

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

Held 22nd August at Newent Memorial Hall

<u>Attendees</u>	<u>Post</u>
Richie Balding	Chairman
Keith Urch	Deputy Chairman, BCS Rep, Youth Liaison and Membership
David Sass	Secretary
Graham Barton	Parade Marshall
Pat Phillips	Deputy Padre
Rick Axon	Bar, Entertainment Member
Dave Pollock	Raffle Coordinator
Susan Urch	
Tom Heseltine	
Sue Colborne	
Gordon Thorogood	
Jim Gardiner	
Shaun Westmoreland	
Jan Sologub	
Adrian Dover	

1. Act of Remembrance.

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

2. Apologies for Absence.

Julia Gooch, Steve Doyle, Jim Payne, Jon Miles, Viv Miles, Helen Axon, Colin Britt, Susanne Britt, Simon Mason, John Price, Pat Price and Brian Billingham.

3. Chairman's Report.

3.1 New Branch Members

With the unfortunate closure of the Minsterworth Branch, Newent & District Branch has received a surge in numbers with 12 Members transferring over to our Branch. I have made contact and welcomed those new members who have email addresses and will compose a letter to welcome the others to the Branch, in the meantime please make any new members welcome. **After meeting action:** 6 letters sent to ex-Minsterworth Branch members welcoming them to Newent & District Branch.

3.2 Updated Branch Community Support (BCS) resources

Earlier this month I received notice that Updated Branch Community Support (BCS) resources are now available to order direct from Membership Services, so I have asked for copies of the Flyer, Poster and new Membership Forms.

3.4 Memorial Hall Committee Meeting – 20 August 2024

I attended the Memorial Hall Committee Meeting as the service user on behalf of the Branch on Tuesday 20 August 2024. This month's meeting discussed how the Memorial Hall is currently administered and how it needs to come in to line with 21st century thinking. It is currently being run under the 1934 rules and regulations when it was first handed over to the trust. The committee has received advice from Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC) and 2 of their suggestions are: Changing the current charitable status to that of a 'Charitable Incorporated Organisation' (CIO) this amongst other things will free up how and where they can seek funds and grants. The other main thing to consider would be to change the geographical area the Memorial Hall supports, i.e. from 'Newent Parish' to 'Newent & District', this will also give them wider funding options. Their next step is inviting down the GRCC representative to the hall in order to give a talk about all they have found, I will of course keep you updated.

3.5 Newent Town Council (NTC) - Remembrance Day meeting – 5 September 2024

Several members of the Branch Committee will be attending a meeting called by NTC to discuss this year's Remembrance Day Service and Parade on 5 September 2024.

3.6 Veteran's Coffee Morning – 27 August 2024

This month's Veterans Coffee Morning will take place at Manna Coffee House on 27 August 2024 starting at 10am, everyone is welcome.

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.

4.1. Newent Veteran 100th Birthday celebration.

Item 5.2. from July minutes. This matter is ongoing. The Secretary has asked the veteran's daughter if she can find some photographs showing the veteran in uniform, and is awaiting her delivery of a montage of images the family hold. Secretary will attempt to bring it to next meeting.

The Secretary will provisionally book the Newent Church for the veteran's birthday (January 5th 2025) as a possible venue for a celebration event by RBL Newent Branch

4.2. Approval of the Minutes of the last meeting were Proposed by Tom Heseltine and seconded by Rick Axon as a true and accurate record and passed unanimously. Chairman signed the minutes.

5. Reports by Officers

5.1. Branch Community Support (BCS)

5.1.1 Welcome

Due to the recent closure of the Minsterworth Branch of TRBL we are fortunate to be able to welcome a number of new members to our fold. I am sure that you will make them most welcome and we shall look forward to meeting them all at our meetings, coffee mornings and other planned social events.

5.1.2. Branch Remembrance

As always, we remember those veterans, friends and Branch colleagues that are unable to be present this evening. We are here to assist and support veterans and their families; you only need to contact one of your Committee.

5.1.3. Branch Welfare, Membership, Statistics, Community Support and Youth Liaison.

As a direct result of National Conference, there continue to be further changes within the structure of TRBL HQ and the way in which it delivers its services. A gentle reminder to those considering assisting and supporting colleagues via the BCS system - help is always available.

5.1.4. Branch Welfare

The Branch continues to aid and support its Members, veterans and supporters.

Veterans and Branch Members may continue to contact the RBL Helpline services via the national network on 0808 802 8080 and The Veteran's Gateway: <https://support.veteransgateway.org.uk>

Meanwhile, your BCS Representatives will continue to utilise their local and regional experience to assist wherever possible.

5.1.5. Armed Forces Support Network - The Veterans Covenant

Your representative again attended a meeting of the FoD Armed Forces Support Network.

5.1.6. Veterans Notice Board Newent Medical Practice

Local Branch Members visiting Newent Medical Practical Practice may also be aware of the new Veterans Notice Board which was instigated following discussions between the Practice and your BCS Representatives. The Practice contact for Veterans related information is: **Philip Conway** – Advanced Nurse Practitioner. More information is available to Members upon request.

5.1.7. Branch Membership

Due to transfers into The Branch and subject to renewals, Branch Membership currently stands at 51 members.

The Branch always welcomes new members and encourages them to attend forthcoming events, especially our Branch Coffee Mornings at Manna Coffee House on the last Tuesday of the month.

5.1.8. Branch Statistics

This month has been less busy albeit the Branch continues to provide support to its current Members, new veterans moving into our community and a small number via the Telephone Buddy Network.

In the event that members identify a comrade in need, they are encouraged to contact a Committee Member or

BCS Representative at the earliest convenience: 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:	
Total Number of Calls made by Branch Executive	6
Telephone – How many beneficiaries called	2
Telephone – How many telephone buddies:	2

5.1.9. Branch Community Support and Youth Liaison Activities

5.1.9.1. Community and Youth Liaison

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

The process for TRBL Branch Affiliation continues.

5.1.9.2. Newent War Memorial

Requests for public funding having been published on behalf of The Newent War Memorial Committee via the Newent Focus and NewAd are now proving successful, some £500 having been received during the month towards our final target. All donations are welcome albeit a baseline funding application to cover the initial cost of structural review and cleaning (circa £2k) in line with the planned completion date of October 2024 has been submitted to Newent Town Council. Other requests have also been submitted. The total cost of the project is circa £10k to include a provision for ongoing maintenance.

5.1.10. Forthcoming Dates for TRBL Branch Diary

5.1.10.1. Remembrance Day Events

November is always a very busy time for the Branch and Newent's community: more details to follow.

5.1.10.2. Military Wives Concert

A repeat of last year's successful event is planned to be held on 24th November in Newent's Memorial Hall: more details to follow. For further information please see the report issued by Rick, our Branch Entertainments Officer.

5.2. Treasurer's Report

The Ents member read out the Treasurer's report which stated that there were no transactions in the previous 30 days. The current account stands at £1004.41

5.3. Entertainments and Bar Member - Dates for your diary

October 24 7pm Cheese and Wine (AGM)

November 24 Innsworth Military Wives Concert (Newent Memorial Hall)

November 28 Social Evening Cobblers Wine Bar

December 19 Christmas Meal Alma in Linton (awaiting confirmation)

6. Any Other Business

6.1. Veteran's 100th Birthday

GT suggested that he makes contact with the Intelligence Corps as John Vasselo was a member, and they may well be interested in the celebration the Branch is planning. GT was thanked for volunteering to contact the Intelligence Corps.

6.2. Memorial Service held at Newent School

The Parade Marshal asked the Chairman if he could confirm with Newent School that the annual Remembrance Service at the School will be going ahead this year and which date they plan to hold it. The Chairman will contact the School and confirm this year's arrangements.

6.3. National Memorial Arboretum Coach Trip

GT informed the members that there is a coach trip by Yeomans Coaches to the National Memorial Arboretum and there were just a few spaces left. He would get more details and asked the Secretary to circulate them to members.

6.4. John Edward Whitehorn Trophy

The Chairman asked the Members at the meeting when would be a good time to publicized this year's John Edward Whitehorn trophy, which is the annual trophy awarded to young people in the local community who have contributed to making Newent such a nice place to live. After some discussion it was decided that the application form should be sent out now for the new School term and ask for replies by 28 November 2024, the trophy can be presented shortly after this. **Action:** The Chairman would update the application form and send over to the Youth Liaison Representative for distribution.

6.5. Newent & District Branch AGM – 24 October 2024

The Chairman reminded all those present that our Branch AGM will be taking place on the 24 October 2024, he stressed that this was a time for Members to come forward and take an active part in running the Branch. If anyone would like to know more about the duties of a Branch Committee Member or Officer please just ask, new thinking on Branch affairs is always welcome.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The meeting closed at 19:50 with the next meeting set for 26 September 2024 starting at 7pm in the Memorial Hall.

Meeting Agenda

Newent and District Branch The Royal British Legion

26 September 2024 in The Memorial Hall

1. Welcome and Act of Remembrance.
2. Apologies for Absence.
3. Chairman's Report.
4. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising.
5. Reports by Officers.
6. Any Other Business.
7. Date of Next Meeting.