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Blackburn Cadets Get New HQ in £14M MoD Upgrade.

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A new headquarters has opened its doors to young cadets in Blackburn, marking part of the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence's £45 million Reserve Estate Optimisation Programme, which is upgrading cadet and reserve facilities nationwide.

Constructed by modular building specialist Integra Buildings, the Blackburn site is one of the early completions under the Reserve Estate Optimisation Programme, which aims to modernise cadet and reserve facilities across the UK. The facility was designed not only for

military drills but also to nurture confidence, leadership, and strong community ties among thousands of cadets from the Army Cadet Force, Air Training Corps, and Sea Cadets.

Ministry of Defence representatives underscored the importance of these new spaces as more than just training centres. “These new facilities are more than just buildings, they’re places where young people come together to grow in confidence, develop skills and form lasting friendships,” a spokesperson said. The building was produced off-site using modular construction techniques, reducing both time and costs while meeting Defence Related Environmental Assessment Methodology (DREAM) sustainability standards.

Integra Buildings’ managing director, Chris Turner, noted that the project aligned perfectly with the company’s expertise and values. He explained that securing the contract through the Crown Commercial Services framework, a £10 billion government procurement initiative, highlighted Integra’s standing as a trusted partner for public sector projects.

The Blackburn centre is part of broader improvements at approximately 14 sites across the UK, including new cadet facilities in places such as Fakenham and Skegness. According to Amy Browne, an apprentice project manager at Integra, working on the project provided vital experience in managing multiple builds to high standards. “It’s brilliant to see the site’s progress, with the first buildings now installed and handed over,” she said.

While the country faces ongoing debate about the priorities of government spending, this investment demonstrates a commitment to supporting British youth and strengthening local communities. For the cadets and volunteers in Blackburn, the new headquarters offers a modern, sustainable environment to develop skills and forge friendships that can last a lifetime.

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