Welcome to the Eighth RAVC Newsletter – September 2026

Dear Friends,

This eighth RAVC Newsletter is for your information. Attached with this Newsletter please find:

The Minutes of the RAVC Association AGM held at the DATR 20th September 2026.

The Regimental Secretary's Report for the year.

Royal Army Veterinary Corps Welfare and Benevolent Fund - Rules.

The Difference between the new version of Rules and the Model Document, (as updated in line with new Charities Act).

Trend of RAVC Funds as at 30th June 2026.

'Call Out to Military Families' in the Melton Area poster.

RAVC W&B Fund Rules

The RAVC Trustees have been reviewing RAVC W&B Fund Rules, aiming to ensure compliance with modern standards and regulations. The update to the Rules is now complete, and the Trustees will sign off on the new Rules in the coming months. This has been a complex and laborious task to complete. The new draft Rules, are attached alongside a summary of the differences between new version of Rules and the Model Document (as updated in line with new Charities Act).

RAVC Ties and RAVC Stable Belts. Are now held by the DATR PRI and are priced at £11 and £37 respectively.

Please note the link to RAVC's Chiron Calling 2026 edition below:

https://fliphtml5.com/bookcase/jdtrj

The History of the RAVC 1962 - 2021. All 518 copies of The History of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps 1962 - 2021 have been sold. An online, searchable version is currently being prepared and it is hoped that this will be made available through the next RAVC Newsletter.

RAVC Journals, Chiron's and Chiron Callings. A major project is now being explored to digitise the Corps' historic publications, including:

RAVC Journals dating from 1935 to the mid-1970s;

the green unit duplicated Chirons from the mid-1970s to the early 1980s; and

early editions of Chiron Callings from 1986 onwards, through to Autumn 2019.

I am currently seeking a suitable company able to scan these historic publications to a sufficiently high standard that individual editions can subsequently be searched using keywords. This is a substantial and potentially lengthy project, but, subject to Trustee approval and the necessary funding and arrangements being put in place, the aim is to make the complete collection available online.

A small number of RAVC Journals and one or two duplicated Chirons are still missing from the collection. Members are therefore asked to check their personal archives, lofts, garages and filing cabinets. If you hold any of these publications, please contact the RAVC Regimental Secretary as soon as possible to arrange their temporary loan to the Corps. Even a single missing edition could help complete the archive and ensure that this important record of RAVC history is preserved and made available to future generations.

All loaned publications would be handled with care and returned after scanning. The RAVC will reimburse reasonable postage costs incurred in sending publications to the Corps.

This is an important opportunity to preserve a significant part of the RAVC's history and make it accessible to serving personnel, veterans, families and researchers for many years to come. If you believe you may be able to help, please contact the RAVC Regimental Secretary as soon as possible, even if you are unsure whether the publication you hold is one of those required.

RAVC Training Videos. The RAVC also has an important collection of historic training videos, many of which provide a unique record of how our personnel, animals and specialist capabilities were trained and employed over the years.

If you have any RAVC training videos that are not already available on the RAVC History Channel,

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1BYFspjnnxDh4foW7dk3WyFgkPOxS1TTy

I would be very grateful if you would contact the RAVC Regimental Secretary with a view to arranging for them to be copied and, where appropriate, placed online for all to view.

The aim is to preserve these valuable records of RAVC training and make them accessible to serving personnel, veterans, families and future generations.

If you have any old RAVC training films, videos, tapes or other recordings and are unsure whether they are already held by the Corps, please do get in touch. Even material that may appear routine today could provide a fascinating and valuable record of the Corps and its training heritage.

RAVC Corps Marches

For information, and for those who may wish to hear them, the RAVC Corps Marches can be found at the following links:

"Drink Puppy Drink" – Quick March of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps
Listen to "Drink Puppy Drink"

"Golden Spurs" – Slow March of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps
Listen to "Golden Spurs"

These marches form an important part of the musical and ceremonial heritage of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps.

Honouring the Royal Army Veterinary Corps - A Memorial for the Future

This initiative is currently paused pending the rebuild of the RAVC Memorial at Kendrew Barracks. Further information will be provided once the position becomes clearer.

RAVC Charity - Gift Aid

I am pleased to confirm that the RAVC Welfare & Benevolent Fund's Gift Aid registration with HMRC was approved on 22 July 2026.

This means that eligible donations made by UK taxpayers can enable the Charity to reclaim an additional 25p for every £1 donated, at no additional cost to the donor, provided the relevant Gift Aid conditions are met. Members and supporters who are eligible are encouraged to complete a Gift Aid

declaration when making a donation, thereby increasing the value of their support without making an additional payment.

Further details, including how members and supporters can make Gift Aid declarations, will be promulgated in the next RAVC Newsletter.

RAVC Benevolence.

How to Access Benevolence If you are a serving member, veteran, or family member of the Corps and you need support, we want to make sure you know how to access it.

The most effective route to benevolence is through the Royal British Legion or SSAFA. Both organisations have experienced caseworkers who will assess your situation, put together a case on your behalf, and approach the RAVC Welfare and Benevolence Charity, and other military charities, for funding and support. This caseworker approach means your needs are properly understood and coordinated, rather than dealt with in isolation. We know this process is not always perfect. It can be slow, it can feel impersonal, and sometimes people fall through the gaps. We are honest about this because we want to improve the system. If you know someone in the RAVC family who might be struggling, please share this post. Sometimes the right support starts with someone else making the connection.

Contact Details: Royal British Legion: 0808 802 8080 (free, confidential) rbl.org.uk SSAFA: 0800 260 6767 (free, confidential) ssafa.org.uk

The Establishment, Development and Deployment of the British Messenger Dog Service in the First World War

NAM Emma Worrall – The Presentation recorded on 18th Jun 26. You can watch the video at this Link



RBL Newsletter Is available to read at this link:

https://e-britishlegion.org.uk/cr/AQjrxgQQ3I62BxiTwbG1AjC9-9BCWhvpURXjRhpu9Re-UtDood6oO34G0H2EKYIbWXvrqi8

Items being considered for commission by the RAVC.

Please read the information accompanying the items featured below. If you are interested in purchasing any of the items, please let me know. At this stage, this is solely an expression of interest and does not constitute an order or financial commitment. The level of interest received will help determine whether production can proceed and enable us to establish the most accurate costs possible.

Please note that any delivery of any items is not expected until May/June 2027. Where practical, the intention is for items to be collected at the DATR Open Day on Saturday 28 June 2027.

Further details, including confirmed costs and ordering arrangements, will be provided once they have been fully established.



RAVC Shield, 10'' x 8 '' approximate cost, £35 (The King's cap badge will be on the new version. Older version may still be available with Queen's cap badge).



Rear of shield.



RAVC Coloured Umbrella, price TBC, but hopefully approx £20 depending on total quantity required.



A new version of the above bag, but in MTP and with an RAVC TRF, the bag does open out more than actually shown. Price TBC but should be no more then £3 - 4 each.

A New RAVC Dog Handler Statuette – A Project in the Making

I am pleased to report that discussions are underway with a specialist manufacturer about the possibility of producing a new RAVC dog handler statuette.

The aim is to create a contemporary representation of today's RAVC Military Working Dog handler, reflecting current equipment, appearance and responsibilities while retaining the character and spirit of our Corps.

The project remains *at the initial concept stage*, and several factors must be considered before a decision can be made about progressing to production. These include the design and approval of the master sculpture, the cost of producing the master and subsequent cold cast bronze copies, potential savings from larger production runs, and the timescale from commissioning to completion.

More than simply a commemorative item, the statuette could become a meaningful tribute to the skill, dedication and courage of RAVC handlers, as well as to the enduring partnership between handler and Military Working Dog. It would provide members with a distinctive and lasting piece of Corps memorabilia, representing both the proud heritage of the RAVC and the continuing importance of its work today.

Members can expect further updates as the concept develops and the practical details are assessed. Once the design, costs and production arrangements have been confirmed, information will be shared about the proposed statuette, expected availability, pricing and how members will be able to express their interest or place an order.



The future design should reflect contemporary MWD handlers, incorporating current operational dress, personal protective equipment, weapons, other equipment and dog equipment, so that any new statues remain representative of serving personnel and current operations.

Thank you.
Chris Ham.
Lt Col (Retd) Chris Ham MBE - RAVC Regimental Secretary (Interim).

Future Diary Dates Upcoming Events 2026 - 2027

- Thu 1 Oct 2026 – The UK Service Dogs Conference and Awards
- Fri 16 Oct 2026 – RAVC Officers Club Function (Postponed)
- Thu 5 Nov 2026 – St Margaret's Field Remembrance Service, London
- Fri 6 Nov 2026 – Animals in War Memorial Service, Park Lane, London

- Sun 8 Nov 2026 – Remembrance Sunday Parades
- Sun 8 Nov 2026 – Cenotaph Parade (London) – Veterans only
- Sun 8 Nov 2026 – Melton Mowbray Remembrance Parade
- Wed 11 Nov 2026 – RBL Act of Remembrance, Melton Mowbray
- NOTE MANY DATES FOR 2027 ARE TO BE CONFIRMED
- Fri 5 Mar 2027 – Chiron Calling Submission Deadline
- Sat 8 May 2027 TBC – Liam Tasker Memorial Rugby Match, Melton Mowbray TBC
- Fri 1 and Sat 2 May 2027 – ADU NI Association Reunion at National Memorial Arboretum
- Thu 27 May 2027 (TBC) – Founder's Day, Royal Hospital Chelsea TBC
- Sat 5 Jun 2027 (TBC) – The Gathering, Melton Mowbray (organised by Bill Jarvis)
- Fri 18 Jun 2027 (TBC) – Annual RAVC Golf Reunion TBC
- Mon 21 Jun 2027 (TBC) – Fly the Flag Day, Melton Borough Council TBC
- Sat 19 Jun 2027 (TBC) – Armed Forces Day TBC
- **Sat 28 Jun 2027 – DATR Open Day**
- **Sun 4 Jul 2027 – RAVC Morning Service, Royal Hospital Chelsea**
- Wed 21 Jul 2027 – Sandringham Flower Show TBC RAVC Association Members accompanied by Veteran MWDs required TBC
- Sati 24 Jul 2027 TBC – LCpl Ken Rowe's Family visit to NAM, Shropshire, wider attendance by serving and RAVC Veterans very welcomed by the Rowe Family TBC
- **Sat 18 Sep 2027 – RAVC Corps Weekend DATR incl Committee Meetings and AGM**
- Thu 11 Nov 2027 TBC – RBL Act of Remembrance, Melton Mowbray TBC
- Thu 11 Nov 2027 TBC – St Margaret's Field Remembrance Service, London (nominated personnel only) TBC
- Fri 12 Nov 2027 TBC – Animals in War Memorial Service, Park Lane, London TBC

Welfare Support
Additional and out of hours support:

Samaritans freephone **116 123** ROI 1850 609090 (24/7) or email – to access confidential emotional support for feelings of distress, despair or suicide thoughts

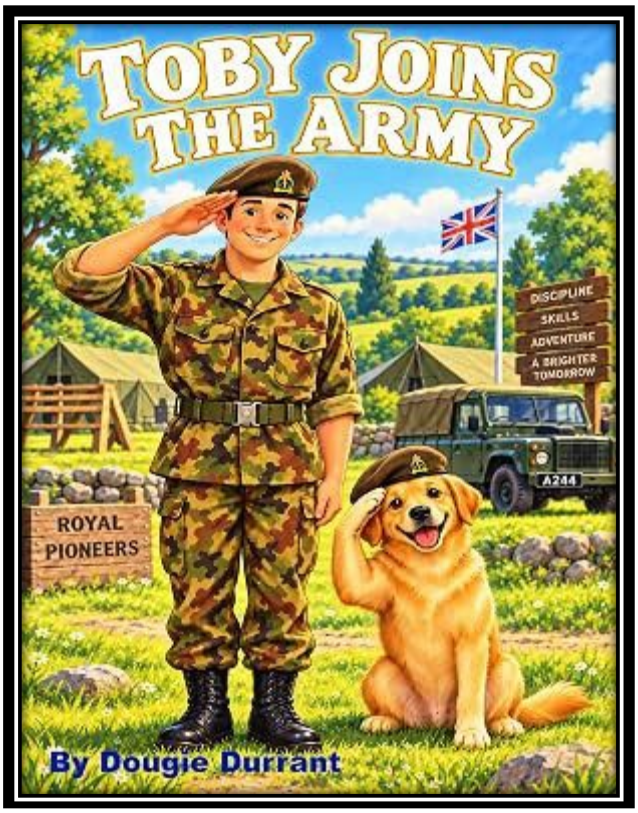
NHS 111 – to access medical help fast but when it's not a 999 emergency, **telephone** 111 (available 24 hours)

Big White Wall – a safe **online** service providing access to millions with anxiety, depression and other common mental health issues. Free for serving personnel, veterans, family members and carers

Shout - a crisis **text** support service for people in the military community who are struggling and need immediate support to get through a crisis. Text CONTACT to 85258
The Veterans Charity - **Immediate needs Charity** for Veterans providing urgent support to those veterans in distress or hardship who have served at least 6 months within the UK Armed Forces

Forcesline **telephone** helpline: 0800 7314880 (Monday – Friday 10.30 – 19.30) or email. Free confidential helpline for serving personnel, former members of the Armed Forces and their families

Veterans UK - to seek information on claiming AFCS, Armed Forces Independence Payment, Medical Discharges and Pension Forecast Requests



Toby Joins the Army by Dougie Durrant (Ex ADU NI Handler)

Toby Joins the Army tells the story of an unhappy Labrador puppy who longs for a home where he will be loved and cared for. When Toby arrives at the Royal Army Veterinary Corps Dog Training School in Melton Mowbray, he meets a kind handler and other dogs who are learning to work alongside soldiers.

Training brings plenty of new experiences. Toby learns to follow his handler's signals, use his remarkable nose and stay calm when things feel strange or frightening. With patience, praise and a few well-earned treats, the once-lonely puppy begins to trust his new friends. Before long, Toby discovers that the Army has given him more than a job: it has given him a place to belong.

Kindle edition only £7.55 from Amazon. Hard copy available early October 2026.