

## HMS Sutherland

THE Royal Navy was 'honoured' to bring a warship to Lyme Regis and invite members of the community on board.

But for HMS Sutherland's commanding officer Al Wilson, it was also a chance for a return visit to the town where his parents-in-law live, Whitchurch Canonorum.

"I know the area relatively well," he admitted.

"But I had never seen Lyme from the sea before and it was really nice to be able to anchor so close."

Led by the Mayor, Coun Sally Holman, invited guests attended a reception on board the Royal Navy's fastest frigate and watched capability demonstrations by the 200-man crew.

They were welcomed by Commander Wilson and Commodore Jamie Miller, Naval Regional Commander Wales and Western England.

Guests had a tour of the ship, including the bridge and operations room, and were shown demonstrations in boarding and fire fighting.

This was followed by a ceremonial sunset party, when the ensign was lowered.

Coun Holman thanked the Commanding Officer and his crew for the visit and presented them with a town crest.

She said: "On behalf of the guests tonight, I would like to thank you very much for making this visit to Lyme Regis.

"It is a great honour for us and we have had a great evening and we have really enjoyed seeing your ship and some of the operations.

"We shall take memories back with us and we hope that you and your crew will enjoy the view of Lyme Regis.

"The sunset ceremony is incredibly moving."

In return, Commander Wilson presented the Mayor and the town with a plaque of the ship's crest.

He said he was pleased HMS Sutherland could 'step into the breach' after the disappointment when RFA Lyme Bay had to cancel its visit.

HMS Sutherland is a Type 23 frigate, which has reached more than 34 knots (39mph) in trials.

She was commissioned into the Navy in 1997.

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