



LIFE BEYOND THE MILITARY –  
OUTDOORS

## RXW27

By Anna Baker Cresswell

Our 3rd Rural Week of 2019 at Bicton College which started on Sunday 2nd June had all the elements of a typical British summer – driving rain, muggy aftermath, interspersed with warm Devon sunshine. All in the space of 5 days..!

We were joined by 7 HighGrounders including our first lady serving in the Royal Navy. One of our HighGrounders had heard the [On Your Farm programme broadcast on Radio 4](#) on Remembrance Day in 2018 and resolved to join us when he started his resettlement, and our word of mouth self-referrals continue to grow which is very encouraging.

Jon Perkins kindly volunteered to spend the first 3 days with us until Anna was able to get to Bicton, and we were delighted to welcome Tony Atkinson from [Rock2Recovery](#) as our evening speaker on the Monday, Jamie Ranson from [Langore Tree Services](#) on the Tuesday and our friend Cal Rose from [R&M Utility and Engineering Services](#) did the honours on the Wednesday.

As is our custom, we went to the Sir Walter Raleigh in East Budleigh for our last night on Thursday, where we are always made so welcome.

Chris Shepherd's timetable included a new presenter Zoe Elliott from [Careersinracing](#) who came to talk to us about the thoroughbred racing and breeding industries and the many opportunities which exist for ex military people with organisational skills who enjoy variety and working outdoors.

Zoe is a member of our Development Board and we are extremely grateful to her for her time and dedication.

Another new timetable innovation was a visit to [Combe Estate](#) where Justin Lascelles and his staff described the many and varied opportunities on estates as they diversify to include garden centres, game shooting, forestry, camp sites, farm shops and much more.

As always Chris's programme was a balance between classroom presentations and outside visits and we are so grateful to all who shared their time, knowledge and contacts so freely including Moss, Nadine, Terry and Paul at [Woodbury Park](#), Nick at the [The Outdoors Group](#), Glen Miller and his team at Agricultural Plant and Machinery, Aaron at [Forestry England](#), Grant and his team at [Kenniford Farm](#), Matt and Kirsty at [Hi-Line](#), Debbie Kingsley [South Yeo Farm West](#), Julian from [Glendale Services](#) and to finish our week an inspirational presentation from Phil Sampson from [Sampson Hall](#).

We thank Bicton's staff for looking after us so well, and the last words go to our HighGrounders who are the reason we all do what we do:

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#### Last words:

“I have already mentioned it to other serving personnel. It’s a great environment and a real eye opener as to what opportunities are out there. Also, a good mix of ex-forces and civilians during the week which will help with transition.”

Female RN Lieutenant. Serving.

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“Everything has been brilliant from staff, accommodation, food, setting. The content of the course – variety, presenters etc. A v positive theme of a good outlook on ex-military personnel. Great atmosphere with like-minded people.”

Targets Analyst. Army. Serving.

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“100% I would recommend this to others. It provides an opportunity to consider areas of employment that many people wouldn’t normally think of.”

Royal Marine, Veteran.

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For more information about HighGround’s services please contact Anna Baker Cresswell  
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Join our closed LinkedIn group where we post work experience and employment opportunities from military friendly farms, estates, forestry and commercial horticulture companies, vineyards and much more. Follow HighGround at Headley Court on Facebook.

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