

## **Freedom Parade through the Streets of Newbury**

On 15 September 1997 Newbury Town bestowed the “Freedom of Entry” upon the Royal Engineers in recognition of the service to the town provided over many years by the Officers and Soldiers based at the Hermitage Barracks. This honour gave the right to march through the town with drums beating, banners flying and bayonets fixed.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2009, the Royal Engineers exercised this right for the third time. The streets were lined with spectators the whole length of Northbrook Street and round into the Market Place. As the soldiers approached, the crowds applauded to show their support.

Once in the Market Place, Major General Alan Macklin and the Mayor of Newbury, Cllr Kuldip Singh Kang, inspected the troops, then Mr Mayor welcomed them into our town. He noted that not all of the Regiment was on parade – some soldiers are currently serving their country on operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, he thanked the Regiment for putting on such an impressive display.

Thanks must be expressed to the Newbury Branch of the Royal British Legion for all their help both before and on the day, thanks also to Newbury Lions Club or marshalling the road closure, and thanks to West Berkshire Council for their help with the closure and staffing of the Pelican Lane car park. Final thanks to the members of the Regiment and Newbury Town Council Officers for the ‘to numerous to mention’ things that were done to ensure the success of the day.

