

Oxted & District Branch Newsletter June 2026



Chairman's Update

We have been busy connecting and supporting veterans in the local community through our BCS work, and it is a real pleasure to welcome new faces as the group continues to grow. We marked 15 years since the end of Op TELIC in May by laying a wreath at Oxted's War Memorial and have supported the families of veterans who have sadly passed away.

In total, we raised £3,584 for the Great Tommy Sleep Out, placing Oxted 18th in the national list of fundraising teams. If you missed them, you can catch-up with the 'live reports' on our Facebook page.

A series of Oxted Branch Talks has begun, and the two talks held so far were very popular. The next one is in July, and we have more booked all the way through this year and next.

As we head into the second half of 2026, the Committee has already turned its attention to the Remembrance Parade and Poppy Appeal. If you can spare a little time to help us as a Poppy Appeal Collector this year, we'd love to hear from you. It's a great way to connect with your local community, meet new people and make a positive impact.

In this issue, we:

- Remember **Op TELIC** (Iraq).
- Ask you to sponsor our Standard Bearer on his **Pedal to Paris challenge**, raising funds to support the country's veterans.
- Celebrate Oxted's record-breaking Poppy Appeal 2025 - **Oxted Morrisons No. 1 in the UK**.
- Invite you to our next Branch Talk - on **Victoria Crosses** on 28 July.

- Invite you to our new **Canasta Circle** - all are welcome. Details below.
- Launch our next **Murder Mystery Night** - join the Escape and Enigma Squad for a fun, brain-teasing evening. Details below.

Any feedback on the format or content of this newsletter would be gratefully received - please email me directly.

Rob Cogan

Chairman, Oxted & District Branch, Royal British Legion

Oxted.Chairman@rbl.community

Call/text: 07423 573899



Follow us on our [Facebook](#) page and keep an eye on our [website](#) for events, support services and ways to get involved.

Thank you to those who have responded to our general questionnaire, but if you haven't yet, you can still shape events and activities by completing the questionnaire at [this link](#).

Remembrance - The Long Shadow of Op TELIC

On 22 May 2026, the Royal British Legion marked 15 years since the end of Operation TELIC, the UK's military operation in Iraq. The operation began in 2003 and formally ended on 22 May 2011, when the final British personnel departed Iraq.

For many service personnel, Operation TELIC meant long periods away from home, difficult conditions, and demanding duties carried out with professionalism and commitment. It was a period that asked a great deal of our Armed Forces, and its impact continues to be felt by many veterans and their families today.

The cost was significant as 179 British Armed Forces personnel lost their lives. Thousands more were wounded, many with life-changing physical injuries, while others continue to live with the mental and emotional effects of their service.

To mark the anniversary, we laid a wreath in remembrance of all those affected by Operation TELIC: those who served, those who were injured, those who still carry the scars of their service, and the families and friends of those who did not return.

Fifteen years on, we pause to remember their service and sacrifice, and to acknowledge the continuing need to support those whose lives were changed by Operation TELIC.

We will remember them.



Pedal to Paris



1 - In the heatwave Ryan finishing the training session: London to Brighton.

Service Not Self — Clipless, Clueless but Committed

In September 2026, Ryan Williamson, our Branch Standard Bearer, will take on the RBL's Pedal to Paris challenge: a 460 km cycle from London to Paris over four days, raising funds to support veterans in need.

Having previously raised over £15,000 through endurance events including marathons, Tough Mudder and a 24-hour open-water swim, Ryan is no stranger to a challenge. Cycling, however, is a very different story.

"I could barely manage five miles before starting training, and the clipless pedals have been character-building. They're called 'clipless' but somehow still manage to attach me firmly to the bike at exactly the wrong moments!"

With Ryan's family ties to the British Army and his own service in the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps, he has seen first-hand the impact the RBL can have on veterans, serving personnel, and their families.

He is aiming to raise £2,500. Every donation, no matter the size, is greatly appreciated, so please donate if you can.

<https://royalbritishlegion.enthuse.com/pf/ryan-williamson>

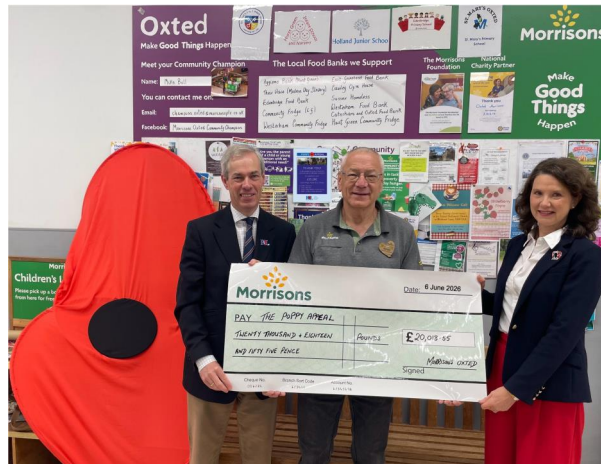
Thank you.

Poppy Appeal - Oxted Morrisons No. 1 in the UK!

Oxted triumphed as the top fundraising Morrisons store in the UK during Poppy Appeal 2025. The store raised an unbeatable £20,018 towards the Oxted Branch's record-breaking total of £35,000, thanks to the generosity of local residents and our fabulous volunteers who

manned the table every day at the store entrance. We recently collected the cheque from Morrison's Community Champion, Mike Bull.

Poppy Appeal 2026 runs from Thursday 22nd October through to Remembrance Sunday, 8th November. We are determined to make sure Oxted stays at the top of the national charts again this year, and we need more volunteers. If you can spare a little time to help us, email oxted.events@rbl.community or phone **07423 573899**.



Oxted Branch Talks

Victoria Crosses - Facts, Frauds and Funnies

Presented by Major (Retired) Rob Marshall MBE RCL on **Tuesday 28th July** at 8pm.

This talk will cover:

- **Facts:** The history of the VC (instituted in 1857 during the Crimean War). His discussions often highlight the extreme criteria for these honours and the history behind the famous gunmetal medals.
- **Frauds:** Marshall touches on the controversies and impersonators surrounding these highly prized medals, which have fetched over £400,000 at auction.
- **Funnies:** He shares lesser-known, amusing, and extraordinary stories of VC recipients, such as the only family to hold three Victoria Crosses (the Gough family) or the men who were stripped of their medals under Clause 15.

Email oxted.events@rbl.community or contact **07423 573899** to reserve your seat in the Mil&V.

Doors open from 7.30pm for an 8pm start.



Oxted Branch Talks

The Oxted Branch presents the next in its series of talks:

The Victoria Cross Facts, Frauds & Funnies

Presented by Major (Retired) Rob Marshall
Tuesday 28 July at 8pm

Booking required - email oxted.events@rbl.community to reserve your place.

 Mil&V Veterans Hub, 42 Church Lane, Oxted RH8 9LB

 Please arrive from 7.30pm to take your seats



Registered Charity no. 210279

What's On

Love a game of cards? You'll love our Canasta Circle.

Join the group on Monday 27 July at 12.30pm in the Mil&V for the initial teach-in session. We have secured the lovely Pam Button, a seasoned Canasta player and teacher, to run this session.

Whether you are a seasoned player, a bit rusty, or a total beginner, all are warmly welcome. Please email oxted.events@rbl.community or call/text 07423 573899 for more information and to book a place.



Oxted & District Branch

GAMES GROUPS

Love a game of cards?
You'll love our

Canasta Circle

Monday 27 July at 12.30 pm

Initial teaching and practice session.

Experienced, rusty, or brand new player?
All are welcome to this guided session.

Email oxted.events@rbl.community or
call/text 07423 573899 for info.



Mil&V Hub, 42 Church Lane, Oxted RH8 9LB

IT'S FRIDAY NIGHT - IT MUST BE MURDER!

FRIDAY 21st AUGUST at 7.30pm

MURDER MYSTERY GAME NIGHT 2 - COME AND HELP THE ESCAPE AND ENIGMA SQUAD
SOLVE THEIR NEXT CASE

TAP HERE FOR YOUR NEXT CLUE

Do you enjoy a murder mystery? Love sleuthing? The Oxted Escape & Enigma Squad is your opportunity to join our very own equivalent of the Thursday Murder Club! Our investigation room only holds 8 detectives, so book your seat before it's gone! See flyer for more details and how to book.



Oxted & District Branch

MURDER MYSTERY GAME NIGHT



FRIDAY 21st August @ 7.30pm

Murder at an Antarctic research station. A man has been convicted - but is he really guilty?

Unravel the clues, prove his innocence.
Then put the real killer behind bars.

Maximum 8 detectives. Want to join the squad?

Email oxted.events@rbl.community

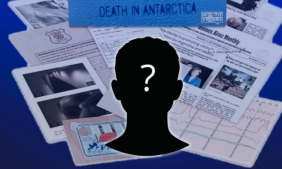
Call/text 07423 573899

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Coming Soon

- **Next Oxted Branch Talk:** RAF Biggin Hill presented by Bob Ogley, on Tuesday 6th October.
- We are looking to host a **Bridge Taster Session** - please e-mail oxted.events@rbl.community if you are interested.
- **In the pipeline:** Whist Wizards and Cribbage Club, Mahjong Masters, Book Swap, Technology Help.

COMING SOON

Dates for your Diary

[Military & Veterans Meet Up](#) - first Wednesday of the month, 7.30pm

Join us for friendly beers, banter and a few dits at our monthly Military Meet Up!

Next one is on Wednesday 1st July in the Mil&V Veterans Hub, 42 Church Lane, Oxted RH8 9LB.

[Veterans' Breakfast Club](#) - third Tuesday of the month, 10.30am

Friendship and fantastic fry-ups at our monthly Veterans Breakfast Club!

Next one is on Tuesday 21st July at the Skyline Café, 35 Station Rd East, Oxted RH8 0BD.

Canasta Circle - Monday 27 July at 12.30pm

All are welcome - experienced, rusty, or total beginners. If you wish to join this initial teaching and practice session, please email oxted.events@rbl.community or call/text **07423 573899** for information.

Oxted Branch Talks: Victoria Crosses, Facts, Frauds and Funnies - Tuesday 28th July at 8.00pm

Email oxted.events@rbl.community or call/text **07423 573899** to reserve your seat.

Doors open at 7.30pm for an 8pm start.

Escape and Enigma Squad - Friday 21 August, 7.30pm

Put your sleuthing skills to the test. Have you got what it takes to resolve **Death in Antarctica**, and put the real killer behind bars? Join the squad by emailing oxted.events@rbl.community or contact us on **07423 573899**.