



I.G.A. North of England Branch

AGM Meeting Minutes

Date:	28th November 2025
Time:	19.00 Hrs
Location:	The Board Room, Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool
Attendees:	Andrew Williamson (via Teams) Laurie Jacobson David Ellis Mick Harris Bobby Ablewhite Allan Oakes Ken Owen Peter Radley Ray Bywater Gary Connerty William Aspinall
Apologies:	Barry Fitzgerald Keith Newall Jimmy Shanks Charlie Humpreys Vaughan Corbett Kevin Farrell Robbie Ablewhite Paul Gibson Simon Donegan (failed Teams link)
Next Meeting:	20 th February 2026
2026 NoE Branch Meeting Dates:	20 th February 2026 15 th March 2026 (Association St. Patricks Day Event) 15 th May 2026 7 th August 2026 19 th September (Association Dinner) 8 th November 2026 (Remembrance Day) 4 th December 2026 (AGM and Xmas Mickery)

2026 Association Dinner:	ASSOCIATION DINNER 19th Sept 2026	
Agenda Item	Matters Discussed	By Whom
Fallen Comrades	One minutes silence was held to remember those members and fellow 'Micks' that are no longer with us.	Andy Williamson
Minutes of last AGM meeting	Proposed by P. Radley, seconded by M. Harris Carried unanimously as a true record. A statement of thanks to the committee was made by M. Harris.	

Secretary's report	<p>Time has flown by and it doesn't seem a year since our last AGM. I am sorry that I am unable to attend in person tonight, but I join you via Microsoft Teams. My thanks go to Laurie and Dave for holding the fort in person tonight, in my absence.</p> <p>What a great year it has been. We continue to have success in turn out at our Bi-Monthly meetings, we continue to increase our membership (although we are always looking to build on numbers, and for members to pay their subs in a timely fashion) and we have had another fantastically successful Association Dinner, thanks to the extremely time consuming and hard work put in by Dave, Ray and our committee. To this end I would like to say a huge thank you to the committee for all their unsung work behind the scenes, our great Regiment for understanding their importance to us and supporting our Dinner and to all our members, friends and family who continue to support us and make our association so enjoyable.</p> <p>I had the honour of representing our Association, along with Mick Harris, in Belfast, for the laying up of our old colours, for the first time ever outside of the Guards Chapel.</p> <p>Thanks also goes to Ray Bywater, who on behalf of our Association, organised a church celebration in Liverpool, to celebrate the 125 years of our Regiment forming, this coincided with other events held by the other IG Associations, and the Regiment at the Guards Chapel in London.</p> <p>On a sadder note we lost not only a personal friend but a Regimental stalwart, friend and colleague to all 'Micks', Major Robbie Wilmont, MBE. He has and will be a huge loss to us all.</p> <p>I would like to finish by saying a huge thank you for your continued support to both our committee and to you the members.</p> <p>Quis Separabit</p>	Andy Williamson
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Chairman's Report	<p>1. General</p> <p>This has been an unusual year with many highs and quite a few low points which the team have tackled extremely well. We lost Robbie Wilmont, who will be sorely missed and indeed Ray Graham (our sincere thanks go to Lt Col Bill Blakey who represented the Regiment and Dave Ellis for the NoE Branch Association, at his funeral). Both will be remembered with great fondness.</p> <p>It has also been a year in which we have succeeded in introducing the multi billionaire John Caudwell to the Regiment and the NoE Branch Association. John and his Partner, Modesta, were able to join us for St Patricks Day to celebrate the 125th Anniversary of the Regiment in Wellington Barracks which they enjoyed a great deal. John also attended our Dinner in Liverpool for a great night of entertainment. We hope to be able to welcome John and Modesta to more events over the coming years.</p> <p>This has also been the first year in which we have started to develop a small number of Supporter organisations who donate raffle prizes, buy tickets and donate them back to the Branch and actively partake in social events. The aim is to slowly increase this number over time to help keep our accounts in a healthy state.</p> <p>2. Annual Dinner</p> <p>Our Annual Dinner at the Adelphi was a huge success and we were delighted to welcome John Caudwell along with the Vice Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside, the Deputy Lord Mayor, the former Vice Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire, the High Sheriff designate for Staffordshire, Harriet Dearden (Trustee of Herefordshire's Veterans Support Centre) and officers from the Regiment. We also welcomed and presented Supporter plaques to Care Merseyside, CM Marine, Beacon Counselling Trust, Kays Medical and our own Mick Harris with CSS Security Ltd. The Dinner was particularly well organised this year and my thanks go to Dave Ellis and Ray Bywater, who worked extremely hard to get things right and for their support to both Andy Williamson and myself on the night. The food was really good this year, probably due to the fact that we held a rehearsal dinner a few months beforehand, something we hope to replicate in future years.</p> <p>Pricing still remains an issue and the committee will be deciding on whether to stay with the Adelphi next year or make a permanent change</p> <p>3. Branch Operations</p> <p>As ever, I am enormously grateful to the Committee for their hard work and dedication over the last 12 months and we were able to present our Treasurer, Laurie Jacobson, with a Regimental Lieutenant Colonels certificate, in recognition of all his work in bringing the accounts onto a sound footing.</p> <p>Our Remembrance Day Parade and indeed our St Patricks Day Parade were both really well attended and enjoyed by all. It was observed that very few Micks actually took part in the Remembrance Day parade in Liverpool, favouring participation instead at the "Mickery" post parade ! Whilst its always lovely to see so many at our social events I think we need to do more to encourage higher numbers to attend the actual parade next year.</p> <p>4. Accounts</p> <p>The accounts are stabilising after our efforts to create Supporter organisations as mentioned above and so there is now little change from last year's numbers and with more coming on stream, we hope that our accounts will now start an upward trajectory rather than watching our funds slowly diminish as in previous years.</p> <p>5. Next Branch Dinner 2026</p> <p>The next Branch Annual Dinner will be on the 19th September 2026. A final decision on the venue will be made early in the New Year.</p> <p>We have managed to recruit Hilary Meredith-Beckham who is married to Sir David Beckham's Father Ted, to give the key note speech at next years Dinner. Hilary owns and runs a leading UK law firm that specialises in prosecuting claims on behalf of veterans against the MOD. She is incredibly successful (Professor of Law and Veterans Affairs at Chester University and Chair of the Royal British Legion Solicitors Group).</p> <p>This may be of real interest to all branch chairman/secretaries as she is prepared to answer any questions that veterans may have in relation to their service. Most of the time she operates on a no win no fee basis. We hope therefore to have a healthy attendance from other Branches at next year's dinner to learn as much as possible about veteran rights and entitlements.</p> <p>As Chairman, I would like to wish all members within the Irish Guards Association Northern Branch a very happy Christmas and a thoroughly enjoyable New Year !</p>	Simon Donegan
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	<p>As Chairman, I would like to wish all members within the Irish Guards Association Northern Branch a very happy Christmas and a thoroughly enjoyable New Year !</p>	
Treasurers report	<p>The treasurer reported on the account summery (which is attached as an appendix). These were presented to the Chairman for ratification and the signed copy will be presented to RHQ.</p> <p>The accounts presented were accepted unanimously as a true record. Pro. A. Oakes. Sec. K. Owen</p>	Laurie Jacobson
Welfare report	<p>This position is still vacant and the report is by Dave Ellis who is fulfilling this role on a temporary basis.</p> <p>Although not in the Association I attended the funeral of Ray Graham who Passed away on the 25/10/2025.</p> <p>Dave Fisher is still in a Hoylake home</p> <p>John Roach is now at home but as at 02/12 he will be moved in to a nursing home. I continue to call in as much as possible.</p>	David Ellis
Events Manager Report	<p>It was discussed that due to spiraling costs it may not be cost effective to hold our events at the Adelphia hotel.</p> <p>Come January 2026, with regards to meeting and functions that we have held there and whereby we were given free room hire for veterans we will now be charged for everything.</p> <p>We have to decide if we are or are not to hold our meetings at the Adelphi hotel and to look at somewhere else same for our events for the coming year. Tonight we had a vote and unanimously decided not to include a buffet or entertainment for Saint Patrick's day, but to keep a small buffet style and entertainment for remembrance day, if cost effective.</p> <p>I have been in touch with 6 hotels in Liverpool to hold our annual dinner in September and it will be decided by the committee top table in January were we are going to hold events. This was unanimously carried by those in attendance.</p> <p>The six hotels are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adelphi 2. Atlantic 3. Titanic 4. Shankly 5. Hilton 6. Liner Hotel 	David Ellis

Election of Committee for 2026	Secretary – Andy Williamson Treasurer – Laurie Jacobson Vice Chairman – Peter Swain Events Manager – David Ellis Assistant Events Manager – Ray Bywater	All positions were voted on mass as no other nominations were made. All members unanimously in favour. Pro. B. Aspinall Sec. M. Harris
Election of Standard Bearers	Temporary – Ray Bywater	
Election of Sub Committee	Welfare – Allan Oakes Photographer/Journal Sec – Ken Owen	
A.O.B.	<p>All members were asked to ensure that they update their standing orders, for January 2026 and to the new bank, ensuring they remain as paid-up members, to enable our branch to function.</p> <p>We can only function with the paid participation of our members subs, so please ensure you keep paid up and update any standing orders, if required. Please remember that the subs have gone from £10 to £15 per year and if you want a hard copy journal rather than the electronic version the total cost plus membership is £25.</p> <p><u>The new bank details are:</u></p> <p>Acc. Name – The Irish Guards Association, North of England. Acc. Type – Business Acc. Number – 49227337 Sort – 23 05 80 Bank – METRO. Membership £15, Membership & Journal £25. Please use your name as reference.</p> <p>Christmas hampers will not be provided for those identified as requiring one. It was proposed by Laurie Jacobson and seconded by Dave Ellis that anyone who is nominated will be presented with a £30 food voucher for a local supermarket so that they can choose for themselves what they would like, rather than for us guessing. This was carried unanimously by all those in attendance.</p> <p>Dates for 2026</p> <p><u>Memorial Service for Major Robbie Wilmont MBE</u></p> <p>The Memorial Service for Major Robbie Wilmont MBE will take place at the Guards' Chapel on Wednesday 25th February 2026 at 3pm. The service will be followed by a reception at the East India Club, 16 St James's Square.</p> <p><u>JOE SALMON</u></p> <p>Joes funeral is on Friday 6th February at 1300hrs in Enfield Crematorium , Great Cambridge Rd, Enfield, London EN1 4DS.</p> <p><u>March to the Guards Memorial</u></p> <p>Is on Sunday 15th March from Wellington Barracks, on parade at 1120 for the Drum head service at 1140 and stepping off at 1200. Tea and coffee will be</p>	Members Pro. M. Harris Sec. L. Jacobson Carried unanimously

	available plus Shamrock will be distributed prior to the parade. Dress is suit collar and Regimental tie and large medals. There will be refreshments in the Sgts mess after the parade. Ticket details will be passed as and when received.	
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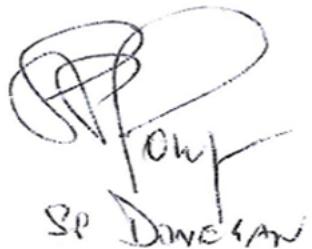
St Patricks Day (SPD)

Is on Tuesday 17th March in Mons Barracks Aldershot. Regarding tickets, feeding, parking and entry, this will be passed as and when received. RHQ nor the Association, have access to any tickets

Minutes agreed and carried unanimously as a true and accurate account:

Proposed: M. Harris Seconded: B. Aspinall

Chairman, Colonel Simon Donegan:



Handwritten signature of Simon Donegan, consisting of stylized initials and the name "Simon Donegan" written below.

Secretary, Andrew Williamson:



Handwritten signature of Andrew Williamson.

Date: 25.01.2026