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| **news release** **23 April 2025** **Marking the 80th anniversary of VE Day** l'alouette_a_1_23_5Thursday 8 May is the 80th anniversary of VE Day – a moment of celebration and reflection that marked the end of World War II in Europe.The day will be an opportunity for people in West Sussex to come together and pay tribute to all those who fought for freedom from 1939 to 1945.Residents are being encouraged to be a part of history by watching a flag raising or the lighting of beacons, joining a street party or attending a church service.You can check out what’s happening near you at [ve-vjday80.gov.uk](https://ve-vjday80.gov.uk/)Our library service also has a [wide range of resources to help you celebrate and find out more about VE Day.](https://arena.westsussex.gov.uk/-/remembrance-sussex) If you would like to know more about the Home Front during the war, then Matthew Jones, Assistant County Archivist at the West Sussex Record Office, will be giving a **talk called ‘West Sussex at War 1939-1945: the Home Front’** at The Old Library, Knockhundred Row, Midhurst GU29 9DQ on Thursday 8 May at 2pm. [Booking is essential](https://midhurst-tc.gov.uk/event/ve-80-events-in-midhurst/).If you can’t make that date, then you can join a **free online webinar on Sussex Day (16 June).** The webinar, the latest in the West Sussex Unwrapped series from West Sussex Record Office and Screen Archive South East, will explore the experiences of ordinary West Sussex residents on the Home Front in the Second World War. Photographs and documents from the Record Office will help to bring to life themes such as evacuation, rationing, air raids and the ever-present threat of invasion by sea whilst films from Screen Archive South East will show Home Guard training and activities, including the wrong and the right way of dealing with Nazi spies. The talk will end with a compilation of films depicting the war-time experience and the end-of-war celebrations across the south east. [Find the details here.](https://www.wsro.org.uk/product/west-sussex-unwrapped-west-sussex-on-the-home-front-1939-1945-online-talk/) **Here’s some of the other VE Day events happening in West Sussex:*** From May to September our [West Sussex Record Office in Orchard Street, Chichester](https://www.wsro.org.uk/), will host a display of World War II photographs, with a selection of images [displayed in some of our libraries across the county as well.](https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/find-my-nearest/library/)

 * Throughout May there will be an exhibition at Midhurst Museum of World War II artefacts from the Royal Sussex Regiment collections. You can find out more about the Royal Sussex Regiment Archive including World War II material here: [The Royal Sussex Regiment - West Sussex Record Office](https://www.wsro.org.uk/research-guides/the-royal-sussex-regiment/).

 * During War Graves Week from 2 to 11 May, there will be Commonwealth War Graves Commission tours at Midhurst, Easebourne, Lodsworth and Clymping where those who lost their lives in World War II are buried, including men from the Royal Sussex Regiment. [Find out more about War Graves Week here.](https://www.cwgc.org/visit-us/events-tours-and-talks/)

Councillor Pieter Montyn, Chairman of West Sussex County Council, said: “It is fitting that we mark the 80th anniversary of the liberation and the end of World War II in Europe. “The hard-won victory began in June of 1944 with the Allied landings in Normandy and further operations in northern France in which British and Dominion forces alongside US and other forces played a central part. These continued at Arnhem and in the Ardennes during the harsh winter of 1944.  “In the spring of 1945 British and other forces advanced through northern France and towards the end of April and during the first days of May liberated occupied Belgium and the Netherlands.  “West Sussex played its part in the liberation, home as it was to the extensive build-up of ground and airborne personnel and equipment as well as to vast amounts of supporting materiel, in anticipation of the Normandy landings, and supporting continuing cross Channel operations. “When the formal end of WW II hostilities was signed on 7 and 8 May, over a million people celebrated in the streets of Britain. “Today, Victory in Europe Day is celebrated and remembered in most European nations. “This is a time not only to remember the extraordinary effort and events of 80 years ago, but also to reflect in gratitude on the sacrifices made by so many in the pursuit of peace.” ends​ **For further information please contact the news desk on 0330 222 8090 or email** **pressoffice@westsussex.gov.uk****. For urgent out-of-hours enquiries please call 07767 098415.** Facebook  Twitter |

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