

**OLD BASING & DISTRICT ROYAL BRITISH LEGION BR 1890**  
**Charity 219279**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 5th OCTOBER 2023 at 8.00 pm**

Present:	George Mars (GM)	President
	Ian Greenway (IG)	Chairman
	Ian Preston (IP)	Vice Chairman
	Julie Yeates (JY)	Treasurer
	Avril Mitchell (AM)	Secretary
	Tim Russell (TR)	Committee + PAO
	Joe Karmazyn (JK)	Committee
	Tracey Merritt (TM)	Committee + Membership Secretary
	And 13 branch members	

1. The Exhortation was read by our President, George Mars who asked us to remember those who have passed away over the past year and never let their memory slip from our minds
2. Apologies for absence from Rick Bourne, Mark Taylor and Milena Hajncz
3. IG welcomed everyone and thanked us all for coming along this evening, it being nice to see a few more people in the room.
4. Adoption of the minutes of the previous AGM: Copies of the minutes were available for all to read. These were proposed by AM and seconded by TM. Accepted as a true record.
5. Matters arising from the previous minutes: None.
6. President's address  
GM commented on the amount and variety of activities that take place at our branch and club. It makes one consider 'what is the RBL'?  
We are an organisation of two parts – membership and charitable work and the two are separate and quite distinct.

Looking at our branch, we have only 4 to 5% of the members who attend our meetings. We would like to encourage more, that interest may translate into people becoming more involved perhaps even joining committee. GM thanked the current table officers and committee for their efforts and suggested other may wish to join us.

The Poppy Appeal is doing well but this does require volunteers to come forward and spend a few hours of their time doing something which is valuable and ultimately quite rewarding – raising money for our beneficiaries so please try to sign up for a couple of hours – or more – if you can.

7. Chairman's annual report  
The past year we have run a number of enjoyable and successful events which have been well supported by the village and raised awareness of the work we do.  
  
IG notices he sees somebody wearing a veteran's badge and will always stop for a chat, inviting them to our branch, this is something we all could do. New members bring fresh enthusiasm and keep the branch, and club alive.

Sadly, we have lost a few of our members but they will not be forgotten.

We have our Poppy Launch Black-tie dinner soon and this year with a photo booth so you can get a nice photo of you in your posh-togs!

Next year a new event for us will be a Burns Night celebration which we hope you would like to book for, and in June we are hosting a D-Day 80 fun day here with Basingstoke branch being involved too.

We had a visit from the Compliance officer due to our paying rent to the club, we have had to stop this payment with immediate effect.

In closing, IG stated he hoped to see us all here, all year.

8. Presentation and adoption of the audited accounts for 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023  
JY found the past year a challenge and a steep learning curve, but has persevered.

The opening balance 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 was £1461.89 credit

During the year we had payments totalling £3504.16 and receipts of £5215.95

Primary expenditure:		Primary Receipts	
Poppy Appeal	£ 720.00	Poppy Launch Dinner	£1265.00
Rent	£2400.00	Branch Subs	£ 329.00
Ceremonial	£ 210.21	Fundraising	£ 290.00
King's Coronation	£ 173.95	Branch Property Trust	£2750.00

The Closing Balance 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 was £3173.68 credit

The BFI Account opened 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022 at £39.59 credit and closed 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 £40.19, increase of 60p interest.

The BPT account opened 1<sup>st</sup> Jul 2022 at £8872.61 credit and closed 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at £12532.25. During this period we transferred £2750.00 to our current account. Interest of £175.83 was accrued.

The accounts have been audited and were signed off on 14<sup>th</sup> Aug 2023 and submitted to HO. We are therefore compliant.

During audit two points were raised:

1: The Poppy Appeal Launch dinner 2022 profit was never paid to the Poppy Appeal, this has now been done.

2: The monthly £200 rent we paid to the Social Club was reviewed by the Compliance Team and on 8<sup>th</sup> Sept 2023 we were instructed to cease this with immediate effect. The standing order was cancelled on that date.

We await a further review from the compliance team to confirm how much of the rent we need to pay back to the BPT Account.

The Accounts are proposed for acceptance by Julie Yeates, seconded by Andy Dawes. Accepted by all present.

John Davies queried why the accounts had not been circulated prior to the meeting to allow time for review. JY had neglected to ensure this. AM did point out that the branch minutes are emailed monthly, which do include the treasurers report. It was agreed that we will ensure the report is available in the future.

Chris Beadle queried whether HO had found the misallocated rent in the sum of £2500 from the previous year. We confirmed this had been resolved.

A query was raised that if we have over 400 members why did we only receive £320 subs. We believe this is due to staggered renewals. Treasurers do not get a note of whose subs they receive although *in theory* it could be calculated from the membership listings on MAP.

9. Poppy Appeal Organiser annual report, Poppy Appeal year 1<sup>st</sup> Oct 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2023.

It was so nice to get back to a normal Poppy Appeal, but with the current financial climate and the reduced use of cash this did reflect in some of the Poppy totals.

I would like to start by thanking my Poppy Appeal Committee of Chris Beadle, Avril Mitchell, Tracey Merritt, Diane Matthews. Both Chris and Avril are officially Deputy Poppy Appeal Organisers now and without your help we would not have an Appeal in Old Basing.

Avril and Chris managed the collectors at Chineham shopping centre, and I managed the collectors from Hook. This system works well and with the opening of a Sainsbury's in Hook I may need an assistant there also.

The use of four contactless units was vital and delivered a total of £7,966 (Chineham- £4,030.00, Hook- £3,936.00).

Collections inside Tesco's Chineham were hampered by a less advantageous location, our advocate, Julie Shepherd was off work recovering from an operation, so we were unable to be at our normal position, beside the door.

I struggled to fill positions at Hook, and I would like to thank Rick Bourne and Avril for rallying more troops, Chris Beadle and Sue Wilson have also joined the select band of collectors who has covered both Chineham and Hook in the same week.

Chineham shopping centre was much quieter than in previous years which is reflected in a reduced average of £148.97 (£206.17) per tin making a total of £4,913.13.

Tesco's Hook did not experience this issue and averaged £252.99 (£250.89) per tin producing a total £4,984.47 collected, most likely being the only Supermarket in the town.

The top three collectors this year are:

First, our Chairman Ian Greenway with £2,222.42

Second me, with £1,380.19

Third Mark Taylor with £1,208.10

Everyone who collected this year did so while society experienced hard financial conditions, considering that, our totals are excellent, and you should all be rightly proud of your efforts.

There were fewer business boxes delivered than before due to some locations only having contactless transactions, this year we also found more shops had shut.

Old Basing & District Business boxes raised £3,848.01 which was higher than last year.

Hook Business boxes raised £1,608.68 which is £567 down from last year and included finding 5 additional locations had closed.

The highest totals again came from schools with Four Lanes Juniors £520.00 and Hook Junior School £441.11.

Remembrance Day went well and working with the Parish Council did reduce my workload.

Unfortunately, as with last year, we had no Police support and I would like to thank the Club members who stepped in to support me in holding back traffic, there is a list for Police support that we are not getting on anymore, this will be resolved by the next Remembrance Parade.

David Godfrey did an outstanding job as Parade Marshall, thank you David and our stand in Reverend WgCdr John Morley gave a lovely service despite his ill health on the day, thanks should go to Rick Bourne for arranging the service.

The Church collection raised £513.81, and a contactless machine was used during the raffle collecting £68, adding the £126 in cash making a total of £ 194.

Thanks, to Tracey Merritt for arranging the buffet and ensuring the raffle was well stocked with prizes and additional thanks goes to everyone unnamed who contributed.

In addition to Remembrance and the Poppy Appeal main collections I have received £141.35 from David Smith who runs dances here, £100 from Alexander & Dry for the late Robert Russell.

The Initial Report sent to Aylesford was:

Old Basing & District	£10,743.76	Contactless	£ 4,030.00
Hook	£ 6,614.86	Contactless	£ 3,936.00
Interim Total	£25,324.62		

Into 2023 and I was pleased to report on a donation from the Corp of Drums of £100.

The Poppy Appeal's entry into the Skittles competition in March sadly failed to progress to the final's night, falling short by a solitary point, rest assured, our team, 'Tim's Babes' will be back for more next time. This was an excellent event organised by the Club and I was very pleased to accept the raffle donation from Tracey of £271.

In April Rick Bourne presented me with the proceeds of the County Golf Event of £ 388, another great total which is always welcome.

The Coronation Event on May 6<sup>th</sup> went extremely well, the contactless machine brought in £127 and cash through the Poppy Tin was £143.02, £270.02 is a great day and the hard work that went into it was worthwhile.

My Splat the Rat survived its maiden outing, so we have an asset for the future.

In June it was great to see the return of The Old Basing Carnival and a first for us as we attended the Hook Village Show. Due to a prior engagement Avril and I could not stay for the whole day at the Basing Carnival, so our Branch Chairman held the fort. £144.50 was raised, of which £47 came through contactless donations which is a great result.

The Hook Village Show is another worthwhile event to attend which we will be supporting from now on. £88.50 was raised, including £35 via a contactless unit, not a bad result for a first visit. Importantly we met our new MP for Old Basing and Hook, Mr Ranil Jayawardena and his family who played on our "Splat the Rat", he is keen to engage with the RBL here as he does with Fleet and Church Crookham so watch out for further notices.

Sadly, the Armed Forces Golf Event had to be cancelled due to lack of attendees, this is a hangover from Covid and is the first time this event could not go ahead.

As I could not be at the Poppy Appeal Organisers Seminar, my Deputy, Chris Beadle was able to attend, there are always updates we need to be aware of and it was great to hear the National and County totals, so far.

The current National Total is £47,701,210.88

North Hampshire Total is £758,697.87 South Hampshire Total is £835,500.89

Total for Hampshire is £1,594,198.76 (£1,516,805.78)

It was noted that the average donation Nationally from Contactless Machines is over £6 which proves their worth.

The new 'Plastic free Poppies' will be available for the next Poppy Appeal so the Poppy you have grown used to is now a 'limited edition', and I plan to use this line during the next Appeal.

In September Lloyds bank seem unable to process a normal Poppy Appeal deposit, I have put a complaint in to our Community Fundraiser and may look at using the collection service for the Poppy Appeal main counts this year.

Also, the end of year figures will not reflect what we have brought in as there has been issues with the Contactless machines.

One area that I have left until almost last in this report is the 2<sup>nd</sup> hand items that I regularly take from you. This is becoming a profitable sideline for the Poppy Appeal and has expanded into Coins, Books and CD's and Bric a Brac, this year I am pleased to report that the total raised by 2<sup>nd</sup> hand items alone has now reached £429.23.

Just before I reveal the final totals, I will explain that in the future, those who look back at this year's Poppy Appeal figures will find a discrepancy between my report and what Aylesford has recorded.

In spite of me registering two units to Hook, all £1,184 collected has been allocated to Old Basing. Also, the unit I used at the Hook Village Show was not the one I was supposed to have (borrowed from CFR) so an additional £35 isn't allocated to Hook. Regardless, my report reflects what money was raised and the Community Fundraiser (CFR) is aware of this.

So, the final totals raised for the 2022/2023 Poppy Appeal are:

Old Basing and District	£ 13,174.66	Contactless Old Basing and District	£ 4,204.00
Hook	£ 6,689.06	Contactless Hook	£ 3,971.00
Total	£ 19,863.72	Total	£ 8,175.00

**Grand Total                    £ 28,038.72**

Thank you to all who have made this possible, Tim Russell, Hon Poppy Appeal Organiser

## 10. Other Reports as submitted

### 10.1. Club Report

Andy Pope gave the report due to Mark Taylor being away.

The rent review was re-negotiated earlier in the year.

The club are constantly holding events, which are mostly proving popular with good attendance.

For the first time has been a Karaoke night, and we have restarted weekend breakfasts and monthly Sunday lunches.

The football pitch has opened and with the benefit of us having a new door installed straight into the club, we are getting new members signing up.

Tony Lopic passed away unexpectedly, he was an active club committee member and is missed. We will be adding his name to our roll of honour on the bar.

TR asked that when members pass away, even though they may not have active at branch events, please tell us so we can acknowledge them, everybody is after all, a Branch member first and foremost.

### 10.2. Membership Report.

Tracey reported the current membership is 413 with 42 overdue.

Tracey has not received the new club stickers for 2024, so will use a batch of unused ones from a few years ago, since they are a different colour to 2023.

### 10.3. Corps of Drums

Diane Matthews reported the Band have attended over 20 events in the last year.

They started the year with very few band members, sometimes only just enough to put on a performance but with ongoing recruitment events and an improved social media presence they have increased their numbers, this being great news for the future of the band.

Russ Parrot has taken over the Band Facebook page and is posting regularly which is really helping raise their profile.

Upcoming events - 7<sup>th</sup> October performing for the Mayors Charity Concert at the Anvil and are busily rehearsing for that, 22<sup>nd</sup> October the Basingstoke RBL lunch at Gabardine Bar. 4<sup>th</sup> November 11am at Chineham Centre for the Poppy Appeal Launch, 11<sup>th</sup> Nov in The Malls 10.15 onwards. 12<sup>th</sup> November for our Remembrance Parade and may perform in church. There is a Carol concert at Rowan Lodge, a Christmas Fayre 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec here, 2-2.30 at St Marys Christmas Tree festival 10<sup>th</sup> Dec and Carols at Chineham centre 17<sup>th</sup> Dec 11am.

### 11. Election of Table Officers and Committee

Nominations had been received for the following:

Chairman – Ian Greenway

Vice Chairman – Ian Preston

Secretary – Avril Mitchell

Membership Secretary – Tracey Merritt

Committee – Joe Karmazyn, Tim Russell, Julie Yeates, Susan Chewter

These were uncontested and deemed elected for a period of three years.

Julie Yeates was re-appointed as treasurer.

### 12. Discussion of Motion for County Conference

Andy Dawes raised a possible matter which could be raised, that of the 'five mile radius' limit on usage of BPT funds for welfare work. This is an arbitrary figure which does not allow for gaps in the coverage between branches. For instance, Basingstoke Branch do not have a BPT, therefore can do welfare work in any locale but we are restricted. NHH is in Tadley's area, yet are within 5 miles of us. There is a lot of margin for problems with the current rules.

TR confirmed that despite all the known issues, RBL branches have to abide by the legally binding terms of their BPT. TR will speak to the BPT team and try to find any loopholes that may exist, but as it stands this is not a suitable matter to raise as a motion.

### 13. Appointment of Delegates to County Conference and Annual Conference

Ian Greenway and Ian Preston were voted as delegates to both National Annual Conference and Hampshire County Annual Conference.

### 14. Adoption of Branch Plan

The Branch plan has been created and a draft will be made available on our noticeboard and digital channels. This is a living document and can be constantly reviewed so please let us have any suggestions for changes or additions.

John Davies proposed we accept the plan, seconded by IP. Agreed by all present.

The meeting closed at 21.32

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chairman

Dated \_\_\_\_\_