

Minutes from: Newent & District Branch of The Royal British Legion

25 September 2025 – Memorial Hall

<u>Attendees</u>	<u>Post</u>
Richard Balding	Chair
Helen Axon	Treasurer
Graham Barton	Parade Marshal
Rick Axon	Bar, Entertainment Member
Dave Pollock	Raffle Coordinator
Simon Mason	Padre
Pat Phillips	Honorary Padre

1. Act of Remembrance.

The Chair opened the meeting at 1900 hours and asked everyone to think of the people who couldn't be with us due to ill health or for any other reason. He then read out the names of the members of the Parish of Newent who lost their lives in WW1 and WW2 during the month of October. He concluded with the Act of Remembrance.

2. Apologies for Absence.

Keith Urch, Susan Urch, Elaine Balding, Gordon Thorogood, Adrian Dover, Roger Acland, Terry Weaver, Jim Gardiner, Colin Britt, Jon & Viv Miles.

3. Chair's Report

Welcome everyone I hope you are all well, a very short report this month.

3.1 Remembrance Parade & Service 2025

On 4 September the Parade Marshal, Branch Padre and myself were invited by Newent Town Council (NTC) to attend the initial meeting for this year's Remembrance Parade & Service, which will take place on 9 November 2025. It was a very productive meeting and we do not think there will be a need to hold another face to face meeting unless something goes drastically wrong. The Parade Marshal and Branch Padre will let everyone know the details when complete.

Do not forget that we also hold a small ceremony at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in front of Newent War Memorial. Everyone is welcome to attend.

3.2 Veterans' Coffee Morning – 28 October 2025

There was a good turnout for the coffee morning this week. Don't forget that the next Veterans' Coffee Morning will be on the 28 October 2025 starting at 1000 in Manna Coffee House, everyone is welcome to attend.

3.3 Branch Annual General Meeting – 23 October 2025

This year's Branch Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on Thursday 23 October 2025 in the Memorial Hall and will start at 1900. This is the Members' chance to become actively involved in the the Branch. As with any committee there is always room for new ideas and enthusiasm, so if anyone would like to get involved please let me know and I'll help in any way I can.

This year's AGM will be accompanied with both cheese & wine, which in my opinion is a reason for attending all on its own.

3.4 Finally

Don't forget that as normal if anyone needs help in any way at all please do not hesitate to get in contact, and if we can help, we will.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising

There were no matters arising so RA proposed and HA seconded that the Minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record: passed unanimously.

5. Reports by Officers

5.1 Branch Community Support (BCS) Report for September 2025

Dear Branch Members, Veterans, Families and Supporters of the Newent & District Branch of the Royal British Legion. We have pleasure in presenting this month's BCS Report as follows:

5.1.1 General Information

Welcome to our September Meeting and General RBL Update. We continue to progress reconnecting with our many local veterans, serving members of our Armed Forces community and Cadet Units in Newent. We are renewing our Branch Affiliation with the Newent Branch of the RAFAC via Damon Ballinger, Flt Lt RAFAC | OC 186 (Newent) Sqn Air Cadets.

5.1.2 Branch Remembrance

We remember those unable to be present this evening due to various reasons and as usual, offer our support to those in need. Members and friends are reminded of the Branch and Veterans' Coffee Morning on Tuesday 28 October at Manna Coffee House starting at 1000.

5.1.3 Branch Welfare, Membership and Statistics.

This reporting period has been very quiet, with few requests for advice or support.

5.1.3.1 Branch Welfare.

Aside from the support available via your BCS Representatives, Veterans and Branch, Members are encouraged to continue to contact the RBL Helpline services as normal via the national network on 0808 802 8080 and The Veteran's Gateway: <https://support.veteransgateway.org.uk>

5.1.3.2 Branch Membership

The current Branch Membership has increased by two Members with the addition of Roger Acland and Thelma his wife, formerly of Longhope who have recently moved into Daffodil Court. We are sure that they will receive a warm welcome from residents and to our Branch Meetings and Coffee Mornings. The new Branch total will be 48 once current Members have renewed their subscription: new Members are always encouraged and welcomed.

5.1.3.3 Branch Statistics

We continue to be supportive of our local Veterans and others within our surrounding area. The Branch continues to provide support to Branch Members, new Veterans moving into our community and an ongoing number via the Telephone Buddy Network.

We would remind Members that you can support others in need by signposting them to TRBL helpline or by reference to the Branch BCS representatives at the earliest convenience. Please note that all communications are confidential.

Branch Statistics for this period are therefore as follows:

Total Number of Welfare visits: 2

How many beneficiaries visited: 2

How many visitors (Branch Community Supporters): 2

Total Welfare Expenditure: NIL

Telephone Buddies:

Telephone – How many beneficiaries called: 2

Telephone – How many telephone buddies: 2

Total Number of Calls made by Branch Executive in support of Veterans: 2

5.1.4 Branch Community Support, Youth Liaison and Community Activities.

5.1.4.1 Community and Youth Liaison

Following the Branch meeting with Newent Town Council, arrangements for the forthcoming Remembrance Day Event in November are being finalised.

Your Branch Representatives continue to liaise with the many varied groups and youth organisations within our community.

5.1.4.2 The John Edward Whitehorn Trophy - Nominations

With the summer holidays over, reminders have again been sent to all secondary schools and youth organisations serving Newent and its wider community for action during the September school term. SM asked if there was a minimum age at which someone could be nominated. RB said that the age range is 13 – 18.

5.1.4.3 Newent War Memorial and Time Capsule

A varied array of items has now been collected: sealing of the capsule will take place imminently.

5.1.5 Forthcoming Dates for TRBL Branch Diary

The next Veteran's Branch Coffee Morning will be held on Tuesday, 28 October at Manna Coffee House, Newent.

For further information please see the reports issued by our Branch Chairman, Branch Entertainment Officer and Parade Marshal.

5.2 Treasurer's Report

The current account balance remains at £1085.36, as there were no transactions over the previous 30 days.

5.3 Parade Marshal Report

On Thursday 4 September the Chairman, Padre and Parade Marshal attended a Remembrance Parade planning meeting at Newent Town Council's Offices. It was agreed that we would stick to the usual format but with one slight alteration:

0915-0930 Parade groups to meet by Lake Car Park

0935 Parade step off

0945 Arrive at Church, standards carried to porch, parade fallout, enter Church

1000 Church service starts

1040/1045 Church service ends – uniformed groups to exit first*

1050 War Memorial - reading of names, last post, silence, reveille, wreaths

1115 Remembrance event finishes

*This is to avoid the uniformed groups being caught up in the mass exodus from the Church

The Parade Marshal will draw up an “exit list” so that the groups know which exit to use.

The Air Cadets have very kindly offered to carry the Branch Standard at the Parade. NTC will arrange for a rolling road closure from 0935 until 1000 and for a shortened road closure from 1055 – 1115. NTC will also send out all the invitations and deal with putting up the large poppies throughout the Town.

On Sunday 7 September the Parade Marshal took part in a Standard Bearer’s training day organised by Gloucestershire RBL. As well as RBL Standard Bearers there were Army, Air Force and Police Cadets taking part.

5.4 Branch Padre

Nothing to add re. the Remembrance Service and Parade.

5.5 Entertainments Report

RA reminded everyone of the events planned for the rest of the year:

- 23 October: AGM followed by cheese and wine
- 27 November: Social meeting at the Cobblers
- 18 December: Christmas Dinner at the Alma

It was agreed that up to £50 could be spent on refreshments for the AGM.

5.6 Raffle Coordinator

DP asked if he was required to produce a written report for the AGM. The chair said that only the Officers were required to submit reports but that anyone else on the Committee could submit one if they so wished.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 The Chair has received details from the PAO re. collection dates in Newent at the Market Square: Saturday 25 October and Saturday 1 November both 0900-1200. Members were asked to let the Chair know if they could help, even if only for a short time, on either of the dates. The Army and Air Force Cadets will be collecting around the Town of both days. There is also the possibility that the Army Cadets will be able to collect at one or two Newent Rugby matches.

6.2 The Chair said that the Standard Bearer gauntlets need replacing and that there should be a Standard Bearer tie kept with the gauntlets and sling. It was proposed by SM, seconded by RA that the Branch should purchase new gauntlets and a tie: passed unanimously. RB was also tasked with checking to see if the badge on the sling needed updating.

6.3 DP showed Members his Father’s medals which had been cleaned and remounted. This was done by Sunset Militaria in Ross on Wye and DP agreed to

provide contact details in case other Members had medals that needed cleaning or remounting. The information is attached to these minutes.

6.4 GB asked if details were available for the Newent Community School Remembrance service. SM said that he was going to the school next week and should be able to find out what is being planned.

6.5 Date of the next meeting: Branch AGM on 23 October in the Memorial Hall starting at 1900.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 1945.

Meeting Agenda
Newent and District Branch the Royal British Legion
AGM 23 October 2025 in Newent Memorial Hall

1. Act of Remembrance.
2. Apologies for absence.
3. Chairman's opening remarks.
4. Adoption of Minutes of previous AGM.
5. Matters arising from previous Minutes.
6. Chairman's report.
7. Individual Officers' reports.
 - a. Deputy Chair, Welfare, Community Liaison
 - b. Padre
 - c. Parade Marshal
 - d. Entertainment & Bar Member
 - e. Raffle Coordinator
 - f. Secretary
8. Presentation and adoption of accounts.
9. Election of Officers and Committee Members.
10. Nominations to National Office.
11. Motions and Charter Motions for the Annual Meeting of the County Conference.
12. Appointment of Delegates to the Annual Meeting of the County Conference and Annual Conference.
13. Special Items:
 - a. Remembrance Parade & Services
14. Any Other Business