

Saffron Walden Annual Town Meeting 2023 Report

Royal British Legion

The Royal British Legion, is a charity that provides financial, social and emotional support to members and veterans of the British Armed Forces, their families and dependants. At Branch level we are able to guide people to the Veterans Gateway which is there as a first point of contact and will assist people to get the type of support they need.

The Legion works to ensure that the people of the United Kingdom remember all those who have lost their lives on active service to the Crown and honours the service of the Armed Forces and veterans, and the contribution of their families.

The Saffron Walden Branch takes the lead in the Annual Remembrance Day Parade. We invite those groups and organisations who take part in and attend the Parade each year, and also arrange for and supply the wreaths that are laid at the War Memorial ensuring each has the correct organisations badge, where possible. We liaise with the organisations such as the Town Council, District Council and Police, that carry out the activities that go on in the background but without which the Parade could not happen.

The actual Parade and Church Service take about 2 hours from the start at the War Memorial to the finish at the Market Square, but it represents many more hours of work by dedicated individuals and groups that go into making the Parade a success.

The British Legion focuses on Ex and Serving military personnel so it may be difficult to see how its activities enhance the lives of others living in the town. But I believe that the work we do and the service we offer is an important part of the infrastructure of the Town and local communities. We are always ready to take the Branch Standard to the funerals of ex-serviceman who pass away in the local area as a mark of respect and the Branch secures the services of a Band for the Remembrance Parade which improves an already fantastic spectacle.

Throughout the year the Branch will put on Social Activities that are open to and enjoyed by many townspeople.

Saffron Walden Branch is small in relation to the number of members and we will be canvassing the public during the coming year, in an attempt to increase membership which is open to all.

In comparison to the amount we collect each year for the Poppy Appeal we are a heavyweight and when the 2022/23 collection ends later this year we will have banked over £33,000, a tribute not only to Our Poppy Appeal organisers and the small band of collectors who freely give their time each year but also to the generosity of the people of Saffron Walden.

Thank you