EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
For the community, by the community. A not-for-profit service

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

EPSOM & EWELL TIMES

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Veteran lives celebrated at Epsom's Comrades Club

10 November 2023



With funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, Surrey County Council has captured the life stories of four veterans and presented the booklets to them and their families in a special ceremony at **The Comrades Club, Epsom** in The Parade, Epsom

Part of the Force for Change project, the funding provided was to identify former service personnel living in Surrey who were not already known to the council, document their life stories and look at how veterans can be further supported.

The project focused on three areas of Surrey – Epsom & Ewell, Guildford and Surrey Heath. Activities organised to engage veterans included canal boat trips, basketball sessions, outdoors and indoor archery, fire skills and model-making sessions.

Alongside this, newly trained volunteers from **Bourne Hall museum in Ewell**, supported by trained staff from the Surrey History Centre worked with the veterans to document and record their life stories. The booklets created will be stored in the Surrey History Centre for future generations, and copies have been presented to the veterans and their families.

Chair of the Council, Saj Hussain is the Armed Forces Champion for Surrey County Council. He said: "*Preserving the life stories of our veterans is not just a responsibility; it's a tribute to their sacrifices. Through the Force for Change project, we've had the privilege of documenting and sharing these remarkable journeys. These booklets serve as a testament to their dedication and resilience, ensuring that their legacy lives on for future generations and their families to learn from and be inspired by.*"

Councillor Kevin Deanus, Surrey County Council Cabinet Member for Fire and Rescue, and Resilience, said: "*Time is running out for us to capture these important stories and ensure they are documented for future generations. We are delighted to have been able to support this project, to be able to connect with and provide support for more veterans in Surrey.*"

One of the volunteers, Phil Read, documented Tegwyn Bryn Lloyd's story. Sadly, Tegwyn passed away last year shortly after completing his life story. **Phil said:** "*He [Tegwyn] came across as a very gentle soul to me, God fearing and that. Very gentle but yet did his duty and that overrode everything else and that came across to me more than anything.*"

Throughout the project veterans were connected to the veteran hubs across Surrey for ongoing social activities and support.

If you or a family member is serving, has served, or if you support members of the Armed Forces community, you can download the free Forces Connect app from Apple or Google stores. The app signposts to a wide range of support services.

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