Lance Corporal James Ashworth from the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards was killed in Afghanistan on Wednesday 13 June 2012. In March 2013 it was announced that he was to be awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross for the actions leading to his death. You can read his full obituary below.

Lance Corporal James Ashworth joined the British Army in 2006 when he was 17 years old. Following his training at the Infantry Training Centre, Catterick he joined Nijmegen Company Grenadier Guards and completed a stint of ceremonial duty in London.

He was quickly identified as being a fit, capable soldier and thus suitable for the Guards' Parachute Platoon, part of 3rd Battalion The Parachute Regiment. He spent three years with the Guards' Parachute Platoon, deploying on Op HERRICK 8 and exercising in Belize, Norway and Kenya.

On returning to the Grenadiers during the build up for Op HERRICK 16, Lance Corporal Ashworth deployed to Canada with The Queen's Company before moving across to the Reconnaissance Platoon for the remainder of Mission Specific Training for Op HERRICK 16.

A talented football player, he represented the Battalion, most notably during their successful recent French military tour.

Lance Corporal Ashworth came from a strong lineage of soldiering: his father was a Grenadier, and one of his brothers, Coran aged 21, is currently serving with the Army in Northern Ireland.

Brought up in Kettering, he continued to live there with his mother and girlfriend. When at home he played football for his local team and loved spending time with his girlfriend and friends.

"Lance Corporal Ashworth's death leaves a hole in the Battalion - we have lost one of our very best soldiers."
Lieutenant Colonel James Bowder

Lance Corporal Ashworth was an excellent soldier with a bright future ahead of him. He was an exceptional individual with a great deal of proven combat experience. Although only recently promoted as a Non Commissioned Officer, he was already working hard to further progress his career by assuming greater responsibility.

He was a very fit, popular young man and will be remembered for his strength in the field and his sense of fun when back in barracks. Lance Corporal Ashworth was a typical Grenadier: fit, capable and a professional soldier to the core.

The gap left by his loss will be difficult to fill, and he will be sorely missed by all who served with

him. The thoughts and prayers of the Regimental family are firmly with James' family during this difficult time.

Lance Corporal Ashworth leaves behind his mother, Kerryann, father Duane, sisters Lauren and Paige, brothers Coran and Karl, niece Darcie, aged 4, and his girlfriend, Emily. His family paid the following tribute:

"We are devastated by the loss of our son, brother, uncle and boyfriend. He meant the world to everyone and has left an irreplaceable hole in our hearts.

"We ask that we are given time to grieve and we sincerely thank everyone for their condolences."

Lieutenant Colonel James Bowder MBE, Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards, said:

"Lance Corporal Ashworth was an outstanding soldier whose loss has moved us all. A real self-starter, he excelled in everything that he undertook. Fit, strong and brilliant at his job, he set the bar very high. Indeed, such was his calmness under pressure, his charisma, and his selflessness that he made an exemplary junior leader.

"Lance Corporal Ashworth was a pleasure to command and I will sorely miss his calming influence on the battlefield."
Captain Mike Dobbin

"Lance Corporal Ashworth had fitted a great deal into a relatively short time. Having already served with distinction in the Guards' Parachute Platoon, The Queen's Company and then most recently in the Battalion's Reconnaissance Platoon, he was destined to go a long way in the Army.

"Lance Corporal Ashworth's death leaves a hole in the Battalion – we have lost one of our very best soldiers. The Battalion, and indeed the broader Regiment, will never forget this quite exceptional man. Moreover, our thoughts and prayers are with his family at this most difficult of times."

Captain Mike Dobbin, Commander, Reconnaissance Platoon, Nijmegen Company, 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards, said:

"Lance Corporal Ashworth was killed while fighting his way through compounds; leading his fire team from the front, whilst trying to protect his men and he showed extraordinary courage to close on a determined enemy. His professionalism under pressure and ability to remain calm in what was a chaotic situation is testament to his character.

"Lance Corporal Ashworth was a pleasure to command and I will sorely miss his calming influence on the battlefield. Softly spoken, he stepped up to every task thrown in his direction. As the section Second in Command in the ISAF/Afghan National Army partnered section, Lance

Corporal Ashworth regularly commanded the section while the Section Commander worked with the Afghan Army. This he did with absolute professionalism and an ability that surpassed his rank.

"As a platoon, we have lost a strong commander, outstanding soldier and dear friend who was popular throughout the Battalion. My thoughts and prayers are with his family and his girlfriend, who should be extremely proud of the courage he displayed and the life that he led.

"I am humbled by what I saw of Lance Corporal Ashworth's actions and will never forget him."

Colour Sergeant Andy Austin, Second in Command, Reconnaissance Platoon, Nijmegen Company, 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards, said:

"Lance Corporal Ashworth was an exceptional soldier and a shining example to both his peers and subordinates alike; always leading from the front with a smile on his face. No situation would faze this man; whatever challenge he faced he would tackle at full tilt and with pride, both on the battlefield and on the football pitch.

"His great love of the beautiful game was shared by myself and others in the Platoon. After every match day in the Premier League we would discuss the day's events with great interest, especially the fortunes of his beloved Tottenham Hotspur. These conversations I will miss terribly.

"This was a man destined for great things in the Army and whose potential I watched flourish in the Platoon. He would always strive for excellence in absolutely everything and if it didn't work out, he always made sure that it would the next time. He was always determined to learn more and be the best.

"This Platoon has lost a leader and more importantly a friend, I will miss him dearly and my thoughts are with his family and girlfriend."

Sergeant Vandell McLean, Platoon Sergeant, Reconnaissance Platoon, Nijmegen Company, 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards, said:

"James Ashworth was one of the Reconnaissance Platoon's most promising Lance Corporals. He was a person who so enjoyed his football that on many occasions he tried to change me from a rugby fan to a football fan.

"Lance Corporal Ashworth was loved by everyone within the Platoon. He was always able to bring a smile to everyone's face and be seen by the Platoon as being some sort of follower of fashion!

"Lance Corporal Ashworth commanded well above his rank, a person who only had to be told once. He truly led from the front; his place in my heart and of the rest of the Platoon's will never be filled.

"My sorrow is with his family at this time of great loss. Please take comfort in knowing that Lance Corporal Ashworth died protecting me, his mates and the rest of the Platoon."

Guardsman Jordan Wint, Reconnaissance Platoon, Nijmegen Company, 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards, said:

"Jimmy, a friendship that I will never forget. You were a top bloke, and an even better soldier. I looked up to you as a man, a commander, but most of all as a mega mate. Words can't describe how you will be missed, but I've given it a bash anyway. Watch over the rest of us. Love you mate. RIP."

Guardsman Gareth Loftus, Reconnaissance Platoon, Nijmegen Company, 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards, said:

"Selfless, brave, courageous; words like these don't come close to what Ash demonstrated that day. He will be missed by all as a commander, but most of all a good mate.

"A memory I will always treasure is getting ready to go out, we played FIFA, and for each goal conceded we had a shot of alcohol. We drew 7 -7!

"A really good bloke and great soldier. At this time our thoughts are with his family and friends. RIP mate