Trooper Andrew Martin Howarth was born in Bournemouth, 28th May 1990. He attended Queen Elizabeth's School in Wimborne, Dorset, before joining the Army in 2007. He completed basic training at the Army Training Regiment, Bassingbourn, before passing out of Royal Armoured Corps Phase 2 training at Bovington. He joined The Queen's Royal Lancers in Catterick, North Yorkshire, in February of 2008, and in doing so became the third generation of his family to serve with the Regiment.

Trooper Howarth has spent the duration of his career in C Squadron, as a reconnaissance vehicle driver. He was exceptionally gifted at maintaining and managing the armoured vehicles under his stewardship and was chosen from amongst his peers to drive for his troop leader. He showed his true abilities from the start, driving for his troop leader on training exercises on Salisbury Plain Training Area, during Exercise MEDICINE MAN in BATUS in the summer of 2009, throughout Mission Specific Training for Op HERRICK 12, and on the deployment to Afghanistan in April 2010. His initiative, self motivation and robustness, both physical and mental, were exceptional in a soldier of such youth and inexperience; he would have, without doubt, risen through the ranks above and beyond his peers. He had an infectious smile and a truly inspirational sense of humour.

Aside from his life as a professional formation reconnaissance soldier, Trooper Howarth was an immensely charismatic young sportsman. He has a deep rooted love of rugby football and represented the Regimental side on many an occasions. He was also an avid alpine skier, having learnt to ski with the Regimental Alpine Ski Team in Verbier, Switzerland in 2008; although he was only a beginner, his enthusiasm, absolute courage and determination easily compensated for his lack of experience on the slopes.

Trooper Howarth was killed in action during a vehicle patrol in the Bolan district of Lashkar Gah on 18 September 2010 alongside one of his colleagues. He was serving as part of Fondouk Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers, and was providing security to the people of Helmand Province, during a vehicle mounted ground domination patrol, by denying insurgents' freedom of movement. He leaves behind his parents, John and Sarah, and his older brother Marcus.

Trooper Howarth's family said:

He was a very loving son who loved his family and friends, he would light up any room when he walked in and would do anything for anyone. He had a heart of Gold and will be deeply missed.

He was proud to serve his country.

He quoted before he left for Afghanistan " We give our today so you can have your tomorrow".

Lieutenant Colonel Martin Todd MBE, Commanding Officer, The Queen's Royal Lancers said:

Trooper Andy Howarth was a young man of irrepressible enthusiasm, determination and good humour. He was the perfect reconnaissance soldier: quick-witted, physically robust and as skilled dismounted as he was on vehicles of all types. He was a true son of the Regiment, son, nephew and grandson of former Lancers, and he wore the 'motto' with unrestrained pride. He crammed an enormous amount into his time with the Regiment: skiing, playing rugby and football, as well as making scores of close friends. Their tributes to him burst with the affection and respect in which he was held by all ranks. He died amongst his friends in a noble cause, serving his Regiment and his country, while protecting the Afghan people. Our hearts go out to his parents, John and Sarah, and his brother, Marcus. We can only share in their intense pride in him and their unutterable grief at his loss.

Lieutenant Colonel Lincoln Jopp MC, Commanding Officer, Combined Force Lashkar Gah said:

All of us in Combined Force Lashkar Gah have been deeply struck by the awful death of Trooper Andy Howarth. A stalwart of Fondouk Squadron, he was a tremendous character who had made an impact well beyond the Squadron. He died on patrol thwarting the insurgents and protecting the people of the southern Bolan area, providing the freedom for local nationals to go about their daily lives. It was vital work and he was doing it brilliantly. The whole of the Scots Guards Battlegroup, every man and woman, join me in sending our deepest and most sincere condolences to Andy's parents and brother. Their grief must be immeasurable and we grieve with them. We Honour our Fallen.

Major Ben Cossens, Officer Commanding, Fondouk Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers said:

During the short period of time I had the privilege of commanding Trooper Howarth, he made a deep impression on me. His verve, enthusiasm for life and incessant smile will remain with me indefinitely. He was an excellent soldier, able to find humour in the darkest of places and situations and never one to abandon a task. He was unquestionably robust, professional and utterly selfless in everything he did. It is cruelly fitting that he be killed in action, protecting the people of Afghanistan from the tyranny and repression of the Taliban.

It is an absolute tragedy that such a fine man should be taken from us so early. The thoughts and prayers of everyone in Fondouk Squadron are with Trooper Andy Howarth's parents John and Sarah, and his older brother Marcus. Our lives are richer for having known him; he will always be remembered.

Major Jim Walker, formerly Officer Commanding, Fondouk Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers said:

Trooper Howarth had been with the Squadron all throughout our training in Canada and through to deployment to Afghanistan. Although still a young man, we watched him develop through his training and he showed in Afghanistan the fearlessness to be the point man on foot patrols. He knew his business and worked hard to support his Troop. Nicknamed 'Steptoe' for his natural

and endearing scruffiness, he was perfectly placed and comfortably at home in First Troop. Always ready with a smile, he approached life on operations with enthusiasm and dedication to his fellows. He was impressively fit and especially loved playing football and rugby, I'll remember him as part of the Squadron's victorious rugby team, complete with socks around his ankles and a smile on his muddy face. A stalwart soldier, tough and enthusiastic, he will be profoundly missed, but always remembered.

Captain Will Pope, Second-in-Command, Fondouk Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers said:

Trooper Howarth had been serving with The Queen's Royal Lancers for over a year when I first met him. It was clear immediately that he was a massive character who was adored by both his fellow Troopers and those that had the pleasure of commanding him. When the Squadron gathered it would inevitably be the case that Trooper Howarth would be in the middle of the biggest cluster of Troopers, leading the jokes and finding the funny side of even the most dire of situations.

In Afghanistan I would inevitably see Steptoe, as everyone knew him, when he would come into Squadron HQ at the end of his Troop's patrols. He always seemed to try and carry at least three loads of batteries on his own, so his exhausted comrades were able to relax while he put them on to recharge. Inevitably dropping a couple on his way in, he would be drenched in sweat and grime, utterly fatigued but still able to push out a broad grin and a cheeky quip which would never fail to raise spirits in the Operations Room. He was a first rate soldier and an excellent friend to all that knew him. We share in his family's loss for the death of a truly inspirational young man.

Captain Ollie Thornton-Flowers, Intelligence Officer, Fondouk Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers said:

Trooper Howarth was one of those men that everyone knew in the Squadron. He was fought over by vehicle commanders within his Troop for his excellent driving skills. His professional nature was often hidden behind his place in the squadron as a joker. I believe that through all the training and the hard times in Afghanistan I never saw him without his trademark smile. His career was destined for greatness but cut so very short by this tragic event. He will never be forgotten and his place never filled. His parents John and Sarah and brother Marcus are in my thoughts at this sad time.

Lieutenant Johnny Clayton, 1st Troop Leader, Fondouk Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers said:

Trooper Howarth and I had served in the Army for about the same length of time and we have been part of the same troop since I first arrived at the Regiment. During this time I have had the pleasure of working and serving with a soldier who cared deeply about his job and also got to know a young man with an infectious good nature and lust for life.

Never the smartest turned out soldier, Andrew was always found grinning widest when completely covered in oil, dust or whatever the practical side of his job found him working with.

He would always be the first on a dance floor or, in the absence of one, would sometimes just dance and have a laugh wherever he was. His smile was a near permanent fixture and he had the ability to make everyone around him laugh.

He died doing something he enjoyed, working with his brother-in-arms. He has left a void that will not be filled and I will miss him very much.

Lieutenant Rob Campbell, 2nd Troop Leader, Fondouk Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers said:

Trooper Howarth: Quiet, hardworking and smiling, always smiling.

Warrant Officer Class 1 (Regimental Sergeant Major) Leon Mattear, The Queen's Royal Lancers said:

I first met Trooper Howarth in February 2008 when as a new recruit his father personally delivered him to C Squadron from Phase 2 training. He was an immensely likeable young man, a keen rugby player and a dedicated member of the Regimental rugby team. This sad loss will be felt hugely by all those in Fondouk Squadron and in particular his close friends and peers. My sincerest condolences go to his family at this tragic time.

Warrant Officer Class (Squadron Sergeant Major ) Tony Gould, Fondouk Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers said:

Trooper Andy 'Steptoe' Howarth was a born entertainer and brought humour to whatever he did. Seeing Steptoe grow into a vehicle expert and reconnaissance soldier was amazing and made me a very proud Squadron Sergeant Major. His jokes and enthusiasm for dance music was infectious. He would often ask if he could spin his famous decks during room inspections. Unfortunately we did not all share his love for hard techno house music. I am proud to have watched Steptoe grow and strive for perfection. Trooper Andy Howarth rest now, and play your music loud and proud, as your pain has gone. Thank you, Steptoe, you are gone, but will never be forgotten.

Staff Sergeant (Squadron Quartermaster Sergeant) Tony Round, Fondouk Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers said:

Trooper Andrew Howarth (Steptoe) was an extremely skilled trooper; he gave his heart and soul to the Regiment, and would staunchly defend his fellow soldiers in all situations, whether on operations or at home. While Trooper Howarth was soft spoken by nature, it was all too often the case to hear his beloved drum and bass thumping from his car as he drove through camp. He will be sadly missed by all who have served with him or knew him.

Brother, Rest in Peace.

Lance Corporal James Bowers and Trooper Michael Pannell, 1st Troop, Fondouk Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers said:

Andy was one of my best friends. He was one of the most outgoing people I've ever met and was always full of life; he could often be found sitting in the common room with a beer in his hand ready for a party on the weekend. Even in the most testing of times he would still be smiling from ear to ear, especially when no one else was.

He would do anything to help someone in need. His absence is a hole that can never be filled. He was a true friend in every sense of the word.

We will miss him and he will never be forgotten.

Trooper Brett Armstrong, 1st Troop, Fondouk Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers said:

Trooper Howarth, aka Steptoe, was an amazing asset to the Squadron and also his Troop. He was a keen soldier and was determined to complete his snipers course once back in the Regiment after the tour. He was the highlight of the day for the people who knew him best, always dancing and cracking jokes. He will be missed; each day he will be remembered and kept in our hearts. Our love goes out to Trooper Howarth's friends and his family who have suffered a great loss. There was no doubt that he would have fulfilled his dreams, he was a Lancer through and through and will be deeply missed by all soldiers in the Regiment.

Steptoe was a keen DJ and loved drum and bass, he was never down, always a happy person even when things were rough.  For example on exercise on Salisbury Plain we had been up all night dismounted and the rain had been pouring all night. We had a few hours waiting for the coach the next morning back in camp. Everyone was down and depressed because they were wet and cold. But there was Steptoe in the middle of us all dancing away to his tunes on his iPod without a care in the world. He knew for a fact that he couldn't dance but he didn't care, as long as he made people laugh then he was happy. And that is the kind of memory that will be remembered for years to come.

Trooper Craig Smith, 2nd Troop, Fondouk Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers said:

Andy was one of my best friends. He had a way of making everything fun and bad things ok. He had a gift that allowed him to approach any situation with confidence and bravery. He passed this on to all those around him through presence and humour. Both in his professional and private life, Andy and I did it all together: nights out, football matches and Sunday lunches, with his family and mine. These moments I am honoured to have had and I will treasure eternally. Andy leaves behind a Squadron's worth of friends who respected and loved him. We could all turn to him in times of need as I knew I could. My thoughts and heart go out to his family.

I will always miss you and always remember you with respect and love. Goodbye mucker.

Trooper Ian Baird, 2nd Troop, Fondouk Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers said:

Steptoe was always fun to be around and he was able to bring a big smile to your face in any situation or go the totally opposite way and drive you insane; that is what brothers in arms do.

He was a totally unbelievable friend, with more loyalty to the people he loved than many others I have seen. I know he had a lot of love for his family. As a 3rd generation Lancer, we knew his Dad was his hero; he was a sensitive soul and loved his mother like no other.

Marcus, his brother, was the apple of his eye. I remember just before we came out here, Marcus was coming up to camp and Steptoe was so excited about being able to bring his two worlds together. He loved having his friends and family around him and would do almost anything for them; just as we would for him.

Goodbye Steptoe; you will always be with us.

Trooper Kieran Dawson, 3rd Troop, Fondouk Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers said:

It is so sad to see you go but I am sure you have gone to a better place. I will always cherish the good times we had. You were always a good friend to me and others. You will be sadly missed and you will always be in my memories, thoughts and heart.

Rest in Peace, Love Dawson.