

Reference: XXX
Accession Ref: XXXX
Name: Chris Roberts
Address: [Not given]
Date of Birth: [Not given]
Place of Birth: [Not given]
Date of Interview: [Not given]
Interviewed by: Roger Kitchen
Duration: 00:17:44

Chris took over as the Royal British Legion Trustee for the Rose after being invited to do so by the outgoing one. Initially, the Legion had resisted the Rose because of the lack of Christian symbology, as embodied by the raised sword. As the city developed it became clear that the Rose was a point of remembrance for all faiths and none. From the outset, it was decided that Armistice Day would be marked at the Rose because many communities already had established Remembrance Day events. As well as the Armistice, there was an annual commemoration of the boy-soldier Albert French which was supported by the Cadet Wing of The Rifles Association.

Before the Rose, there had been no place for the public to lay flowers for, for example, the death of Princess Diana. The Rose had had plans ready for the death of HM The Queen and was there to assist people through their reflection and grief.

He saw people taking the time to contemplate when they visited the Rose. They were struck by the effort made to create a landscaped place of reflection that wasn't just a cenotaph and wasn't just for sad things – Tea Bag Day was one that sprang to mind and that celebrated the city's industrial basis. It was a peaceful space close to a busy commercial hub and designed to be uplifting.

Although some of the organisations originally involved had become less enthusiastic, there were new ones stepping in. He felt it had benefitted from not being under the civic authority.