**SOUTH WILLESBOROUGH AND NEWTOWN IGNITES THE SPIRIT OF THE 1940s WITH AN UNFORGETTABLE VE 80 / VJ DAY CELEBRATION!**

**South Willesborough and Newtown Community Council (SWANCC) is thrilled to announce the roaring success of its spectacular SWAN SALUTE TO THE 1940s – VE 80 / VJ Day Commemoration, held on Saturday 5th July 2025. The event transformed Newtown Green into a living, breathing time capsule of wartime Britain – brimming with colour, sound, remembrance, and joy.**

**Taking centre stage was an absolutely awe-inspiring, full-size Spitfire, proudly displayed on the green. Crowds were left speechless as they stood in the shadow of this legendary fighter plane – a powerful symbol of British courage and ingenuity that captivated hearts and sparked imaginations throughout the day.**

**As the green buzzed with excitement, visitors were transported back to the 1940s with vintage military vehicles, authentic air raid shelters, and an immersive ‘Home Front’ exhibition. Enthralling wartime re-enactments brought history to life, while the sound of live 1940s music from acclaimed London and Brighton performers filled the air, setting toes tapping and spirits soaring.**

**A highlight of the day came when Sir Winston Churchill himself – flanked by his officers – arrived to rapturous applause. A spontaneous Guard of Honour formed as he delivered a rousing performance that stirred the crowd into a unified celebration of resilience and victory. Union Flags waved high – over 500 in the hands of families, veterans, and children – as voices rang out in song and dance in true Blitz spirit.**

**The event was graced by a host of distinguished guests including Deputy Lord Lieutenant Sir George Jessel Bt. DL, MP Sojan Joseph, Mayor Cllr Lyn Suddards, and Ashford Military Champion Cllr Peter Feacey. Each offered moving tributes to the enduring strength of the wartime generation and the unbreakable spirit of community.**

**The Town Crier’s haunting bagpipes marked a solemn moment of reflection, as the Mayor of Ashford lit the Lamp of Peace and delivered a heartfelt speech. A collective silence followed, shimmering with reverence and gratitude.**

**Chair of the SWAN Community Council, Cllr Sue Mullan, said:**

**“The SWAN Salute to the 1940s brought our community together in a truly unforgettable way. The turnout was phenomenal, and the atmosphere was electric. We raised a powerful and heartfelt Salute to the remarkable generation of the 1940s. SWANCC is deeply grateful to every volunteer, performer, and special guest who helped create such a meaningful and magical day.”**

**In a dazzling finale, the Cinque Port Lindy Hoppers lit up the green with a sensational performance, sending the crowd home smiling and uplifted – the echoes of music and laughter lingering long after.**

**With wonderful attendance and an outpouring of local pride – many residents dressed in stunning period attire – the SWAN Salute was a vibrant tribute not only to the past, but to the enduring power of remembrance and unity.**

**SWAN Community Council extends heartfelt thanks to all who attended, contributed, and celebrated, ensuring the legacy of VE and VJ Day continues to inspire future generations in South Willesborough and Newtown.**

**Photos and media enquiries:**
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