

Up to 400 soldiers from 2nd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment (Green Howards) [2 YORKS] have commenced their deployment to Afghanistan as part of 11 Light Brigade, which replaces 19 Light Brigade this October.

They will take on the role of the Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT). The purpose of the team is to develop the capabilities and maximise the effectiveness of the Afghan National Army (ANA).

The nature of the role in theatre will see the battalion operate in small teams, utilising a wide range of military and instructional skills to further develop their Afghan colleagues' capabilities.

Major Robert Palfrey, Officer Commanding A Company, said:

"Working hand-in-glove with the ANA provided a great opportunity to both develop and learn from the Afghan soldiers. They are highly motivated, capable and experienced fighters. This task is widely recognised as some of the most important and rewarding work being done in theatre at the moment."

Lieutenant Colonel David Colthup, Commanding Officer 2 YORKS, said that:

"After a thorough period of intensive training, during which everyone concerned worked extremely hard, the battalion is well prepared for this demanding role. Over the past month the battalion has had the opportunity to take some hard-earned leave to relax with their families. They are now fully focused on the task to hand and are highly motivated and very much looking forward to the tour."

The main training activity recently has been Exercise Druid's Dance - a three-week battalion-level exercise executed on Salisbury Plain. The exercise involved two OMLTs supported by Polish troops playing the role of the Afghan National Security Forces.

The soldiers from 2nd Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment are just one element of many drawn from across the field Army that will make up 11 Light Brigade, which has been specifically formed for Operation HERRICK 11.

As an entity the units that make up 11 Light Brigade have been preparing together for their Afghanistan deployment for some time.

Many of the soldiers will be veterans of previous tours to Afghanistan and Iraq with 2 YORKS last being deployed on Operation HERRICK 7 (Afghanistan) from October 2007 to April 2008.