



THE SAPPER CHARITY

Newsletter

News and events from across the Corps and Sapper Family

Royal Engineers Association

#22 - October 2025

Welcome to this edition of the newsletter!

As we prepare for November's national Act of Remembrance, this autumnal season invites reflection on the power of doing something for others. Acts of volunteering not only strengthen our wellbeing but also deliver lasting social impact - embodying the spirit of service that defines our Sapper family.

Whether taking on a challenge, fundraising for a good cause, or restoring military vehicles and artefacts, remembrance and service come together. Our recent visit to the D-Day beaches in Normandy was a powerful reminder of that connection.



The Power of Volunteerism:

Fuelling Our Mission - Supporting the Wellbeing of Others

Volunteerism continues to be the beating heart of the Royal Engineers Association- driving not only our fundraising efforts but also strengthening the mental health and wellbeing of our wider community. Across the country, members, serving personnel, and those with a deep connection to the Sapper family are stepping forward to take on extraordinary challenges in support of the Sapper Charity.

Among them, three runners **Andrew Hurren, Saskia Hart, and George Clout** - all currently preparing to take on the next TCS London Marathon, pushing their limits to raise vital funds. Their commitment reflects the resilience and determination that defines our community - past and present.

Meanwhile, dozens of volunteers are immersing themselves in our vehicle painting projects. These initiatives go far beyond restoring historic military artefacts. They offer a chance to reconnect with the camaraderie and shared purpose experienced during service. Working side by side, participants rediscover a sense of belonging, forge new friendships, and leave each event with a renewed connection to the REA family.

Serving members of the Corps are also playing a vital role - taking on fundraising challenges and lending their time and energy to support the charity. Their involvement bridges generations and reinforces the enduring spirit of service that defines the Royal Engineers.

The impact of these efforts is profound. Volunteers consistently report a boost in mood, a sense of achievement, and a feeling of being part of something bigger than themselves. In a time when isolation and mental health challenges are increasingly common, these projects offer a lifeline - reminding us all of the strength found in unity and shared endeavour.

To every volunteer, runner, painter, serving member, and supporter: thank you. Your contributions are preserving our heritage, funding our future, and uplifting lives - one act of service at a time.

Get Involved: Challenge Events

Taking on a challenge is a powerful way to honour service, support fellow Sappers, and strengthen your own wellbeing. Whether it's a marathon, mountain trek, cycle ride, or personal fitness goal, every effort helps raise vital funds for The Sapper Charity and the wider Royal Engineers community.

You can find inspiration and upcoming opportunities on reahq.org.uk/fundraising/challenge-events, where we'll support you every step of the way - from choosing your challenge and setting up your fundraising page to sharing your story and celebrating your success. Every challenge, large or small, helps keep the spirit of service alive, supporting those who've served and those who continue to serve.

Tick your will off your to-do list

Write your will for free, and support us by leaving a gift in your will



In partnership with



Other ways to support us

You can still show your support by making a one-off or regular donation to the Sapper Charity.

Donate

Arromanches

REA VOLUNTEERS | RESTORATION MISSION

2025

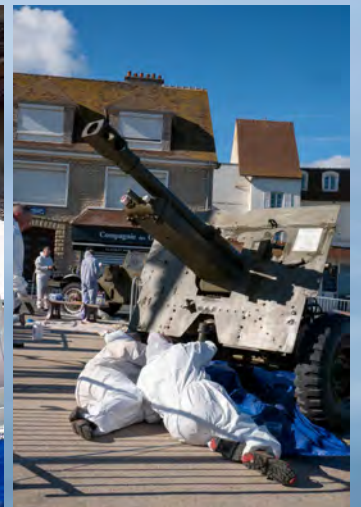
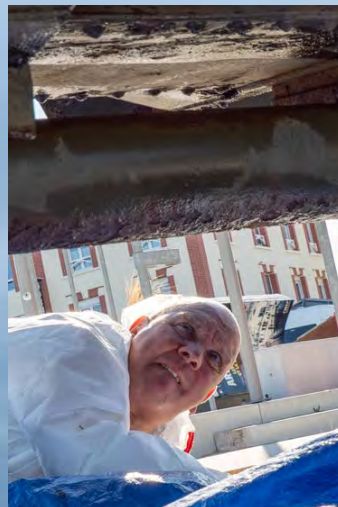
Spending time with the REA volunteers in Arromanches this week has been both humbling and inspiring. Watching this diverse group of veterans come together, sleeves rolled up, paintbrushes in hand - to restore historic D-Day artefacts was a powerful demonstration of what it means to be part of the Sapper family.

These missions are about so much more than preserving history. They reconnect people. They rebuild bonds forged through shared service, humour, and purpose - and they create space for new friendships and conversations that matter.

From the early morning starts to the laughter over evening meals, and from local schoolchildren stopping by to the generosity of the Mayor and Musée du Débarquement team, the week captured the very best of the Royal Engineers spirit: teamwork, pride, and service to something greater than ourselves.

It's been a privilege to help tell this story - and to see first-hand how projects like this make a lasting impact on people, communities, and wellbeing.

Chris Toulmin
REA - Head Office



"My first foray into the world of REA activities. A brilliant experience with like minded people and I'm keen to be involved in more. Great camaraderie and great to help Guillaume bring the museum and history to life for the new generations."



It wasn't all hard work for the team in Arromanches. Between coats of paint, there was time to explore some of Normandy's most significant historical sites - including the Longues-sur-Mer gun emplacements and the Churchill AVRE "I Charlie", which had been rejuvenated earlier this year by another REA volunteer team.

The visits offered valuable context to the work being done, with Nigel "Spence" Spencer leading the group and providing expert guidance, joined by Guillaume Dormy, Curator of the Musée du Débarquement, who shared fascinating insights into the Longues-sur-Mer defences and how the allied forces overcame them.



"As the 'Sprog' of the group, I wasn't sure, when I first got on the transport, what I had signed up for, turns out this was one of the best things I have done since leaving the Corps."



The trip also provided important moments for reflection and remembrance. During a visit to the British War Memorial, the team took time to honour all those who were lost during the D-Day campaign.

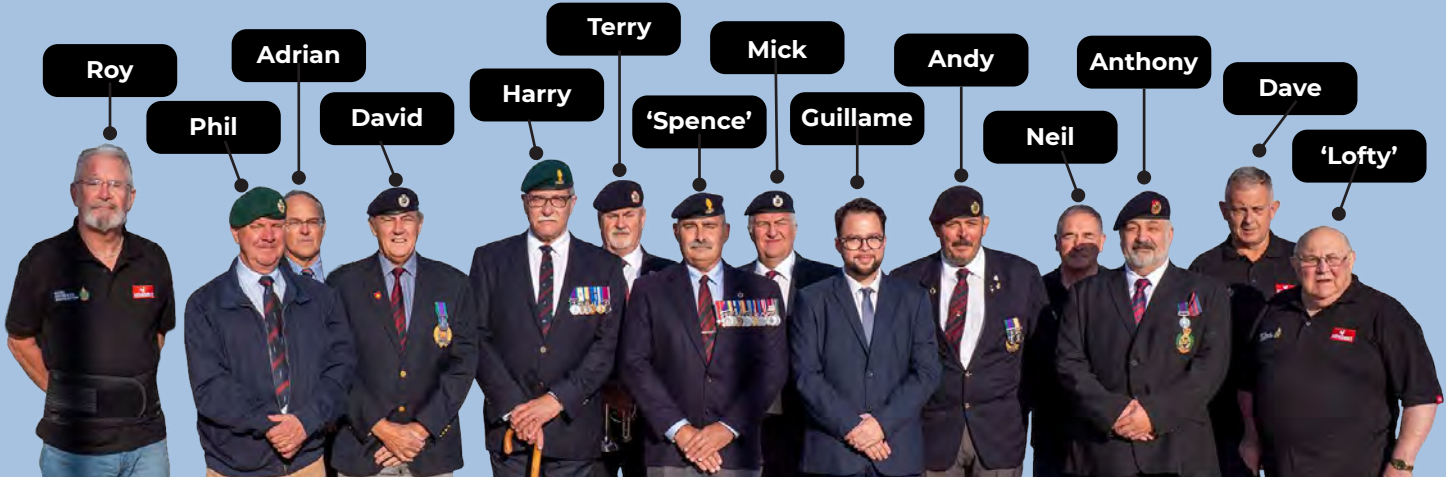
There was also a very personal and moving ceremony held at the Royal Engineers Memorial overlooking Arromanches, where the team paid tribute to their fellow Sappers who fell during the conflict.

The week concluded with a more formal public ceremony, hosted by the Mayor of Arromanches-les-Bains and the Musée du Débarquement, looking out across Gold Beach - a poignant reminder of the courage, sacrifice, and enduring legacy of those who served.



These restoration missions are open to all members of the Sapper family serving or veteran and offer a unique opportunity to be part of something meaningful. They combine hands-on teamwork with a shared sense of history, camaraderie, and wellbeing.

Whether it's wielding a paintbrush, sharing stories, or simply being part of the team spirit that defines these trips, every contribution matters. If you'd like to take part in a future event, keep an eye on upcoming opportunities via **SapperCom** or get in touch with REA HQ to find out more.



Nigel 'Spence' Spencer Roy Hickman Phil Caldwell	David Davidson Harry Reddick Terry Knight	Mick Rushton-Butters Andy Wells Neil Bevans	Anthony Dixon Dave Shepherd Tony 'Lofty' Collins	Guillaume Dormy - Arromanches Museum Curator Adrian - Arromanches Museum Trustee
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Remembering the Blitz

Royal Engineers Museum and REA Sheffield Branch Help Tell the Story of the Sheffield Blitz

The Royal Engineers Museum has recently gifted a World War II mock-up of an unexploded German bomb to the National Emergency Services Museum (NESM) in Sheffield.

This unusual piece will be part of the NESM's Sheffield Blitz Exhibition, reopening on 12th December 2025 after refurbishment to mark the 85th anniversary of the Sheffield Blitz.

The mock bomb helps bring to life the dangers faced during the bombing raids of December 1940, and the vital role played by emergency services and military engineers - especially the Royal Engineers - in keeping people safe.

It's a fitting reminder of the bravery, teamwork and resilience shown in the darkest days of the war, and we're proud to see the Corps' story included in this important exhibition.



Sapper Check In

Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day is a time to remember all who have served and those who are left behind who have been affected - but it's also a time to check in on fellow Sappers.

While many attend parades, and march with pride and remember respectfully, some choose to stay away and remember quietly in their own way.

Check in with those you don't see, not just those you do. A simple message or call can make a big difference. Let's ensure no Sapper feels forgotten during this important time of reflection.

Train Travel for Remembrance

Serving military personnel and veterans attending Services of Remembrance across Great Britain on Sunday 9 November will be able to travel by train for free. This includes travel to any London Terminal station on either Saturday 8 or Sunday 9 November, with return travel permitted on Sunday 9 November only.

Branch Information

New Branch Annual Report & Info Sheet

On 30th November, the REA will be sending out a new Branch Annual Report and Information Sheets to Branch Officials. This updated format, using Microsoft Forms is designed to give a clearer insight into branch structures and member activity.

The new format will improve transparency, identify areas of need, and ensure resources are distributed fairly particularly with the new group structure. Branches are encouraged to complete and return the documents promptly to support this important initiative. Your input will help shape the future of REA support across all areas.

Group Boundaries

From the 1st of January 2026, the new REA group boundaries will come into effect. First proposed in April, they've since been refined following feedback from branches and committee members.

The boundaries were finalised in September by the Operations Committee and published on SapperCom in October. To ensure everyone is informed, the final boundaries can be viewed here

<https://tinyurl.com/2uzsya3t> areas

Field of Remembrance



This year's Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey will have a more poignant feel. Following requests from serving and retired Sappers there will be a number of remembrance crosses bearing the names of fallen Sappers placed in the Royal Engineers Field of Remembrance.

The plot is reviewed by a senior member of the Royal Family after which access is open to the public from the afternoon of Thursday 6th November until Sunday 16th November.



Upcoming Events

9th November 2025
Remembrance Sunday - Cenotaph March Past

29th November
Chilwell Winter Ball

Keep up to date with all events on **SapperCom**

Newsletter direct to your inbox

Use the QR code or this [link](#) to sign-up.

