



LIFE BEYOND THE MILITARY –
OUTDOORS

RXW26

By Anna Baker Cresswell

The show goes on!

Torrential spring showers almost tropical in their intensity, were combined with sunshine and lovely mild growing weather, for our 2nd Rural Week of 2019 at Bicton.

We welcomed 9 HighGrounders, 5 Veterans and 4 serving personnel, including our first lady Group Captain, with the Army outnumbering the RAF by 7 to 2..!

Our evening speaker on the Monday was Jamie Ranson who had travelled from Cornwall to talk about his transition from the Army and setting up his business [Langore Tree Services](#).

Jamie joined us for a Rural Week at Bicton in 2017 while he was still serving so the fact that he has got his business off the ground (sorry Jamie, terrible pun..!) in such a short space of time and offered to come back and talk to others leaving the military, is a source of great pride to all of us involved with Rural Weeks.

On Tuesday evening we welcomed a new speaker Jeff Barber who left the RAF and has set up a very successful dog and cat boarding business. Jeff shared his wisdom and experience with typical ex military generosity and we really hope he will come and visit us again – thanks Jeff!

Our Wednesday evening speaker couldn't join us, so Chris Shepherd led an Insights into Employment session which we all contributed to. With so many different experiences of interviews good and bad, it made for an interesting session.

Chris's outside programme of visits was as ambitious as ever and we must thank [Clinton Devon Estates](#), [RSPB](#), [Kenniford Farm](#), [Exminster Golf Centre](#), [Forestry England](#), [Hi-Line](#), [Ugbrooke House and Gardens](#), [Green Valley Cider](#), [Budleigh Salterton Riding School](#) and our partners at [South Yeo Farm West](#) for their hospitality during what was an action packed 5 days.

Special thanks also to all the presenters at Bicton including Neil from [Ground Control](#), Moss, Peter, Nadine, Nick, Phil from [Sampson Hall](#) and everyone at the College who made our stay go smoothly.

We were delighted to welcome Kirstie Gallagher who has recently joined [The Royal Marines Charity](#) as an employment advisor when she came to visit Bicton and see what Rural Weeks are all about and it was also lovely to see Trevor who joined us for a Rural Week in autumn 2018 when he came back to spend the evening with us and tell us what he's up to now.

Continued...
Page 1 of 2



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Page 2 of 2

Last words:

“That technology can work hand in hand with the rural sector.”

RAF technician, serving.

“This course should be offered to all Service Leavers.”

Army Major. 32 years' service.

“A really great insight into the sector in all its different guises. Very friendly atmosphere and great to meet such a wide variety of people.”

RAF Group Captain. Serving.

“Very helpful in terms of exposure to future employment opportunities in the land-based sector and saves people from choosing future jobs unwisely or in ignorance.”

Army Padre. Serving.

For more information about HighGround's services please contact Anna Baker Cresswell

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