

The RAF at Fakenham

An Airfield Repair Depot was built at High Terrace in Fakenham in 1941 having previously been an office above a shop in Norwich Street, it became part of the new RAF Airfield Construction Service based in Newmarket. At that time Fakenham was responsible to RAF West Raynham. The Flight Commander was a Flight Lieutenant who was responsible for 200 men dispersed over many flights. Some of the men were civilians of which there were 56 at Fakenham, some were women working as clerks and drivers.

Being under military supervision the young men were not subject to 'call-up'. Fakenham had a number of sites to administer. Holbeach range, Sutton Bridge aerodrome, Swanton Morley aerodrome, West Raynham Aerodrome, Sculthorpe aerodrome (first building), Little Snoring aerodrome, West Beckham radar, Bircham Newton aerodrome, Marham Aerodrome and Neatishead radar. Why Docking, Langham and Foulsham were not included is not known and, perhaps Attlebridge should have been included.

Fakenham had offices, workshops, a canteen and an MT section. An air-raid shelter was also provided. The MT section had some problems when it wanted a long 'Queen Mary' type trailer. High Terrace Road was very narrow and while the tractor unit was looking for the best way to get everything on site the trailer was blocking the entire road down to its junction with the main road! The gate for the depot was at the end of a left-hand bend with a 'pill box' on the corner, thus the problem.

Before the end of the war Fakenham was involved with the rebuilding of Sculthorpe and this continued until after the war. At this time much of the depot had been given over for storage and had been since 1946 (there was also activity at West Raynham and Langham but it is not known if Fakenham was involved but it probably was). When the RAF took an interest in Trimmingham then Fakenham found itself responsible for that Radar site.

Much of the work at Fakenham involved finance and planning. Few were aware what went on there in fact the depot became known simply as 'The Air Ministry'.

Fakenham closed in 1964/66 and the St Peter's Road estate was built in 1971, nothing remains of the RAF site today.