



ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

Harwell Branch

BRI 805

**Monthly Branch Committee Meeting  
Held on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2025  
In the Committee Room at the Village Hall High Street Harwell  
At 17.15 Hours.**

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**ATTENDANCE:**

R. White - President  
T. Pearson - Chair  
P. Cox - Secretary, Harwell Poppy Appeal Organiser (PAO) and Welfare Representative.  
S. Haycox - Treasurer

**COMMITTEE:** H. Benton, Chilton Poppy Appeal Organiser

**1. WELCOME**

T Pearson opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

**2. DISCUSSION OF BRANCH ACTIVITIES *(if members present)***

No members were present apart from the committee.

**3. EXHORTATION AND KOHIMA EPITAPH**

Reginald White gave the Exhortation and silent tribute; he ended with the Kohima Epitaph.

**4. APOLOGIES:** J. Capone and P. Sedwards

**5. MINUTES OF THE JUNE 2025 COMMITTEE MEETING**

The minutes were circulated prior to the meeting. There were two corrections:

**Item 8. New Officers**

“..with responsibility for D Day commemorations.”

“.... and she will arrange..”

The corrected minutes were approved as a true record and signed by T Pearson

## **6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE JUNE 2025 MINUTES**

H Benton asked if there was any feedback from County Chair Rosemary Edgington's visit to the last meeting.

T Pearson said that R Edgington had emailed to say that she enjoyed the visit, sending invitations to members is a step in the right direction and that she had contacted the Legacy department.

## **7. FUTURE MEETINGS AND BRANCH AGM**

T Pearson suggested that we invite members to another meeting. Discussion ensued:

### **Location and Time**

- August is holiday month so September would be better We could have coffee available.
- We could meet at the Harwellian. There was some agreement to this.
- We could meet later in the day which may suit more people.

It was proposed that we meet at 7pm at the Harwellian on 17<sup>th</sup> September.

### **Invitation**

- We could send an invitation or a flier to all members.
- We do not have email addresses for half of the membership so we will need to deliver paper invitations to those members. We could knock on doors and talk to people about the Branch and Legion at the same time.
- We could also phone members.
- P Cox sent an invitation to this meeting to the 23 members who have given us their email address (out of 44 members). Most members live in Harwell, Chilton, Didcot and other local villages.

## **8. D DAY 2025 REPORT AND LETTERS OF THANKS**

P Cox reported:

### **8.1 Letters of Thanks:**

P Cox has written 32 letters so far, there are another 16 to do. P Cox has some contacts and Davies has provided his contact list. P Cox thanked T Pearson and H Benton for checking the generic letter and some of the others.

Letters sent to date:

- Contributors: A Logue Parade Marshal, D Drew and J Sibbald speakers, and Didcot Army Cadet Force.
- Attendees: Most civic representatives, veteran's groups, Campus organisations, Didcot Army Cadet Force, Army: 4 Regiment Royal Logistics Corps and 11 Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Regiment.
- A personal letter for the Valerian Court representative.

Letters still to write:

- Contributors – St John Ambulance First aid, Campus Management, Campus security, Bugler, Public Address System suppliers.
- Attendees: Air Training Corps Didcot and Wantage squadrons, Chilton Scouts and School, Royal Air Force Benson, and the Civil Nuclear Constabulary.

- Veterans' groups including the Royal Air Force Association, Soldiers Sailors and Airmen Families Association, Red line home guard and Night Fright C47 restoration.

P Cox suggested that he send a letter to P Davies to thank him for all his work in arranging the Commemoration.

**Agreed.**

T Pearson suggested that P Cox asks P Davies to send any other information he has on D Day.

**ACTION: P Cox to request information from P Davies.**

*T Pearson asked P Cox if he has contacts for November.*

P Cox said that they will be similar to last year.

### **Replies**

We have received a handwritten letter of thanks from the RAF Benson representative. T Pearson read this out to the Meeting.

We also received a thank you from Moderna who would like to attend next year. Also, a thank you from the Vale of the White Horse councillor Haliagh Gascoigne and Angela Logue, who hope to come next year.

### **8.2 Report**

P Cox has sent the report to the Chilton Chronicle, Harwell News and RBL County for the newsletter. We could post it on facebook and the website and forward to members.

### **8.3 Timetable**

Version 2 of the timetable is in progress.

## **9. VJ 80 DAY FRIDAY 15<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2025**

P Cox has ordered two VJ80 wreaths. There will be a national silence at 12 noon on the day during the National Memorial Arboretum service.

T Pearson said that it was likely to be a quiet day in the Village.

H Benton said that there is only the Ceremony at the National Memorial Arboretum, and not at Westminster Abbey. She is hoping that the Crown pub in Chilton will be running an event, but there are no details yet. T Pearson said that she has had not heard if the Harwellian Club will be holding any event.

Following discussion, it was agreed that we will meet at noon at the High Street War Memorial, observe a short silence and lay a wreath. Then lay a wreath at the War Graves in Harwell Cemetery.

P Cox will email Branch Members and we may put something on facebook. H Benton will mention it to Steve Hale as he attended the VE80 ceremony.

## **10. BRANCH WEBSITE**

T Pearson reported:

She has got access to a new Branch website on the Legion's own website. She has copied across most of the relevant content from the current website. The new website is now live.

This leaves only the minutes archive to be copied from the old website. Then the old website can be closed down completely, or it could just have a message and link to the new website.

She has also included the pictures of H Benton's Poppy Appeal collections in during 2020. H Benton said that this was during the covid restrictions, when we could not collect house to house. So, she had stands in a couple of locations in Chilton.

T Pearson said that there are a few more changes she would like to make. The process has been very good. She has a helpful contact at HQ and things are done straight away.

K Luker now has the old Branch minute books. She has an interest in local history and she will write an article about the Branch's history for the new website. The minute books will then be transferred to the local history centre.

H Benton congratulated T Pearson on this and thanked her for her work.  
**Agreed by All Present.**

P Cox suggested that he should write letter of thanks to D Marsh for his work since 2011.

## **11. SECRETARY'S REPORT**

P Cox reported:

### **11.1 Documents from Previous Secretary**

P Cox has not yet shredded the membership lists and other documents.

**ACTION: P Cox to shred membership lists and other documents as appropriate.**

### **11.2 June Minutes and July Agenda**

The June minutes, July Agenda and Correspondence report were written and circulated.

### **11.3 Printing.**

The Agenda and Correspondence report for this meeting, and last month's minutes were printed and distributed, a comparatively low volume of printing. P Cox has donated a large black and a large colour cartridge which are now in use.

### **11.4 Meeting Room**

P Cox asked what dates he should book the committee room. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday in the month falls on 21st August, 18th September, 16th October, 20th November, and 18th December.

S Haycox suggested that we should not meet in December.

**Agreed by all present.**

### **11.5 Branch Report for 2025 annual Harwell Parish Council meeting**

This does not seem to be on the Parish Council website. P Cox suggested that it could be put on our website.

### **11.6 Branch Annual General Meeting**

We need to hold an AGM between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 30th November.

When the Branch was meeting on the last Tuesday in the month, the AGM was held in October so the delegate forms for County Conference could be returned before the deadline.

Now we are meeting on the third Tuesday an AGM in November may work. Discussion ensued:

- We could distribute fliers e.g. at the Remembrance Service.
- We could have the AGM on 20th November. Remembrance Sunday is 10 days before.
- The Remembrance Service sheets are kept year to year so we can't advertise on them.
- We could advertise on Facebook and the website.
- If we don't do anything to encourage engagement and attendance, it will be just the Committee attending the AGM.

### **11.7 Welfare**

No enquiries received since the last meeting.

### **11.8 Membership**

The Branch has 44 members as of the 13<sup>th</sup> July weekly report on the MAP.

The welcome letter is being written.

### **11.9 Standard**

The Standard has not been paraded since the last meeting.

### **11.10 Remembrance and Armistice**

P Cox asked if he should check if Harwell Parish Council will submit the Temporary Traffic Management orders to the District Council.

**Agreed.**

## **12. CORRESPONDENCE**

P Cox reported that correspondence received since the June meeting includes:

### **12.1 Correspondence from Legion County Office and National Headquarters:**

#### **Membership Newsletter June 2025**

Articles include:

- More volunteers needed for this year's Poppy Appeal.
- New Membership Council Representatives.
- Normandy D Day Commemorations.
- Armed Forces Covenant meeting with MPs.
- Membership Fee increase by £2 to £22 from 4th September as agreed at Annual Conference.

#### **Central News July 2025**

Articles include:

- Membership Council Representatives.
- VJ Day 80.
- Festival of Remembrance.
- Shareable Central News – shorter version for membership.
- The Membership Council Chair's briefing of their June meeting is on the MAP.

#### **County Information from County Membership Support Officer (MSO)**

- Branch paper accounts pack – contact County MSO if you have not received it.
- Deadline for accounts is 30th September.
- Delay in allocating RBL Community email accounts due to high demand.

- Central News July 2025 - as already received.

### **Election of Berkshire & the Vale of the White Horse County Vice-Chair 2026**

- A branch can nominate one member if they submitted their accounts and MS1 on time.
- Deadline for nominations is 1700hrs on Monday 15th September 2025.
- Election is at County Conference on Saturday 24th January 2026.

### **2025 Branch Year-End - Electronic Pack & Instructions**

- For Branch Treasurers.

### **Spreadsheet for Accounts 2025-26**

- For those Treasurers that use them.

### **Standard Bearer Request for Funeral Easthampstead Crematorium on 1st July**

- Medical Corps veteran. A Standard Bearer attended.

### **Invitation to Contribute to Greenham Common 25th Anniversary Art Project**

- By the Corn Exchange Newbury and 101 Outdoor Arts.
- As part of the project is a participatory piece titled “Moral Compass”, which explores the question: “How do you achieve peace?”
- Contributions invited from women in the local area, particularly ex-service.

## **12.2 Correspondence from Other Organisations**

### **July 2025 Chilton Chronicle**

- Includes article by H Benton on Chilton pub VE 80 collection.

## **13. TREASURER’S REPORT**

S Haycox reported:

### **13.1 Branch Funds**

Funds held according to the latest statements as of 17<sup>th</sup> July 2025 are:

#### **HARWELL BRANCH**

<b>Branch Funds Initiative (BFI). Account</b>	<b>£ 370</b>
<b>Current Account:</b>	<b>£ 244</b>
<b><u>Total:</u></b>	<b><u>£ 614</u></b>

### **13.2 Legacy Transfer for Flypast**

*T Pearson asked about progress on this item.*

S Haycox said that he still needed to send in a bank statement connected to the previous year’s audit. He apologised for the delay partly because his laptop had broken.

S Haycox had the statement at the meeting, and T Pearson scanned and sent it.

### **13.3 Donation to Branch from Parish Council**

*P Cox asked if this had been received.*

S Haycox reported that the £100 donation from Harwell Parish Council has still not been received. The only income received is Branch membership fees totalling £8.

### **13.4 Annual Audit**

*T Pearson asked about the audit for this year.*

S Haycox said that he has the ledger and bank statements covering the financial year. He will complete the forms next then submit to County.

### **13.5 Meeting Room Payment**

P Cox said that because of the problems with the entry code at the last meeting the Village Hall committee are not charging for room hire for tonight's meeting.

He is still intending to create a new Village Hall account to book the room.

## **14. POPPY APPEAL ORGANISER'S REPORT**

P Cox reported:

### **14.1 D Day 2024 report**

P Cox has not yet checked the last outstanding payment. The organisation is not attending this year.

### **14.2 D Day 2025**

The wreaths that were received damaged will be sent back shortly.

### **14.3 D Day Wreaths**

P Cox paid £5 for the two RLC badges after the meeting, which is the last payment.

**14 wreaths and 2 badges supplied, and £415 received. Total Price is £347.50, so £67.50 additional donations made.**

### **14.4 VJ 80 Day 2025**

Two VJ 80 wreath badges have been received and we have some blank wreaths in stock. The price for a wreath with a badge has gone up to **£28.50**.

## **15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

## **16. CONFIRM DATE AND VENUE OF AUGUST MEETING**

T Pearson said that the next meeting will be on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> August, at 17:15 in the Village Hall Committee Room.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 18:10 hours.

**Minutes approved at the Branch meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_**

**Chair \_\_\_\_\_**