the first country in the world to become highly industrialized and today, for every person employed in agriculture, 14 work in mining, manufacturing and building. It is the world's third largest exporter of manufactured goods covering a wide range and including ships, automobiles, industrial and agricultural machinery, iron and steel, textiles and leather goods, glass, pottery and porcelain. Although Britain relies on imports for half of its food supply, agriculture remains one of its largest and most important industries.

THE PEOPLE

Living on an island has contributed greatly to the characteristics of the British people. They are anything but isolationists in the field of business and politics, but are conservative in their acceptance of any foreign influence which may alter the highly personal set of values with which they have grown up.

They are proud of their history and traditions, guard their privacy carefully and are equally careful not to invade the privacy of others. Their reserve is sometimes mistaken for unfriendliness. They also tend to be more formal than the average American, but if you are courteous and well mannered, you will find the British extremely friendly and hospitable. In general they have a strong aversion to loud and boisterous behavior or showiness and seldom display their feelings. They do not tend to violence and are said to be the most law abiding people in the world.

GETTING AROUND

The larger cities and towns in England have excellent public transport systems (large double and single decker buses) which help make getting around cheaper and somewhat safer than by taxi or car.

While you're here you'll probably be making a journey to London on a weekend or day off. The most popular way of getting to London is via British Rail from the station at Ipswich. Ticket prices vary between \$7 and \$16 depending on what class you are travelling and whether it's a "day return" ticket. It's cheaper to travel day return, second class.

Trains leave Ipswich for London about once an hour. You can telephone the British Rail at Ipswich 57373 for arrival and departure times.

A WEEKEND IN LONDON

With an early start on Saturday morning, you can fit in visits to Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament. It is suggested you start with the Abbey, as it is open from 0800 hours. This is where the Kings and Queens of England have been crowned since 1066 and you can see the actual Coronation Chair. As you wander around the Abbey, you will find many memorials to such famous Englishmen as Winston Churchill and William Shakespeare. At 0945, the Royal Chapels open, and for a small charge, you can see the many examples of Britain's heritage.

From the Abbey, cross Parliament Square to the Houses of Parliament. You can tour both the House of Commons and the House of Lords, but only on Saturdays from 1000-1630 hours. This tour is usually conducted by a guide and apart from tipping him, there is no charge. At this same time, you will be shown Westminster Hall, where Churchill lay in state and Charles I was tried before he was beheaded.

On Saturday afternoon, go to the city of London, where all the commerce and business is carried on. Here you should spend the afternoon seeing St. Paul's Cathedral and the Tower of London. St. Paul's was built by Sir Christopher Wren, and is a magnificent building. It is open

to the public from 0800-1700, and includes an American Memorial Chapel together with the famous Whispering Gallery high in the dome of the cathedral.

The Tower of London is the home of the British Crown Jewels, the former prison for many famous and notorious historical figures, and the place to see the Beefeaters. Open from 0930 - 1700, there is an admission fee for both the Tower and to see the Crown Jewels. To round off the day, visit London's newest and highest landmark, the Post Office Tower, and see a panoramic view of London by night. If you can obtain a reservation, it is possible to eat in the revolving restaurant at the top of the Tower.

The best way to avoid getting lost in London is ride the tube or underground (Subway), and all the places mentioned are within five minutes walking distance of the nearest tube station. Riding the tube can be quite an experience on its own. However, if you are not feeling very energetic, you may prefer to go on an organized tour. There are many sightseeing tour firms to whom you can apply direct or ask at your hotel.

SIGHTSEEING IN EAST ANGLIA

East Anglia is comprised of the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire. The twin bases are located in Suffolk and the surrounding countryside is mainly agricultural with little industry.

Like all rural areas, it is not highly developed and traces of past history are stronger here than in any other part of Britain. For example, the town of Lavenham and the village of Kersey, both to the west of Ipswich, look much as they did some 500 years ago.

About 11 miles from the two bases, you will find the ruins of castles at Orford and Framlingham and a completely restored windmill in full operation at Saxstead Green. All three places are open to the public.

To the North, East Anglia's history of its changing coastline can be seen at the Dunwich Museum, where you will find that at one time, the village of Dunwich was a large and thriving town before it was destroyed through erosion by the sea.

Further afield there are the cities of Colchester, Norwich and Cambridge, within 40-50 miles of the bases. Colchester is an old Roman town with many relics remaining, while Cambridge is the site of one of Britain's two most famous Universities. Norwich, on the other hand, combines good shopping facilities with a castle museum, cathedral and an open air market, twice a week.

If you want to go shopping, the town of Woodbridge is about five miles from the twin base complex. The shops are small but as attractive as the town. For larger shops and more variety, try the large town of Ipswich, some 16 miles from the bases, where you will also find two movie theaters and a number of restaurants.

SPORT IN EAST ANGLIA

For motor racing enthusiasts, there is a motor racing circuit at Snetterton, which is located some 40 miles from RAF Bentwaters/Woodbridge on the A11 road between Thetford and Attleborough. During the season racing takes place on Saturdays and Sundays every weekend and includes cars, motor cycles, bangers and hot rods.

People interested in soccer (English football) can visit one of the top soccer teams in the country, Ipswich Town. During the season, home games are played at their ground at Portman Road, Ipswich.

Newmarket is the home of the English race horse and during the season, there is racing at least once if not twice a month at their world famous track. During the summer months there is also racing at Yarmouth.



Speedway racing is also a popular local sport, with the Ipswich "Witches" being one of the top teams in the country. Their speedway circuit is the Foxhall Stadium, Ipswich.

In the local area there is a wide variety of clubs connected with sport. Among these are athletics clubs, judo and karate, skin diving, soccer clubs, rugby football clubs, etc. For further details contact the Community Relations Adviser.

HELPFUL HINTS

When eating out, you will find that some restaurants include the tip in the bill. If not, you should tip 10 or 12 per cent, depending upon the quality of the service. In the case of taxis the minimum tip is 5 pence, but for fares of 40 pence or more, you should give 10 pence, and over 75 pence, you should give 15 pence.

To get some of the local flavor of the country, try visiting one of the many Public Houses or Pubs for some British beer. There is a Pub in every small hamlet, most of which also provide sandwiches and snacks. If you want to stick to the type of beer you know, the nearest English equivalent would be a lager. One other point about Pubs you should know is that their hours are restricted by law and are normally open from 1100-1400 and 1800-2230 hours.

You'll find public telephones in most villages and towns. The only coins a phone box will accept are 2p and 10p coins - use 2p coins for local calls and 10p if you want to call the London area. Britain is gradually converting all phones to enable you to dial direct anywhere in the country, but at the moment in some areas, you will have to get operator assistance to call long distance. Before you use a phone box, please read the instructions carefully.

Britain's weather changes constantly and even the forecasters have trouble "prophesying" what is going to happen! To be on the safe side, take a raincoat along and you can be sure that it won't rain.

THE SURROUNDING DISTRICT

ALDEBURGH. Birthplace of George Crabbe the poet and home of the Aldeburgh Festival, the seaside town of Aldeburgh is located approximately 12 miles from Bentwaters. The town's history dates back to before the 16th century.

In Elizabethan times, Aldeburgh was a thriving port trading in Europe, but within about 300 years half the streets of the town were lost by the erosion of the sea. Now the ancient Moot Hall, built in the 16th and 17th centuries, stands on the sea front when it once could be found in the middle of the town. In the Council Chamber of the Moot Hall, maps and prints trace the town's history.

Today, Aldeburgh has a population of over 3,000 people, a small shopping center with a cinema, and the Festival Club. The Festival Club provides the social center for those attending the world-famous Festival of Music and Arts held in June each year. This festival was started by Benjamin Britten, the composer. The facilities in the town include a golf course and sailing club, and fresh fish can be obtained from the fishermen on the beach. A number of families from RAF Bentwaters have made their home in this attractive town.

BURY ST. EDMUNDS. Bury St. Edmunds is located between RAF Mildenhall and RAF Bentwaters. A pleasant market town with approximately 22,000 population, Bury owes its name to Edmund, one of the last Saxon kings of East Anglia. Defeated in battle by the invading Danes, the young king refused to give up his faith and was killed by arrows. Early in the 10th century his remains were brought to Beodericsworth - the early name for the town - for burial.

Today Bury has a large shopping center, a number of chain stores, bi-weekly markets, two cinemas and the remaining Regency theater in use in England. There are several points of interest in the town, the remains of the Abbey being foremost. The Abbey grounds have been transformed into a pleasant park and garden. A rose garden situated on the west side of the Abbey cloister was the gift of John T. Appleby from the proceeds of his book, "Suffolk Summer". Appleby presented the rose garden to the people of Bury in gratitude for the kindness shown to American servicemen of the 8th Air Force stationed in the area during World War II.

Other sites of interest include the Abbey Gate, a beautiful Gothic entry-way which leads into the Abbey precincts; the Norman tower, now used as a belfry for the Cathedral Church of St. James; and Moyses Hall, a 12 century building now used as a museum for items of interest depicting the history of the area.

COLCHESTER. Located some 40 miles south of RAF Bentwaters on the main A12 road to London, Colchester says justifiable claim to be the oldest recorded town in Britain.

Records show that there was a settlement here in 500 BC, and the Romans thought it important enough to establish a large colony there in 50 AD. When William the Conqueror sought to establish himself in Britain in the 11th century, he chose to build a castle at Colchester. The castle keep remains as a museum now, showing the history of the local area from the Stone Age to the present day with a particularly fine collection of Roman antiquities. In the 17th century, when the Cavaliers occupied the town during their battles with the Roundheads, the town was under siege for some time, and Siege House in East Street still bears the bullet scars today. There are two inns of note in the town among other buildings, the Red Lion dating back to the beginning of the 15th century, and the George Hotel built from ancient ships' beams.

Colchester is a large and thriving town with a population of over 72,000 people. The main shopping center is the High Street with many chain stores, small shops, department stores and a market day on Saturdays. There is a famous ancient oyster fishery on the lower reaches

of the river Colne, and visitors can enjoy local oysters as the Romans once did. A time to visit the town is during the annual Oyster Feast when connoisseurs come from all over the country to sample Colchester's celebrated oysters.

FRAMLINGHAM. Rich in history, the ruins of the 12th century castle dominate the small market town of Framlingham. Once the capital of East Anglia, this attractive town is located some 12 miles from RAF Bentwaters. One of the famous people to be born in the town was Nicholas Danforth, who became the founder of the town of Framlingham in Massachusetts. In turn his son was among the founders of Harvard University, and a later descendent was to become a President of the United States.

Today, Framlingham is a delightful little town with a population of over 2,000 people. With its old winding streets and small shops are included several pubs.

FELIXSTOWE. With a population of nearly 20,000 people, Felixstowe is the second largest town in the Bentwaters/Woodbridge area and is a popular British seaside resort.

In the summer months Felixstowe provides many entertainment facilities for holiday makers. The Spa Pavilion has a summer show with national stars and lunchtime concerts, while the Pier Pavilion has special events throughout the summer and dancing every Saturday evening, both winter and summer. There is a large amusement arcade and children's playground. Visitors can water-ski; sail; fish; play golf; tennis, and bowls; and go horse back riding. The shops include a number of chain stores, and there are hotels, eating places and plenty of pubs to visit. A number of American families make Felixstowe their home.

IPSWICH. Located some 15 miles southwest of RAF Bentwaters, Ipswich is the principal town in East Suffolk and the largest town within easy reach of the base.

Ipswich first received its Charter as a town in 1200, and it was renewed by King Charles II when he visited the town in 1655 to present two silver maces to the Borough. For two-and-a-half centuries after the granting of the original Charter, Ipswich was a prosperous and flourishing port, trading in Suffolk wool with countries as far afield as Spain. After a short period of recession, when the trade in cloth declined, Ipswich became the center for milling and malting. The town's prosperity was further increased with the manufacturing of agricultural implements started by Robert Ransome at the beginning of the 19th century. Little now remains of historical Ipswich. The only existing part of the college founded by Cardinal Wolsey in 1528 is a gateway in College Street with the coat of arms of Henry VIII. The outside of the Ancient House in the Buttermarket is a fine example of 15th century pargetting, while Christchurch Mansion, built in Tudor times, is now a museum.

Once again a busy port, the present town of Ipswich has a population of over 121,000. A number of large British chain stores have branches in the town and the shops are many and varied. Recreational facilities include a theater, three cinemas, a library, halls, swimming pools, golf courses and a bowling alley. Pubs and eating places of all kinds abound. A considerable number of families from the base live in the town.

LAVEHAM. Laveham is a thoroughly fascinating Tudor town and should be put down as an absolute must for visitors to England. Situated between Hadleigh and Sudbury, the town is said to be one of the best remaining examples of a medieval town in England.

The movie back-drop of the town is said by many to be the setting of the all-time favorite nursery rhyme, "There was a crooked man". As a visitor walks down the narrow twisting streets with some of the houses tilted forward and others leaning back, one finds it difficult to dispute the claim. What one expects is to see the crooked man emerge from his crooked house, leaning upon his crooked stick!

The Guildhall in the market square and the lovely Cathedral with its charming tower must be seen. The chantries and chapels in the church contain some of the finest wood carvings found in England.

Lavenham is a delightful place for both young and old to spend a Saturday or Sunday afternoon - and don't forget the camera. A walk through Lavenham is a walk through medieval England. The perfect way to end the walk is to have a typically English tea in the 15th century Swan Hotel or in one of the other delightful tea-rooms in the town.

LEISTON. In the agricultural setting of East Anglia, it is unusual to find a town which has grown as the result of industry. However, Leiston is the exception to the rule.

Located some nine miles from the base, Leiston was built round the engineering works founded by Richard Garrett in 1778. Originally manufacturing agricultural machinery, the factory still exists today as the Richard Garrett Engineering Works and is a subsidiary of a larger company. The town has other industries now including boat-building, and the manufacture of wrought iron and industrial safety wear. Nearby the nuclear power station at Sizewell dominates the coast. As several tons of sea water circulate in the station's cooling system, the sea at Sizewell beach is the warmest place for swimmers for miles. The town has a number of modern shops. Some families from the base live in this community.

ORFORD. Once a busy port, Orford is located some 11 miles from RAF Bentwaters. This small town still retains a castle keep, which provides a commanding view of the area.

Henry II built the castle in the 12th century successfully to restore order to East Anglia. Most of the castle has long since disappeared, but the keep has recently been restored and its design can be seen clearly. It might seem strange that this town with its population of just over 650 people should have ever been large enough to warrant a castle, but in the days when the River Ore entered the sea near the town, it was a thriving port. As the sea eroded the coast to the north of Orford, the debris from the cliffs of Dunwich built a bank of shingle, deflecting the river from its course. This now runs parallel to the coast before entering the sea near the village of Shingle Street.

Orford still has a large fine church but only a couple of shops. However, the town is justly famed for its smoked salmon and oysters, and there are three good eating places in the square. A ferry operates between the town and Orfordness and the river is a popular mooring place for boats.

SAXMUNDHAM. Saxmundham is a small but attractive town located some 12 miles north of the base. It forms the focal point for the surrounding farming communities.

Saxmundham's history dates back to the time of the Domesday Book, giving information about all the towns and villages in England and compiled in the time of William the Conqueror in 1086. An entry in the book shows the existence of three churches in the area at that time. Through the centuries, Saxmundham has been an important staging point on the London to Great Yarmouth turnpike road, and the Bell Hotel stands on the site of the old inn where the horses were changed and travelers could rest.

Today the town has a population of just over 1,700 people, but continues to be a thriving market town on the main A12 highway from London to Great Yarmouth. There are a number of small shops and businesses. The Anglo housing project has an estate of 160 houses here, and many Americans live here in proportion to the size of the town.

WICKHAM MARKET. The small town of Wickham Market on the main A12 road from London to Great Yarmouth was once an early Roman settlement.

Although the town includes Market in its name, the market there existed only in the 14th and 15th centuries. The town of Woodbridge then took over the market, and the name was retained only to differentiate from several other places called Wickham. The square in the center of the town flanked by Georgian houses and the White Hart Inn must once have been the site for the market. The inn itself is old with its present facade added in Queen Anne's time at the beginning of the 18th century, although the records show that the first landlord took it over in 1504.