

THE MERCIAN REGIMENT

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER
Q4 2025

Print-friendly Edition

Regimental News-The Laying Up of 2 MERCIAN Colours

On Saturday 11th October, soldiers from both 1 and 4 MERCIAN, as well as members of the Regimental Family, attended Lichfield Cathedral in Staffordshire to see the Laying Up of 2 MERCIAN Colours.

Members of the Regimental family gathered outside of Lichfield Cathedral to witness the Regiment conduct a Freedom of the City parade, where the Colours of the 2nd Battalion were paraded one last time.

The parade saw soldiers from 1 and 4 MERCIAN, members of The Band, as well as veterans and other members parade through the city of Lichfield.

After the parade had finished, the Colours were stood outside of the Cathedral main doors with Private Derby XXXIII. The Regimental Family were invited into the Cathedral for the service.

During the service, the Colours were officially handed over to Lichfield Cathedral, where they will remain in the Cathedral's care.

Regimental News- A Reception at The Houses of Parliament

On Tuesday 2nd December, members of the Mercian Regiment hosted a reception at the Houses of Parliament, which was sponsored by the Member of Parliament for Tamworth Sarah Edwards MP.

The visit to Parliament saw Private Derby XXXIII greet The Speaker of the House of Commons, The Rt Hon Sir Lindsay Hoyle MP, outside of the Speaker's House. He is known for his love of animals and was excited to meet Private Derby.

The visit saw members of The Mercian Regiment speak with Members of Parliament to discuss the work that The Regiment does as The Heart of England's Infantry.

The Mercian Regiment would like to thank Sarah Edwards MP and her team for everything that they did to facilitate this reception, ensuring that Members of Parliament had the opportunity to hear from soldiers about life as a soldier in the British Army.

The conclusion of the visit marked the end of a very busy year for The Regiment.

1 MERCIAN- A (Grenadier) Company

As part of Training Level A (TL-A Section) the Coy conducted Armoured Fighting in Woods and Forests (FIWAF).

TL-A is part of the start state for the TL-C exercise in 2026 that A Company is undertaking as part of the King's Royal Hussars Battlegroup.

As part of the start state requirements for a busy collective training year in 2026, A (GRENADIER) Company conducted LFTT ranges up to Section by night.

1 MERCIAN- C (Kohima) Company

KUKRI COMPASS (Nov-Dec 25). Led by LCpl KENNEDY, C Coy conducted intensive Night

Navigation across Salisbury Plain to develop their basic soldiering skills.

LCpl Kennedy guided soldiers through the fundamentals of map reading to maintain accuracy and confidence in low-light conditions during Ex KUKRI COMPASS.

He carried out a fast, precise check of his grids and bearings, and his sharp fieldcraft and map reading skills shone through during night moves on Ex KUKRI COMPASS.

LCpl Gallacher navigated through challenging terrain, demonstrating confident map-reading and direction-finding skills under exercise conditions.

1 MERCIAN- DRAGON (Fire Support) Company

As part of the build up to Castlemartin ranges, where DRAGON Company will conduct Live Fire Tactical Training, Anti-Tank platoon ran section attack lanes for our junior soldiers to hone their low-level skills and to practice leadership in the field.

This type of training allows Ptes and Junior LCpls to gain valuable experience of working as Section Commanders and 2ICs.

Members of Anti-Tank, Mortar and Assault Pioneer platoons rehearse their patrolling skills on Salisbury Plain Training Area. Sometimes only a GPMG will do.

Mortar Platoon have been working with industry partners who are developing the latest generation of indirect fire simulation equipment.

This equipment allows the mortar line to be linked to a simulated environment in which the Mortar Fire Controllers execute fire missions and adjust fire.

These adjustments are then made by the mortar line, allowing for more realistic training. This would allow for better drills training in camp, but also potentially for weapons effect simulation on exercise.

1 MERCIAN - Mercian Gauntlet Challenge

Just before departing for well-earned Christmas leave, 1 MERCIAN came together for a Mercian Gauntlet Challenge — an inter-company competition testing strength, endurance, resilience, teamwork and soldier spirit. Congratulations to C (Kohima) Coy, this year's victors.

Organised and delivered by SSgt Hilson and the Battalion AAPTIs, the event saw Companies take on four different challenges:

- Victory Row
- British Army Warrior Fitness
- Green Resilience
- Infanteer 5km

Every competitor dug deep and demonstrated the professionalism and standards expected of a

Mercian soldier. A strong way to close the year and highlight the cohesion and fighting spirit across the Battalion.

Well done to all. The MERCIAN spirit remains strong.

4 MERCIAN - Honorary Colonel

Colonel Carl Richardson

The highlight from Q4 was unquestionably a trip to eastern Croatia in early October where I had the pleasure of joining over 90 members of 4 MERCIAN for NATO Exercise SAVA STAR. With the Exercise designed to improve joint operational capabilities between NATO allies, as well as strengthening cultural understandings, I was proud to see the Mercians display great prowess at the conclusion of the Exercise in front of the assembled guests and media, including the British Ambassador to Croatia, the Deputy Prime Minister of Croatia and the Army's Director of Reserves.

It was also an honour to represent the Regiment and antecedent regiments at the opening of the Field of Remembrance in November at Westminster Abbey alongside Brigadier Simon Banton and Lt Col Dean Canham OBE as well as WO2 (retd) Greg Hedges and Sgt Watchman VI. The event has been held every year since 1928, marking the start of the UK's Remembrance commemorations, and was officially opened by Her Majesty The Queen, who seemed especially taken with Sgt Watchman VI!

4 MERCIAN - B (Malta) Company

Soldiers and Officers from B (MALTA) Company marched through Ellesmere Port, Widnes, and Stockport on Remembrance Sunday.

There was a large turnout in all locations, and lots of support was shown for our soldiers.

The gym refurbishment at the start of 2025 has really helped improve soldiers' attitudes towards fitness, giving them a free comparable gym to local gyms where considerable fees are payable.

4 MERCIAN - C (Kohima) Company

In October, 4 MERCIAN C (Kohima) Company deployed to Croatia on Exercise SAVA STAR.

Ex Sava Star is an annual training event hosted by the Croatian Armed Forces (CAF).

The exercise is designed to strengthen cooperation between the CAF and the UK Armed Forces, building closer ties and improving joint operational capabilities.

Soldiers from 4 MERCIAN took part in urban lessons with soldiers from the Croatian Armed Forces.

Lt Col Andrew Lawson, Commanding Officer of 4 MERCIAN, said: *"We are working with and learning from Regular Croatian Armed Forces and it has been beneficial for us both.*

"It is key we are interoperable with our NATO allies, and this enhances our cooperation and understanding whilst strengthening our relationships."

4 MERCIAN- D (Dragon) Company

Ex FROSTED BLADE

Pte Foster

Before Christmas, a team of eight keen skiers from 4 MERCIAN headed to Val d'Isere in France to train for the 40th annual Infantry Alpine Championships (Ex FROSTED BLADE).

Divided across the A Hill for more experienced skiers, and the B Hill for those new to racing, skills were developed in Slalom and Giant Slalom in preparation for the competitions at the start of the New Year.

After a break at home for Christmas- the 4 MERCIAN team will reassemble in Val in January to race other infantry battalions (Regular and Reserve) across all four disciplines of Slalom, Giant Slalom, Super G and Downhill.

I was fortunate to join the Infantry Development Squad for an additional week of training beforehand.

4 MERCIAN- HQ (Eagle) Company

Op CABRIT Mobilisation

LCpl Killen

On the 11 November Pte James and I began our IPDT at MOD Bassingbourn, this consisted of an ITR sweep up and some broader serials including several briefs, foreign weapons awareness, anti-ambush drills and a vehicle rolling simulator. We then deployed onto the last week of Ex IRON CYCLONE where we were

introduced to our new platoon and introduced to the armoured way of operating. This was an exciting change from my light role experience.

The Christmas period saw a few cold nights on guard and an epic food fight, some traditional fancy dress PT up red brick hill then some well-earned leave. Very quickly we were into the preparation to deploy with several kit and document checks.

The start of the six months in Estonia was cold with our first battlegroup exercises in snow and -13 degrees. I was lucky to get plenty of experience deploying as a Section 2IC in a FSP platoon and got hands on with GPMG, Sharpshooter, NLAW, ASM and more pyro than you could shake a stick at.

I was selected to do the regular PJNCO cadre, this included a weeklong beat up followed by six weeks of training, PT tests and a two-week field phase. Under the mentorship of some very professional Mercian JNCOs and SNCOs I achieved a top third placement and was selected to promote on return to 4 Mercian.

I enjoyed a two-week R&R trip home and some AT in Estonia sea kayaking and mountain biking. We returned to the UK in September where I left 1 Mercian and enjoyed 6 weeks of leave before returning to reserve life.

Band of The Mercian Regiment

In October, The Band of the Mercian Regiment were honoured and proud to stand side by side with serving soldiers, veterans, families and friends of 2nd Battalion The Mercian Regiment as

their Regimental Colours were given into the care of Lichfield Cathedral.

Exercising the Mercian Regiment's freedom of the city, they marched with Colours flying, led by The Band, before gathering in solemn reflection for the ceremony inside the cathedral.

The Colours will rest at Lichfield Cathedral, joining the Colours for the 3rd Battalion, as well as the Colours from the Staffordshire Regiment, where they will be preserved and available for public viewing.

Congratulations on an excellent result for Musician Katie Jenner, gaining a well deserved distinction on her CEQ1 performance on clarinet.

The CEQ1 is the highest level of the professional performance qualifications Army musicians can work towards and involves a lot of dedication, effort and preparation.

You may have heard Musician Jenner's stunning solo in the cathedral earlier in the year.

At the poignant time of Remembrance in November, the Band were on parade in Birmingham City Centre, providing musical reflection as wreaths were laid by dignitaries, members of the armed forces family, and members of the public.

The last post was sounded by Cpl Wendy Robert.

Congratulations to Musician Andrew Elwood who has been competing in the Army Inter Corps Orienteering Championships, held in Bovington.

He was placed 3rd in his age class for the night racing, and was placed 2nd overall and 2nd in his age class for the day race. He hopes to represent the Army again this season as part of the orienteering team.

A lot of hard work and training – well done.

The now traditional Christmas concert saw The Band of the Mercian Regiment bringing festive cheer to a packed house in the glorious surroundings of St Michael and All Angels Church in Tettenhall, Wolverhampton. The event has become a firm festive favourite in the calendar, bringing the community and members of the Mercian Regiment together to celebrate Christmas. With traditional carols, symphonic Christmas medleys and even a bit of Stevie Wonder, there was plenty to delight the audience. There was even a bit of comedy from the Director of Music, and plenty of audience participation to boot!

Autumn has been an adventurous and busy time for the saxophone quartet. The group have returned from Croatia and been out and about playing for Christmas festivities and mess events around the region, providing the traditional ceremony for the toasts, and an eclectic programme of background and performance music to suit the occasion.

This season has had a theme of collaboration, over the course of this quarter the band have worked with members of the Croatian Armed Forces Jazz Orchestra, the Band of the Royal Anglian Regiment, the Band of the Royal Yorkshire Regiment, the Band of the Duke of

Lancaster's Regiment, The Band and Drums of Gwent & Powys Army Cadet Force, and players from City of Birmingham Brass Band to support events, concerts and parades. Collaboration and sharing musical experience helps to ensure the best possible musical performance – a big thank you to all involved.

Derbyshire Army Cadet Force

Captain P Thomas – County Media Officer

October began with the Lord-Lieutenant of Derbyshire's awards evening and saw Cadet Corporal Alexander Kirke invested as the Lord-Lieutenant's Cadet.

The appointment is a significant honour, recognizing outstanding character, leadership, and commitment to the cadet movement.

Sea, Air and Army Lord-Lieutenant Cadets support Mrs Elizabeth Fothergill, who represents the monarch in Derbyshire at formal events including parades, awards ceremonies, and official engagements.

During the half-term school break in October, 10 cadets travelled to Bovington Garrison, Dorset for a STEM-filled week hosted by the Royal Armoured Corps. Interactive stands provided an insight into real-world application of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

Highlights included sitting inside a Challenger 2 tank and the Ajax armoured fighting vehicle, getting hands on with the Starstreak man-portable missile system, operating a bomb

disposal robot and piloting a helicopter in a battlefield simulation.

Several of the Army's regiments and corps supported the exercise and it was a big step towards fulfilling the Strategic Defence Review's recommendations for a greater focus on developing STEM skills in cadets.

In November, the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal was supported by hundreds of cadets giving up their weekends to stand in supermarkets, high streets and a very rainy evening at Derby County's Pride Park football stadium!

On Remembrance Sunday, cadets proudly marched in parades across Derbyshire.

Several cadets stood as memorial sentries, laid wreathes or carried banners; but every cadet that attended a service in their community performed their duty with the greatest discipline and respect, and every adult volunteer was enormously proud of their cadets.

In December, detachments were counting down the days to Christmas and celebrating a successful year by way of parties with games and food. But it was the Band and Corps of Drums that truly got everyone in the festive spirit with their annual public concert.

The talented musicians entertained with a series of Christmas carols, Regimental music, modern songs and opportunities for audience participation. An exceptional evening that should be experienced by everyone!

£500 of the money raised through ticket sales, refreshments and the raffle was donated to The Army Cadet Charitable Trust - the official charity of Army Cadets UK, which makes life-changing opportunities accessible to all young people.

The community Cadet Forces are made possible by adult volunteers that invest their free time into developing young people. Much of their work goes unseen outside the organisation they so selflessly commit to, but occasionally there is recognition when their contribution to the cadet movement has been exceptional.

Captain Pete Ward – Director of Music, received a Chief of the General Staff Commendation in the New Year Honours.

During 20 years of service to the Army Cadet Force, he has provided countless opportunities to 12 – 18yr old cadets, including performing at the Military Musical Spectacular on Horse Guards Parade, the Rorke's Drift annual concerts, Menin Gate Last Post ceremony, Chatsworth House concerts and so much more. Captain Ward is the definition of volunteerism, and he shows no signs of giving up anytime soon! We are proud to count him amongst our ranks.

Mercian Regiment Museum (Worcestershire)

Journey through the history of Worcestershire's regiments on a virtual tour of the Worcestershire Soldier Gallery, which was in place in Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum from 2003 to 2025.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m34kLYnNqnk>

In January 2024 it was announced that The Mercian Regiment Museum (Worcestershire) had been awarded a grant by The National Lottery Heritage Fund to develop the Worcestershire Soldier at The Commandery Project in partnership with Museums Worcestershire and the Worcestershire Yeomanry Museum.

The project will relocate The Worcestershire Soldier Gallery from within the Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum to the ground floor of The Commandery, one of the city's oldest buildings which tells the story of Worcester's role in the English Civil War.

Cheshire Regiment Association

Dates for the 2026 Diary

- 21 Mar: Southern Region Meeanee Dinner - Union Jack Club.
- 11 - 17 Apr: Bosnia Memorial - Wayne Edwards Memorial Service & Ahmići Commemoration.
- 27 Jun: Armed Forces Day
- 27 Jun: Tom Sephton Trophy – Crossfields ARLFC
- 26 Jul: St Julien Service – Stockport
- 23 Aug: TBC - Audregnies Service, Battle of Mons
- 24 Aug: Mons Wreath Laying – Chester Cathedral.
- 27 - 31 Aug: 'Acorn' Camping Event

- 06 Sep: CRA Service of Remembrance – NMA
- 24 Oct: East Cheshire Reunion – Stockport (date TBC)
- 05 Nov: Field of Remembrance – London
- 08 Nov: Remembrance Sunday
- 04 Dec: Droppin' Well Service of Remembrance – Chester Cathedral
- 06 Dec: Droppin' Well Memorial Service – Ballykelly

EAST CHESHIRE REUNION

The East Cheshire Reunion was held in Stockport on Saturday 25th October 2025.

Members of the Southern Region supported this event and General Keith Skempton CBE was the presiding Officer.

It is always an excellent event and the Bollington Brass Band made for a memorable evening.

EDITH CAVELL MEMORIAL

On 12th October we represented the CRA at the annual commemoration of Edith Cavell's death.

It is always a moving occasion, with representatives from the Royal London Hospital, the Belgian Embassy, the Royal British Legion and Cavell Nurses Trust.

This year Tony Twiss laid the wreath on behalf of the CRA.

FIELD OF REMEMBRANCE

Due to the continuing refurbishing works at Westminster Abbey, we were limited to only four

tickets. As always, the Last Post and Reveille were immaculately observed at 11 am.

This year HM The Queen inspected the plots and chat to the appointed representatives for each plot.

This year Brigadier Tony Twiss presented the Cheshire Regiment plot to HM The Queen. Tim Park QGM, George Szwejkowski and Trevor Taylor gave support. It was also nice to see Charles Highett, who was there with the Poppy Factory

CENOTAPH

This year we found ourselves in Column B and the third column to march past the Cenotaph. It is always a long time of standing and waiting, so it was a relief to be one of the first columns to march and to get back onto Horse Guards Parade.

Marching past the Cenotaph is an experience and the large crowds and massed bands of the Household Division always makes the hairs on the neck stand up.

Afterwards we enjoyed an excellent lunch in the Two Chairmen public house. We are very grateful to all who supported us on the day and helped to keep alive memories of the Cheshire Regiment.

HALTON BRANCH RALLY NIGHT 2025

Rally night has been held on the Friday night before Remembrance Sunday for the last 50 years. Vinnie Morris and other members of the Rally section presented the evening.

The night started with the concert room filling up nicely with smartly dressed veterans, family and friends before they were asked to stand to receive the Guests. This year they included the mayor and consort of Halton, Officers from TS Ashanti, Runcorn Sea cadets and one of our oldest Legion Members, who is 93. The special guests were our very own Mr Peter Gresty and his lovely wife Lynne.

Worcestershire & Sherwood Foresters Regimental Association

If anyone wishes to join a branch, they are asked to contact the Assistant Regimental Secretary cindy.clark247@mod.gov.uk for more information.

Chesterfield Branch

The branch has had a busy quarter with a mixture of social events and representing the WFRA. On 25 October, a coach load of members when on an outing to the Leeds Armorers.

On Armistice Day, the branch organised the Remembrance Day service at Crich. Those attending has grown over the years and yet again we were joined by two local schools. It is heartening to see the younger generation remember.

On 14 November, the branch also commemorated the fallen with a communal branch meal held at a nearby community centre. We also celebrated Christmas with our annual branch Christmas meal on 14 December.

Derby Branch

Derby Branch has enjoyed two social events since the last newsletter, namely the annual Dinner held on Alma Day, and a Christmas Curry Lunch. Both events were well supported and enjoyed by all. Our entertainments committee excelled themselves in arranging the events.

This year, two senior Army Cadets from Derbyshire ACF have proudly carried our Standards at the Remembrance parades, and we thank them for aiding us.

We have a hard core of members who, come rain, come shine, appear at the monthly meetings and support the monthly raffles. The meetings are relatively informal, although the Chair sometimes has had cause to "gavel" members who get a little "out of hand" especially those who forget to put in their hearing aids! We welcome all serving and former members of the Mercian Regiment, the antecedent regiments, and other arms.

Worcester Branch

On 11 October, a mini-bus with 12 members went to Lichfield Cathedral to take part in the Laying Up of 2 MERCIAN Colours. Our 3 Standards were there with Allan Poyner and Rob McCarthy carrying the Area and Branch standards on the Freedom March.

Later in the month, on the 24th, we were at the Poppy Launch at Worcester Guildhall. In the evening, we attended the Maple Leaf pub in Canada Way, Lower Wick for a social with Mike

Jones and the other members of the Welsh Regts Assoc who came over for the Gheluvelt service.

The following day, on the 25th, was the Annual Gheluvelt Service and it went well and we were blessed with good weather. We had the usual VIP guests and Pte Derby and also a very good turnout from the public. Afterwards we held the buffet at Barbourne Ex Services Club where there was a video presentation of the Battle of Gheluvelt. The Lord Lieutenant did us the honour of cutting the Gheluvelt Cake.

On 8 November the branch was represented at two venues, in the morning some of us attended the 'Woodbine Willie' service at the grave of Geoffrey Anketell Studdert Kennedy MC. He was nicknamed "Woodbine Willie" during WWI for giving Woodbine cigarettes to the soldiers he met, as well as spiritual aid to injured and dying soldiers. In the afternoon, Allan Poyner and Rudi Heaume carried the Area and Branch standards at the WCFC Remembrance match at the Warriors Ground at Sixways. Branch members Neil Cale and Rob Atkinson laid a wreath.

On Armistice Day it was an early start for some of us that attended Foregate St train station to hand over a wreath for the poppy train that takes all the wreaths it collects on its way to Platform 1 at Paddington Station. Afterwards we went to Wetherspools for breakfast, we sang happy birthday to Kipper and he enjoyed his birthday cake. We followed a branch breakfast by attending the War Memorial, outside the cathedral, for the annual Armistice Ceremony.

For Christmas we met at the Coffee morning at the Sgts Mess, Norton Bks which had a male choir singing.

Worksop Branch

Worksop Branch were very busy through the autumn months last year, starting with a strong representation at the Laying Up of 2 MERCIAN Colours. Branch members were proud to join the Freedom Parade, marching through the city of Lichfield as part of the Regimental family followed by an emotional service in the cathedral.

The following day, WFRA members from various branches enjoyed a trip to the Royal Armouries in Leeds. Coach travel was arranged and funded by Nottinghamshire County Council.

Worksop Festival of Remembrance was held in October, Worksop Branch WFRA are a major part of this event which brings many of our local Armed Forced Community together at a time of year which is important to us all. We supported the Poppy Appeal locally with members volunteering on poppy tables in the local supermarkets. It's very humbling to hear stories from members of the public about why Remembrance is important to them.

Worksop Branch was asked to parade the Branch Standard at a number of events during the 2025 Remembrance period. Branch members joined Acts of Remembrance at Worksop Town Football Club and Worksop Rugby Club and the Service of Remembrance at Worksop Masonic Hall as well as the town's Remembrance Parade and a smaller service on Armistice Day.

The mood became more social in December with many members enjoying a Christmas meal with members of Worksop Branch Royal British Legion and plenty of dancing later in the month at the Christmas party night which has become a regular feature on the branch calendar.

Mercian Volunteers Regimental Association

14th September – Mayors Annual Service

On Sunday the 14th September members of the association attended the Annual Civic Service, Dave Willis and Mike Rogers carrying the association standards.

The service is a celebration of the charity work done in Stockport, and in the presence of the Mayor, which this year is Cllr. Kerry Waters.

78th East Cheshire Reunion

On Saturday 25th October, members of the Association took part in the 78th East Cheshire Reunion for veterans of The Cheshire Regiment, along with Veterans and Serving members of The Mercian Regiment.

Bollington Brass Band and the Drums of Cheshire Police provided the musical entertainment, while members enjoyed a hotpot supper.

in attendance we had as our guests Lord and Lady Evans of Rainow along with Maj Will Rose, OC B Company 4 Mercian, who briefed the members on the Regiment and Trustees of Stockport Volunteer Armoury.

6th November – Manchester Airport Festival of Remembrance

Mike Rogers and Dave Willis, flew standards representing the association, attended the annual Festival of Remembrance at the Runway Visitors Centre at Manchester Airport.

This event, both inspiring and moving, celebrates and commemorates the lives of those lost in combat.

In attendance, was a representative from The Lord Lieutenant's office Representing The King, a representative from the Republic of Poland, Mayors from every part of Greater Manchester, including the current Mayor of Stockport Kerry Waters, as well as other local dignitaries, and representatives of many veteran organisations.

Apart from uplifting and moving speeches, the audience was treated to excellent displays of drill and musical ability from the cadet forces of all 3 services.

8th November – Stockport County Edgeley Park

Saturday saw Peter Gresty, with Steve Whaite, Dave Willis, and Mike Rogers carrying standards take part in the annual remembrance at Stockport County FC.

Joined by Veterans, it was a fitting tribute, and thanks to Stockport County FC for organising the event, as well as the hospitality enjoyed by all, and thanks must also go to both fans of Stockport County and Luton Town for their respect.

9th November – Armistice Parade – Stockport War Memorial

Sunday, saw Members of the Association led by Dave Willis and Mike Rogers as Standard Bearers lead the parade to the Stockport War Memorial, where as always there was a huge turnout of not only those participating in the parade, but the turnout of the people of Stockport, to honour the event, in the presence of The Worshipful Mayor of Stockport Kerry Waters, plus representatives from all faith denominations, and from the emergency services, and veterans organisations.

With inspiring speeches, both from all faith denominations, and The Bishop of Stockport, it was a fitting tribute.

Those taking part retired to St Juliens Barracks where they were treated to a buffet, and thanks go to Les Heighway and the staff for making sure everything went well.

11th November – Armistice Day – Stockport War Memorial

Tuesday saw Mike Rogers carrying standard, representing the association for the two minute silence in the presence of The Mayor and local dignitaries, the parade carried out with exceptional skill by the Parade Commander Capt Lesley Oldham of 206

Welfare Help Sites and Organisations

The following sites and organisations are available to help serving and veteran personnel and their families:

Main Service Charities

- SSAFA Forces Help
Tel: 0800 2606780 - 9am to 5:30pm
- The Royal British Legion
Tel: 0808 8028080 - 8am to 8pm
- The Royal Commonwealth Ex Services League
Tel: 020 32072413 - For veterans living overseas
- Help for Heroes
Tel: 0300 0398883 - 9am to 5pm Mon to Fri
- Veterans UK Op Valour
Tel: 0808 1914218 - 8am to 4pm Mon to Fri. Option 6 on calling in
- BLESMA
Tel: 0208 590 1124 - Limbless Association 9am to 5pm
- The Not Forgotten Association
Tel: 0207 7302400
- Veterans Aid
Tel: 0207 8282468 - Discharged F&C veterans
- Blind Veterans UK
Tel: 0800 3897979 - Blind or partial loss of vision
- National Gulf Veterans Association
Tel: 0148 2808736
- The Charity for Civil Servants
Tel: 0800 056 2424

- The Chaseley Trust (Physical disabilities)
Tel: 01323 744200

Mental Health

- Veterans Gateway
Tel: 0808 8021212
- Combat Stress
Tel: 0800 1381619
- Op Courage
(Via web site only)
- Togetherall (Mental Health) (Anonymous web support - Online support only)
- The Samaritans
Tel: 116 123
- NHS Mental Health Services
Tel: 999 or 111

Families Help

- Army Families Federation
Tel: 01264 554004 - 8:30 to 5pm Mon to Fri
- Forces Pension Society
Tel: 0207 820 9988 - Help with MOD Pensions
- Regular Forces Employment Association
Tel: 0121 2623058
- The War Widows Association
Tel: 0845 2412189
- The Army Widows Association
Tel: 0300 6660136

FINANCE PROBLEMS AND DEBT

The financial crisis does not appear to be easing, and therefore you could find yourself having money problems and falling into debt very quickly. The key to helping resolve this issue is to

get help as soon as you identify you are experiencing problems. Try not to ignore the issue, as it will only get worse as time progresses. Below are a number of free help sites that can give you advice on how to tackle your money problems and get you back on track.

- <https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/>

This site can give advice on Benefits, Family Care and Money Troubles. You can call them free of charge Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm on 0800 1387777

- <https://nationaldebtline.org/>

This is an independent debt advice charity. If you're struggling with debt, they can help. You can call them free of charge Monday to Friday from 9am to 8pm on 0808 808400, or chat online.

- <https://www.stepchange.org/>

Step Change is another independent debt advice charity who are non-profit, and their advice is free. They specialise in getting your finances back on track and are non-judgemental. You can call them free of charge Monday to Friday from 8am to 8pm on 0800 138111, or chat online.