The Royal British Legion
Henley-on-Thames & Peppard Branch
AGM – 18th October 2022

Present	Apologies	Absent
John Green – President (JG) Anne Evans – Chairman (AE) Kathy Bardwell-Springett - Treasurer (KB) Karen Grieve – Events Organiser (KG) Mollie Jeffrey - Membership Secretary (MJ) Stan Ainsley – (AS) Ania Kozniewska (AK)		

	Agenda Exhortation Approval of AGM minutes 2021 Chairman's report Treasurer's report and adoption of accounts as of June 2021 Membership Secretary's Report Events Coordinator's report Poppy Appeal Organiser's report Newsletter Editor's report	AE
	Chairman AE opened the meeting at 10.30 a.m. with the Exhortation and recital of the Kohima Epitaph by the President (JG) An attendance list and copies of the various reports are attached at the end of these Minutes. Minutes from the 2021 AGM were presented to members and approved.	AE / JG
1	**Chairman's Report** Chairman AE presented her report noting that the Branch has successfully moved the lunch meeting venue from the Christchurch Center to the Rugby Club and thanked the Events Organiser for her hard work throughout the year in organising lunches and speakers with assistance from KB and AK. AE noted that we have worked hard to try and keep the cost of the lunches down and thanked the Menza café chef for his help with this. AE requested that members agree to re-appoint the current Committee members: President J.W.Green Chairman Anne Evans Hon Treasurer Katherine Bardwell-Springett Membership Secretary Mollie Jeffrey Welfare – John Green Events Organiser Karen Grieve Newsletter Editor Anne Evans Committee Member Stan Ainsley Committee Member Ania Kozniewska	AE

	This was agreed by the members. The following committee posts remain vacant: Deputy Chair Secretary AE noted that JG has agreed to take on the role of Branch Community Support Officer (Welfare) with assistance from SA and thanked them both for taking on this role. AE thanked KB for taking over as treasurer and noted that the year from October 2021 to 2022 had been a busy one with a very successful Poppy Appeal, Remembrance Lunch event, regular meetings schedule and most recently JG's fundraising walk which raised £2,285 for the Poppy Appeal. A photo was taken of JG with a large cheque for the amount of £2728.75 which will be donated to the Poppy Appeal by the branch. JG thanked the members for their support of his fundraising activities and AE told members that JG has been invited to be a standard bearer at the remembrance event in the Albert Hall in November. AE then read out a letter from the Green family who have made a large donation to the branch from the estate of the recently deceased Heather Green	
2	**Treasurers Report** KB noted that the current funds held by the branch exceed the recommended amount for a branch current account (for reasons explained later) and that excess funds will be transferred to a Branch Funds Initiative account which is interest bearing. KB then presented a summary of the accounts for the year ending 30th June 2022 for approval: Section 2 Current account – approx. £20 improvement on last year Section 2 COIF Charities Fund – Small loss (<£1000) relative to last year reflecting market conditions – value approx. £17,000 Section 3 Income (total £5,396) – Majority of Income is from Branch Events plus £578 in donations and £499.60 from COIF Investment. Section 3 Expenditure (total £5378) – Majority of Expenditure is on Branch Events plus £946 on Branch Admin (Newsletter & Website) KB Thanked Andrew Bowes (County Treasurer) for examining the accounts and submitted them to the members for adoption which was approved. KB then noted the following Funds raised / received since June 30th 2022. John Greens Fundraising Walk - £2,285.75 (to be donated to the Poppy Appeal) Donation from Mayors Fundraising Dinner - £3,360 Large Donation from Green Estate - £50,000 Funds from the Mayors Fundraising Event will be held in the Branch Funds Initiative (interest paying account) until such time as the Branch has registered for Branch Community Support and is able to start using the funds. The Donation from the Green	KB

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The Royal British Legion
Henley-on-Thames & Peppard Branch
AGM – 18th October 2022

	Estate has been placed into an RBL Trust Fund.	
3	**Membership Secretaries Report** MJ noted that membership is holding steady at 119 members and welcomed two new members who were joining us for the first time. She also gave special mention to Peter Blaker who we sadly lost this year. SA noted that there are probably very few branches that can claim an increase in membership over the past year. There was a question from a member about how much of the membership fee is returned to the branch and MJ replied £3.	MJ
4	**Events Coordinator's Report:** KG began by thanking the members attending for their support of events throughout the year and invited any suggestions for speakers or menu options from the members. She noted that bookings for the Remembrance Lunch need to close by the 21st October and encouraged anyone who wishes to attend but has not yet signed up to do so ASAP. KG noted that speakers were now booked up to April 2023 and that bookings for the Christmas lunch (which will be held at the Rugby Club) will open after the Remembrance Lunch.	KG
5	**Poppy Appeal Organiser's report** The PAO was not present at the AGM but provided the branch with a report prior to the meeting, a copy of which is attached at the end of the minutes. It was noted by SA that the Poppy Appeal raised around 50% of the funds required to keep the British Legion operating and that the PAO is still looking for volunteers to collect this year. AK noted that the PA was targeting schools this year and was visiting 6 primary and 2 secondary schools to raise awareness of the British Legion and the PA. AE noted that she would be attending an assembly at Gillots School alongside the PAO. JG noted that the cadets were being involved in the PA.	AK/JG/AE
6	**Newsletter Editor's report** AE made an appeal to members for contributions to the Newsletter.	AE

The Meeting closed at 11.15 am.

The Royal British Legion
Henley-on-Thames & Peppard Branch
AGM – 18th October 2022

List of AGM Attendees:

Stan Ainsley

Derek Alway

Peter Ashby

Kathy Bardwell-Springett

Betty Burt

Judy Dinsdale

Diana Duggan

Anne Evans

Marion Forde

John Green

Karen Grieve

Mollie Jeffrey

Joyce Kay

Raymond Kingsley

Ania Kozniewska

Sandra Moon

Joe Pim

Christine Searle

Brian Triptree

Alfred Waller

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The Royal British Legion
Henley-on-Thames & Peppard Branch
AGM – 18th October 2022

Copy of Chairmans Report

I'd like to welcome you all to our 2nd AGM post Covid. My first AGM was held on Zoom, a very discombobulating experience, but I'm pleased to say there will be no more zooming on my watch. At lease I hope so!

Since we moved our venue to the Rugby Club its been very encouraging to see a steady increase of members attending our luncheon talks.

To be sure, moving the Branch from the Christ Church Centre was hard. There we were unashamedly spoilt by Doug who keep us fed with fresh veg and fruit from his allotment, and where we managed to serve members with a free glass of wine and a two course meal with coffee. He was also very flexible about numbers, for although we urged our members to book in advance, inevitably there would be a last minute flurry of one or two extra bodies that needed to be fed and watered – Doug never failed to accommodate this.

However, although its taken a little time, we have had a good year at the Rugby Club and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Karen Greave who since joining the Branch Committee has efficiently and effectively liaised with the Menza Café's charming Tzabi to produce an acceptable menu each month, organized a calendar of talks and kept our members thoroughly informed. With this task she has been amply supported by Ania and Kathy.

But here is where I get to thank you all for understanding and cooperating with the new booking system. Book with Karen, Pay to Kathy and only then will your place be confirmed, and also the rise of the cost of lunch which is now £18. Entering the real world of hospitality, we were shocked at the price of food when served through the hospitality system. You can buy the meat, but the moment you cook to serve it the added VAT is shocking.

I have to thank Kathy Bardwell for taking over the reins of our finances and for clarifying just how we can or cannot spend Branch funds. She will have a chance to talk you through last years accounts, but before she does that I would like to share with you a wonderful letter I received recently from Heather Green's family. Heather and her husband had a very long association with the RBL and in particular with Henley & Peppard Branch, first serving on the committee and on her husband Jimmy's death took over his post as Secretary.

This letter from her family was very heartwarming and makes our work for the RBL so rewarding. The letter included a donation of extraordinary proportions .Letter included

In 2021, John Green raised funds for the Royal British League Poppy Appeal by marching 100K in full WW1 uniform. He had been inspired by the late Sir "Captain" Tom's fundraising in for the NHS.

In this Platinum year, John now 87 years old plans a similar challenge. This time 70K in 70hrs. raised £2268 through Just Giving and £524.15 by personal donations.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The Royal British Legion
Henley-on-Thames & Peppard Branch
AGM – 18th October 2022

Copy of Treasurers Report

1. Section 2 Current account – approx. £20 improvement on last year
2. Section 2 COIF Charities Fund – Small loss (<£1000) relative to last year reflecting market conditions – value approx. £17,000
3. Section 3 Income (total £5,396) – Majority of Income is from Branch Events plus £578 in donations and £499.60 from COIF Investment.
4. Section 3 Expenditure (total £5378) – Majority of Expenditure is on Branch Events plus £946 on Branch Admin (Newsletter & Website)
5. Thanks to Andrew Bowes (County Treasurer) for examining the accounts

AOB

Funds of note raised / received post June 30th 2022

- John Green Fundraising Walk - £2,285.75 (to be donated to the Poppy Appeal)
- Donation from Mayors Fundraising Dinner - £3,360
- Large Donation from Green Estate - £50,000

Funds from the Mayors Fundraising Event will be held in the Branch Funds Initiative (interest paying account) until such time as the Branch has registered for Branch Community Support. The Donation from the Green Estate has been placed into an RBL Trust Fund.

Copy of Membership Secretary's Report

MJ noted that membership is holding steady at 119 members and welcomed two new members who were joining us for the first time. She also gave special mention to Peter Blaker and Heather Green whom we sadly lost this year. SA noted that there are probably very few branches that can claim an increase in membership over the past year as we have.

There was a question from a member (Peter Ashby) about how much of the membership fee is returned to the branch and MJ confirmed £3.

Copy of Events Organisers Report

Tuesday 18 October 22 – AGM - Valerie Alasia, Local Amateur Historian, "Henley Workhouse – the Story of Townlands

Sunday 13 November 22 – Remembrance Sunday Lunch – Masonic Lodge, Reading Road, Henley on Thames

Monday 19 December 22 – Christmas Lunch – no speaker

Tuesday 17 January 23 – Robin Dodd, "Exposing the Killer Shot"

Tuesday 21 February 23 – Richard Pinches aka 'The Lone Rat', WWII Re-enactor,"To El (Alamein) and Back"

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The Royal British Legion
Henley-on-Thames & Peppard Branch
AGM – 18th October 2022

Tuesday 21 March 23 – Terry Grourk, An Illustrated Talk on his book "The Hidden History of Wargrave Hall"

Tuesday 18 April 23 - Trevor Jackson TBC by committee

Copy of PAO Report

In the year ending 30 September 2022 the total funds raised by the Poppy Appeal,
Henley-on-Thames Community: £ 35,400
Oxfordshire County Community: £ 554,726
Nationally: £ 39 million (approx.)

First, may I thank our very small but dedicated team of volunteers for their hard work, and our community organisations, local businesses and various arms of the Military for their practical support. And thank you to the Branch for fundraising for the Poppy Appeal several times during the year and promoting the Henley-on-Thames community appeal.

In 2021 I also organised the Peppard Poppy Appeal till the end of the Remembrance appeal raising £2,900. At present, the Peppard Poppy Appeal Organiser position is vacant.

Since becoming the Henley Poppy Appeal Organiser in 2021 I have followed RBL's ambition to futureproof its charitable aims by making RBL relevant to younger generations. Thus, we are collaborating with local Military bases, civilian community groups and schools. However, we do not yet have enough registered RBL volunteers to operate at our optimum capacity.

The 2021 Remembrance appeal was energetically led by Army Cadets and Gillotts school Head Students and involved RAF Benson personnel. The appeal was met with considerable community recognition, raising Henley Poppy Appeal's profile and helping us to secure support for a well-received Armed Forces Day fundraiser with the acclaimed RAF Salon Orchestra attended by

Deputy Lieutenant Lady Hall. With Lady McAlpine's kind help we were also able to highlight RBL's charitable goals by fundraising for three days at the 43rd Thames Traditional Boat Festival.
The 2022 Remembrance Poppy Appeal will be launched nationally on Thursday 27 October, so in Henley, we will collect donations on private premises such as at our supermarkets and house-to-house, kicking off with an all-day collection in Tesco by the Henley Rotary Club.

On 29 October, we are arranging a Big Henley Poppy Day, collecting donations at various locations around the town. Thanks to Henley Town Council, the main fundraising activities will be held in Market Place from 10:00 to 16:00 with an RBL stall staffed by RAF Benson. We are grateful to Blandy & Blandy and Hof's Bar for facilitating having the Waterloo Band & Bugles of The Rifles with us to help draw crowds. They will be playing from 10:30 to 12:20 and from 13:20 to 15:30.
Another special Poppy collection this year will be on Saturday 05 November in Market Place from 09:00 to 15:00, by the Berks and Oxon Military Vehicle Trust.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The Royal British Legion
Henley-on-Thames & Peppard Branch
AGM – 18th October 2022

On 01 December, Henley Living Advent Calendar will launch its 2022 fun-filled surprises on the Town Hall steps by fundraising for Henley Poppy Appeal. It would be a wonderful start to a very merry Christmas if many Branch members could be there!

Sara Abey - Poppy Appeal Organiser - Henley-on-Thames Community