

VETERANS AND FAMILY HUB & ARMED FORCES COVENANT PARTNERSHIP



Newsletter



01752 241057

VFHub@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk



2025 will mark the 80th anniversaries of VE Day and VJ Day on 8 May and 15 August.

It is an opportunity for the nation to come together to honour and pay tribute to the Second World War generation from across the UK and Commonwealth.

Thursday 8 May 2025 marks 80 years since VE (Victory in Europe) Day when the Second World War came to an end in Europe. The long anticipated news resulted in spontaneous celebrations breaking out across the nation. A national holiday was declared and people from all walks of life came together to mark the moment.

The war in the East did not end until 15 August 1945, when Japan surrendered. The day was celebrated across the world as 'Victory over Japan' (VJ Day).

Dates for the diary

Thursday 8 to Sunday 11 May: Hold your own street party - with the cost of road closures suspended. [Apply here](#).

Thursday 8 May: Celebration on Plymouth Hoe

- 10.30am: flag raising, standards and ships in the Sound
- 11am: live music on The Hoe, street party, stalls, and vintage vehicles
- 5.30pm: evening concert
- 8.40pm: Sunset Guard lighting the Plymouth beacon

Friday 15 August: Special church service to commemorate VJ Day at St Andrews Church.

USEFUL CONTACTS

NHS Non-Emergency
111

Police Non-Emergency
101

South West Water
0344 346 2020

British Gas (Emergency
Number)
0800 111 999

Western Power Distribution
(Contact in the event of a power cut)
0800 678 3105

Adult Social Care
01752 306900

Livewell Plymouth
mental health support (24
hours)
01752434922

First Response
0800 9239323

Samaritans
116 123

JOIN US FOR VE-DAY 80
FRIDAY 2ND MAY 12:30



STREET PARTY

ST AUBYN HALL, STOKE

£12PP PRE BOOKING ESSENTIAL

DRESS CODE: RED WHITE AND BLUE

INCLUDES SANDWICHES CAKE

AND OTHER SWEET TREATS.

****Please check with hub staff regarding individual accessibility needs.**

We strive to make our events as inclusive as possible, though some venues may have limitations in accessibility.



☎ 01752 241057 ✉ VFHub@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk



HM Government



Illegal Lending: Loan Sharks

Facts - Loan sharks and the Law

- Any lender, authorised or not, who harasses you is breaking the law.
- Some loan sharks will threaten you by saying you'll be prosecuted and even sent to prison if you don't pay them. This can't happen.
- An unauthorised lender such as a loan shark doesn't have the legal right to make you pay back the loan at all. This is because the loan itself is illegal.
- If you've been approached by someone you think is a loan shark, contact the police. Call 999 if you're in immediate danger.
- Loan sharks will never stop chasing you for money, so it's important you act as soon as possible. Anything you tell the police will be confidential and you can remain anonymous.

Facts - Reporting a Loan Shark

- If you've found out that a lender is a loan shark, you can report them anonymously. You can either call or make a report online if you'd prefer not to talk to someone:
- If you live in England, you can report them to the Stop Loan Sharks team by calling 0300 555 2222 or visit Stop Loan Sharks

Facts - Signs that someone who has offered to lend you money is a loan shark

It's important to avoid borrowing from people who you don't know well, such as colleagues, friends of friends, or people you recognise in your local community or faith group. This is because they could be a loan shark. Here are some of the signs to look out for if you think you might be borrowing from a loan shark:

- No paperwork - paperwork makes something seem more legitimate, and loan sharks avoid.
- Cash loans or bank transfers - although more loan sharks are now using bank transfers, they usually prefer to deal with cash.
- Refusing to give you information about the loan - most loan sharks will avoid giving you clear details about your loan, such as the interest rate, details of previous repayments and the total amount you owe.
- Taking possessions for security - some loan sharks will take personal possessions as security, such as your passport or bank cards.
- Your loan is getting bigger - loan sharks might increase the debt or add extra charges at any time, even if you're making regular payments.
- Threats of violence - loan sharks often use intimidation and threats to frighten people into paying back the money.
- They lend to more than one person - if it's someone you know and you're aware that they've offered to lend money to other people too.
- If you've already borrowed from a loan shark, you haven't broken the law and there is help available.

www.moneyhelper.org.uk

www.stoploansharks.co.uk

0300 555 2222



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What's on May

Pirates Weekend

Avast me hearties! 🏴‍☠️

Enjoy a swashbuckling weekend of fun and entertainment on 17 & 18 May. Explore a treasure trove of free pirate-themed activities across the Barbican, Sutton Harbour, Royal William Yard and Waterfront.

More information [click here](#)



Royal William Yard Food and Drink festival

The popular Good Food + Craft Market will be taking place in Royal William Yard on the first Sunday of every month!

Known for showcasing some of the region's most talented artists and makers, the markets offer everything from tasty treats to handcrafted gifts. The monthly markets have been a staple of Royal William Yard's event calendar for years, and have won event awards along the way.

It's an unmissable event, showcasing the best the South West has to offer.

4th May, 1st June, 6th July, 3rd Aug, 7th Sep, 5th Oct - 10:00 - 15:00 for information is available [here](#)

Freedom Community Festival

The Freedom Community Festival is an annual free event held at the Freedom Fields Park in Plymouth that brings people together to celebrate the diverse community of the city. Organised and ran by a team of dedicated, generous volunteers who work tirelessly to make it all happen. With support from local organisations performing artists, local people, sponsors, and grants. Culture, great music, delicious food, market stalls, activities, and community spirit all blend seamlessly together to show off Plymouth at its finest. 24th + 25th May more information [here](#)

Britain's Ocean City Running festival

on the 11th May Plymouth host a spectacular series of running events, including Britain's Ocean City Running Festival consisting of the Plymouth Half, Plymouth 10k and Plymouth 5k, Primary School's Challenge and the thrilling Acronyms Tamar 10k.

Our very own Army Veteran Ellie is running 5K!

Good Luck Ellie



5k



Run Plymouth 5k
11 May 2025



Ellie will be participating in the Run Plymouth 5k race this year in aid of the Veterans & Family Hub. The Veterans & Family Hub provides social activity, peer support, mentoring, casework and employment support for veterans.

Your donations will make such a difference to helping our veterans, please give what you can.

To donate visit:
justgiving.com/page/ellie-symonds-1
or pay by card or cash at one of our events

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Are you caring for
someone and
worried about the
cost of living?

Are you looking for
ways to reduce
energy bills, for
you or the people
you care for?

Do you need
support with debt
or other money
concerns?



Carer Money Matters can help you
with energy bills and other money
matters.

We can help you make sure you're
getting everything you, and the
people you're caring for, are
entitled to. So money doesn't have
to be such a big worry.

Please get the help you need to help
the people you care for.
See how Carer Money Matters can
help you.

**CARERS
TRUST**



☎ 01752 201766

✉ advice@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk



**FIRST TUESDAY OF EVERY
MONTH STARTING 5TH
NOVEMBER 1300-16:00**

If you require support or advice
come to the drop in clinic at the
Woolwell centre.

Offering support for serving and
Veterans plus their families.

Improving Lives is a charity
organisation that is committed
to enhancing Physical and
mental health and wellbeing. We
also help with sensory
impairments and much much
more.

The café will be open so grab a
cuppa while you wait...

Telephone: 01752 241057

www.improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk






**Plymouth Veterans and
Family Hub**
in association with
WoollcombeYonge
Solicitors

1st Thursday of each month
at
Ernest English House
Free Legal Clinic

Covering the following areas,
Property (private buying and selling)
Commercial Property
Family Law
Collaborative Law
Mediation
Wills and Probate
Business Services
Crime

By appointment only
Please call the Veterans Hub on
01752 241057
to book your appointment.

WoollcombeYonge
Solicitors



MENS SHED
Plymouth Veterans and Family Hub
Ernest English House



Calling all Male Veterans

**2nd & 4th Wednesday of the month
15:30 -18:30**

What Is Mens Shed
Men's Shed allows Male Veterans to
come together to share your
experiences.

Why Choose Us

- ✓ Mens Shed Accredited
- ✓ Supported by the Royal
British Legion
- ✓ No DIY skills needed,
work on a project at you
own pace learning from
others in the group

Come and gain skills from other
veterans and support your local
Veterans Hub.

Supported by
Royal British Legion

Get in touch with us ☎ 01752 241057 ✉ vfhub@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk

**Plymouth Veterans
& Family Hub**

From **£4.00 pp**

Brew and Banter
Every Friday
10:30 - 12:30
Union Rooms
Wetherspoons Union Street

For more information call:
01752 241057 /
vfhub@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk



Thanks to funding from **THE ARMED FORCES
COVENANT FUND TRUST**




MAY 2025



VETERANS AND
FAMILY HUB

☎ 01752 241057 ✉ VFHub@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk



**LET'S TALK ABOUT
HEALTHY EATING**

A healthy diet can help you to stay active as you get older, giving you more time to do the things you enjoy.

Active for All are running sessions to provide information and guidance on eating a healthy, balanced diet.

The sessions will be led by Karen Wake, a Dietitian who has been talking about food within the NHS for 15 years.

**31st March 2025
10.30am-12pm
Ernest English House, Buckwell Street**

Spaces are Limited - Booking is ESSENTIAL!

To book your place, contact Active For All:
Telephone / Text - 07305 007983
Email - active@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk
or Scan the QR Code



HEART & SOLE

**PEER SUPPORT WALKING GROUP
AT SALTRAM PARK**

There is no time limit associated with loss and grief, it affects us in different ways. Having a calm space to talk, reflect and remember alongside people with shared experience can provide a source of comfort and friendship.

**Wednesdays (fortnightly)
Starting on 12th February 2025
Time 3.30pm - 5pm
Exact meeting location TBC closer to time.**

Free to Attend

For further information, contact Saffron:
Call / Text - 07483 365317
Email - saffron.mccaughna@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk



**BATTLING ON
FRESH START PROJECT**

Supporting Partners and Spouses of Serving & Reservist Personnel

We understand that partners/spouses face unique experiences in their personal, family and work lives.

ARE YOU NEW TO THE AREA? **NEED HELP MOVING FORWARD?** **EXPLORING WORK OPTIONS?** **WANT TO MEET LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE?** **NEED FAMILY SUPPORT?**

We can support you!

We can help to: Identify your barriers and goals, build your confidence, gain connections and explore transferable skills.

We support partners/spouses across Plymouth and South-East Cornwall with one-to-one outreach and welcoming social spaces.

For more information, or to get involved, please contact Adam or Sarah:
Adam - adam@battling-on.com - 01579 384 798
Sarah - sarah@battling-on.com - 07470 586 956



Fresh Start is provided by Battling On and funded by The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust



THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT FUND TRUST
Funded by HM Government





Move Your Mind.



2-hour workshop

Join us to understand how moving your body can have a positive impact on your mind, and discover tools to feel better both physically and mentally.

✦ **Monday 10 March 2025, 10:00am — 12:00 noon**

✦ **Friday 21 March 2025, 10:00am — 12:00 noon**

Ernest English House, Plymouth PL1 2DA

Learn more: devonmind.com/workshops

BLACKSMITHING FOR HEALTH



We are looking for veterans and people who have PTSD to attend free blacksmithing workshops designed to build communities and support positive mental health.



2025 groups start in January, March, April, June and August. Each course takes place weekly over 6 weeks.



The Crafts Workshop CIC, Unit 2, Riverside Business Park, New Passage Hill, Devonport, Plymouth, PL1 4SN



enquiries@thecraftsworkshop.co.uk

Skills
Launchpad
Plymouth

SKILLS SUPPORT FOR PLYMOUTH'S MILITARY COMMUNITY

Are you:

- transitioning from HM Armed Forces and planning the next steps towards a career in Plymouth?
- a working-age veteran seeking employment in the city or retraining?
- a military family spouse, partner or young person seeking new opportunities?

We can help you connect with opportunities for skills, training, education, careers and jobs!

- Drop into Skills Launchpad Plymouth on the first floor of Barclays, Tuesdays, 10am to 2pm.
- Come along to Plymouth Veterans and Family Hub at Ernest English House on Buckwell Street, between 9.30am and 12.30pm on the last Thursday of the month.

Delivery with support from:



Skills
Launchpad
Plymouth

CV WORKSHOP FOR HM ARMED FORCES

If you are preparing for your transition into civilian employment or are a veteran looking to change career or prepare for future employment, we can help!

Scan the QR code to book your space for this dedicated Armed Forces CV session which will be delivered by a veteran and RBG recruitment.



WHEN: Tuesday 13 May, 10am to 11.30am

WHERE: First floor of Barclays Bank in the city centre



MAY 2025



VETERANS AND
FAMILY HUB

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✉ VFHub@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk

Armed Forces & Veterans LGBTQ Stand-Easy

Our Next LGBTQ Coffee Morning
Monday 5th May 2025
10.00 - 12.00

@ The ELM Centre, Leypark Dr, Leypark Walk,
Estover, Plymouth PL6 8UE

Open to any Veteran or current member of our
Armed Forces, their Partners or Carers.

For more information Contact: Glenn at glenn.jordan@fgct.co.uk,
Larry at Larry.Holmes@helpforheroes.org.uk or Colin at colin.davey@fgct.co.uk

Promoted by FGCT Veterans Outreach

Headway PLYMOUTH
Improving life after brain injury

FREE ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS SESSIONS AT HEADWAY PLYMOUTH

The sessions will be led by
Penny Weekes HCPC 08060
(Clinical Specialist Occupational Therapist for people with Acquired Brain Injury and their Families)

BOOK NOW
01752 550559
ceo@headwayplymouth.org.uk
VISIT OUR WEBSITE
headwayplymouth.org.uk

ABI AWARENESS SESSIONS:
ALL SESSIONS AT OUR CENTRE AT 14:30 FOR 1 HOUR

Date	Topic
29th January 2025	An opportunity to meet others while we explore the functions of the brain and the effects of injury
26th February 2025	Understanding fatigue and managing energy levels post ABI
26th March 2025	Understanding and enhancing memory process & concentration skills
30th April 2025	Understanding and enhancing executive function skills
28th May 2025	Exploring the effects of ABI on families - a look at relationships, children etc
25th June 2025	The importance of social, leisure and purposeful activity in promoting recovery

TO BOOK, EMAIL US OR REGISTER AT EVENTBRITE.COM

These are free sessions for those working with or coming into contact with those who may be affected by brain injury (health and adult social care professionals and students, those in the justice and welfare benefits system and our colleagues working in the voluntary, community and charity sector).
Headway Plymouth, Headway House, Devonport PL1 4RJ

SERVING THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY

JOBS > TRAINING > CAREER & CV SUPPORT

CAREERS FAIR 2025

Plymouth
Crowne Plaza, Armada Way PL1 2HU
Thursday 26th June
10.00hrs – 13.00hrs

From Royal Navy - Leading Airman to Offshore Technical Director

☎ **02476 939931**
✉ **info@bfrss.org.uk**
💻 **www.bfrs.org.uk**

#BFRS #BFRSevents

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MAY 2025



VETERANS AND
FAMILY HUB

☎ 01752 241057 ✉ VFHub@improvinglivesplymouth.org.uk

VETERANS GOLF SOCIAL EVENT



DATE
Wednesday
7th May 2025

TIME
14.00 - 16.00

LOCATION
China Fleet Country Club
Driving Range
Saltash, PL12 6LJ

Open to all members of the Veterans Community,
of all abilities,
so why not come along to practice your swing
or just for a chat and some banter.

✉ glenn.jordan@fgct.co.uk **FOR DETAILS** www.china-fleet.co.uk

Food and Drinks will be available from The Cabin

Female Veterans Stand Easy



Thursday 1st May
10.00 till 13.00
Woodland Fort,
Crownhill Road, PL5 3SQ

**Open to all Female Veterans
and Serving Female Personnel.**

   **FOUR GREENS
COMMUNITY TRUST**
Helping people change lives



Wavy Navy Tots

Stay and Play for 0-5s for RN & RM Families
Every Thursday - 0930-1100
Royal Navy Community Centre - Crownhill, PL6 5BX

✉ Mark.Jones@aggies.org.uk
☎ 079 7764 1896
f www.facebook.com/AggiesCWPL

Pride in Veterans Standard Organisation

07/01/25-07/01/26

Working in partnership with Fighting With Pride, Improving Lives Plymouth is committed to providing inclusive and welcoming support to LGBT+ Veterans, serving personnel and their families.


FIGHTING WITH PRIDE

 Caroline Paige MBE
CEO Fighting With Pride

 Dave Small
PIVS Manager

What's On May

Thursday 1st - Unpaid Carers Group - EEH 13:30 - 15:00

** Friday 2nd - VE Day 'Street Party' St Aubyns Hall - 12:30 - 14:00

*** MONDAY 5th - BANK HOLIDAY ***

*Tuesday 6th - Veterans Sticky Bun Morning - Age UK Mount Gould 10:00 - 12:00- £3.00

* Wednesday 7th - Bingo, EEH 17:30 - 19:00 £2.00

* Friday 9th - Brew and Banter- Union Rooms Wetherspoons 10:30 - 12:30

* Saturday 10th - AFVBC Breakfast Club - Drakes Kitchen, UoP 9:00 - 11:00

** Saturday 10th - Age UK Brunch - Age UK Mount Gould 10:00 - 12:00 £7.00

*Monday 12th - Age UK Walking Football - Harpers Football Centre - 14:00 - 15:00 - £2.50

*Tuesday 13th - Veterans Sticky Bun Morning - Age UK Mount Gould 10:00 - 12:00- £3.00

Wednesday 14th - Men's Shed at the Veterans Hub 15:00 -18:30

*Friday 16th - Brew and Banter - Union Rooms Wetherspoons 10:30 - 12:30

* Saturday 17th - AFVBC Breakfast Club the Billacombe, Plymstock - 9:00 - 11:00

*Monday 19th - Age UK Walking Football - Harpers Football Centre - 14:00 - 15:00 - £2.50

*Tuesday 20th - Veterans Sticky Bun Morning - Age UK Mount Gould 10:00 - 12:00- £3.00

**Wednesday 21st - Fish & Chips, EEH Must be booked and paid in advance 17:00 - 18:30 £7.00

*Friday 23rd - Brew and Banter- Union Rooms Wetherspoons 10:30 - 12:30

**Sunday 25th - Veterans Brunch - Age UK Mount Gould - 10:00 - 12:00 £7.00

*** MONDAY 26TH - BANK HOLIDAY ***

Wednesday 28th - Men's Shed at the Veterans Hub 15:00 - 18:30

*Friday 30th - Brew and Banter- Union Rooms Wetherspoons 10:30 - 12:30

* Saturday 31st - AFVBC Breakfast Club, Tamar View Community Centre - 9:00 - 11:00

* Cost payable

** Booking Required