



NEWSLETTER

RECOVERY MECHANIC BRANCH

REME ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER
EDITION 16
JUNE 2025



HEADLINES

Welcome to you all,

It's nice to be sitting outside writing this in the evening sunshine and not the cold grey dismal evenings of the winter. I hope you are all enjoying the recent spate of summer sun and warm weather. Its early June and I am fast approaching my "Beatles birthday*" but strangely, in my head I'm still 21. How many of us still think we can do what we did when we were young and how disappointing it is to find that we can't! I'm writing this while I await news of my wife's replacement knee operation, that certainly makes you realise that you are no longer as young as you think!!

Well, the branch has been busy to say the least. We have just returned from a weekend trip to Krakow, in Poland where we visited Oscar Schindler's factory, the famous salt mines and, of course Auschwitz and Birkenau concentration camps but more of this later in the newsletter. Yet again, Mark O'Mahony organised a fantastic trip but this time ably assisted by his daughter Olivia. Having met Oliva on the trip I strongly suspect that she was the brains behind it (LOL). Seriously, well done the O'Mahony family for a trip I won't forget any time soon. If you haven't been on one of our continental weekends away, I can't recommend them enough. I'm not sure where we will end up next year but keep your eyes and ears open for details, wherever we go there will something for everyone. Culture, history, architecture and a few wets along the way, so why not join us.

We are gearing up for the first "Winch to the Wall" on the 6th of September. If this one is a success, we will look to make it an annual event if not bi-annual. Look out for the ticket realise date later in the newsletter.

And then it's all off to Derby for this year's Bow Shackle Ball in early October. Our annual black tie lady's dinner night has its highest attendance this year so thank you all for supporting this great weekend.

If all that was not enough, our very own website is now live, you should have received an email inviting you to login and create a profile so you can see the membership only areas and get a 20% discount on branch merchandise. Josh Fox, our IT guru, has worked incredibly hard on creating this website for you, so open it up and login and don't forget to tell us what you think.

Finally, from me, enjoy the summer, if you are going away, stay safe, if you're not, stay safe anyway. And remember, it's your branch so if there is something you fancy doing let us know, we can consider anything as long as its legal.

Just heard from Anne, her operation was a great success and she's having her first cup of tea of the day, phew, thank goodness for that.

Arte et Marte.

Cheers

John



OBITUARIES – RECOVERY MECHANIC

During the period since the last Newsletter, Edition 15, March 2025, the Branch received notification of the passing of 4 Veteran Recovery Mechanics:



ON BEHALF OF THE

RECOVERY MECHANICS BRANCH
REME ASSOCIATION

WE REGRET TO ANNOUNCE THE PASSING OF:

"Danny MacDonald"

Our thoughts and prayers are with family members at this sad time.

Those we love don't go away.
They walk beside us every day.
Unseen, unheard, but always near.
So loved, so missed, so very dear.



ON BEHALF OF THE

RECOVERY MECHANICS BRANCH
REME ASSOCIATION

WE REGRET TO ANNOUNCE THE PASSING OF:

"Peter Borthwick"

Our thoughts and prayers are with family members at this sad time.



Those we love don't go away.
They walk beside us every day.
Unseen, unheard, but always near.
So loved, so missed, so very dear.



ON BEHALF OF THE

RECOVERY MECHANICS BRANCH
REME ASSOCIATION

WE REGRET TO ANNOUNCE THE PASSING OF:

"Roy Allen"

Our thoughts and prayers are with family members at this sad time.

Those we love don't go away.
They walk beside us every day.
Unseen, unheard, but always near.
So loved, so missed, so very dear.



ON BEHALF OF THE

RECOVERY MECHANICS BRANCH
REME ASSOCIATION

WE REGRET TO ANNOUNCE THE PASSING OF:

"Rolf Roberts"

Our thoughts and prayers are with family members at this sad time.

Those we love don't go away.
They walk beside us every day.
Unseen, unheard, but always near.
So loved, so missed, so very dear.



Efforts were made to locate members or friends willing to write a eulogy for the above, but without any success. In some cases, we even lack clarity of whether the reported passing of an individual was a Recovery Mechanic, the importance of this being that if we do not have clarity, the individuals name cannot be put forward for inclusion of a plaque to be placed on the Recovery Mechanics Memorial Wall at Lyneham.

COMMITTEE NEWS

In the last Newsletter it was reported that members would receive an invite via an email to register and gain access to the Branch website, unfortunately some difficulties were experienced during this launch and many members did not receive the email invite. After attempts by various means to locate those who did not receive the email invite (thank you to those who responded) the decision has been made to do a 100% re-launch of the email. For those who have already received it and registered you can ignore the email when it arrives (apologies for clogging up your inbox), others, please take a few minutes, follow the instructions and register to gain full access to Branch Website.

After a request from a member the committee have created a new form that can be used by a family member or friend to notify the Branch of a bereavement or record, if you wish, what assistance you might wish to have in the event of your passing. The latter when completed can be submitted to the Branch where it shall be filed away until such times as it may be required. Full details accompany the form which can be located on the new website or within the files in the Branch Facebook page or just go the end of this Newsletter, **Appendix A**, for full details, scan the QR Code which will allow you to see, read and use the form.

The committee have also seen a change in one of the roles whereby Paul Bruce, a serving member shall take over the role of Serving Member Coordinator, replacing Dan Martin, ASM Recovery Training Wing, Dan is not completely leaving us, he will still be available in the background to provide possible assistance should we require it. This change provides the Branch with even stronger links to our Serving Members, allowing us, where possible, to keep up to date with the activities of the modern-day Recovery Mechanic. Welcome on-board Sgt Paul Bruce.

How are we doing as a Branch – the answer to that is very pleasing indeed, we are doing well. Committee Members, past and present + President, have worked very hard to create what we have today, now over 700 strong in membership, this includes Serving, Reservists, Veterans, Family and Honorary Members, if not the largest Branch in the Association we must be very close to it. We have certainly come a long way since the day of formation in October 2020. I do believe that we are viewed by some in and around HQ as leaders in creating, organising and developing a great variety of things, then of course we wouldn't expect anything else from a humble Recy Mech, it is after all what we, at a very young age, were trained to do!

FORTH COMING EVENTS

Regimental Sunday – Royal Hospital Chelsea will take place on Sunday 20th July 2025.

Cenotaph Remembrance Sunday – 09 November 2025.



Winch to the Wall 2025

We are very pleased to announce that our Winch to the Wall event 2025 will take place on Saturday, 6th September.

This event takes place on 6th September 2025 at MOD Lyneham and includes, a guided tour of the reserve vehicle collection, housed in the Roger Jones MBE vehicle hanger and a visit to the Recovery Mechanic Memorial Wall at the Recovery Training Wing. You can also choose to visit the REME museum galleries. Each tour is limited to 20 people, and we will run 2 tours simultaneously on the day.

When using the purchasing link, you will be given 2 options to buy, both options include a visit to the Memorial wall. The 2 options and prices are:

Visit to the Recovery Mechanic Memorial Wall, tour of Reserve Vehicle Collection with Museum visit

Adult £20.00

13 -16-year-olds £13.00

Gold Card (GC) £6.00

Visit to the Recovery Mechanic Memorial Wall and tour of Reserve Vehicle Collection only

Adult £12.00

13 -16-year-olds £9.00

Gold Card (GC) £6.00

To purchase a ticket for this event you will need to use the link that will appear on the branch website events page or the branch Facebook page. All proceeds will go to the REME Museum.

A full information pack will be uploaded to our website events page and our Facebook page nearer the event.

The link will go live at 09:00, Monday 7th July and will be sold on a strictly first come first served basis.

Anyone having difficulties with the link should contact Clare at:
enquiries@REMEMUSEUM.ORG.UK

Don't be disappointed – Get ready and make that booking!



REME National Memorial Day will take place on 1 October 2025 at the National Memorial Arboretum.

Bow Shackle Ball 2025 will be held at the Mickleover Hotel, near Derby on the 4 October, see below for further details. Those of you who have never experienced a BSB should really consider doing so, a great night is always on the cards, there may be a couple of spaces still available, to check, contact Chris Zeil at the following:

treasurer.recymechbranch@gmail.com.



REME Association

RECOVERY MECHANICS BRANCH

BOW SHACKLE BALL

Friday 3rd - Sunday 5th October 2025

staying at the **Derby Mickleover Hotel, Etwall Road,**
Mickleover, Derby, DE3 0XX

YOUR WEEKEND PACKAGE INCLUDES:

Bed & Breakfast. From 15:00hrs Friday 3rd October 2025 for a good old chinwag, pull up a sandbag and swing the lamps and drink till the early hours. Saturday 4th October 2025, afternoon AGM. Saturday evening 4th October 2025, Gala dinner with Raffle...Auction...Disco.

2 Night Package Double Room and Gala dinner	£323 per couple
1 Night Package Double Room and Gala dinner	£214 per couple
2 Night Package Single Room and Gala dinner	£253 per person
1 Night Package Single Room and Gala dinner	£135 per person
Gala dinner only	£50 per person

DEPOSIT: A non-refundable Deposit of £25 per person is required at the time of booking to attending the Bow Shackle Ball.

PAYMENT: Full Payment is due by 10th August 2025, staged payments accepted before this date, contact us for more details.

Pay Direct into our Bank: Lloyds Bank, Recy Mech Branch, Sort Code: 30-99-50, Account Number: 84352668 Please use BSB25 as the payment reference.

All enquiries email: Chris Zeil
treasurer.recymechbranch@gmail.com

ARV 2026 – will be held over the weekend of 17th April – 19th April 2026

OTHER DATES FOR THE DIARY

Branch Annual General Meeting – this will be held on Saturday 4th October 2025 at the Mickleover Hotel, near Derby, there shall also be a link issued that will enable members from afar to join. More information will be given via email closer to the date.



HAS ANYBODY SEEN...

Membership who wishes to attempt to contact Recovery Mechanics of yesteryear can appeal through the Newsletter for assistance. Just let us know through the pages of our Facebook Account or email the Branch email address, recymechbranch@gmail.com who you are trying to trace, and we will include it in the Newsletter and hopefully someone can help you in your search.

The Branch has details of all members, and should you be looking for someone, we can help, for obvious reasons we cannot hand out details without prior permission of any individual you may be seeking to reunite with.

MEMBERSHIP SUBMISSIONS

The more I know, the less I understand

The Recovery Mechanic Branch of the REME Association has just returned from a superb visit to the beautiful Polish city of Krakow. 16 of us gathered at our hotel on the 23rd of May ready for a packed programme of visits organised by our events coordinator, Mark O'Mahony very ably assisted by his daughter Olivia (obviously the brains of the team). We got straight into it with a visit that very afternoon to the factory of Oskar Schindler, made famous by Liam Neeson in the Steven Spielberg film Schindler's list. Afterwards we made our way back to the hotel via various eateries, sampling the very best of what Krakow had to offer.



Factory front as it appears in the film



What a beauty!

The next day we boarded a bus for a visit to the famous Wieliczka salt mine. a fascinating place and on the original 1978 world heritage sites list. The mine has been around for over 700 years and has 9 levels, 245 Km of galleries and is 327 metres at its deepest point, its so huge that visitors only have access to 2%. Full of carvings, chapels and natural phenomenon made by the miners and nature over hundreds of years. Our guide told us we could lick the walls to taste the salt, most of us refrained but there's always one!! Today, you can get married in the underground cathedral and have your reception in the great hall, it even has a health spa. Obviously for our group a tour of historical winches was not to be missed, some of our group had even used one or two for real!!! If you ever have a chance to visit jump at it, truly amazing and the best tasting walls I've ever tried!



Our final day saw us visit the death camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau. We had a guided tour by



a superb guide who had a wonderful way of explaining things but leaving you with your own thoughts. As you can imagine it is a harrowing experience especially for those who had not previously visited a concentration camp. That said, I think its true to say that we were all deeply affected by the visit. Even now I find it quite difficult to put into words my feelings at the time. Anger, certainly, despair, sorrow, madness, suffering, injustice, I could go on but its all been said before. What should be said is that by visiting these places of evil doings is to remember those who perished here and in all other such places at the hands of wicked people

and to keep alive their memory in the hope that such things are never seen again. "The more I know, the less I understand" not a quote from Einstein or Paul Weller but the title of a book I noticed on the shelves in the gift shop and one that totally summed up my feelings after the visit. I learned so much about the suffering of the people taken to this place and how the Nazis processed them like commodities, yet for all that I still have little understanding of how this could have been allowed to happen?



Birkenau Camp and infamous railway line.

On our final night we all got together for a group meal in a typical Polish restaurant on Krakow town square, a fitting end to a truly memorable trip. Looking forward to next year where we hope to travel over to France and visit the Normandy beaches and Pegasus bridge.

John Sibley





The following was received from Trevor Sheppard:

During the April Reunion of ARV proceeds from the raffle and auction was split with 50% being donated to Prostate Cancer UK. Trevor stated the following:

A reply was received from Prostate Cancer UK, the charity supported by Recovery Mechanics REME at their recent Reunion (ARV) in April 2025. They were extremely pleased to have received such a generous donation to the charity. The sum donated £850 will be increased by Gift Aid when the charity makes their claim.

Posted below is the letter received by Trevor:





Recy Mech's and Beer

It's been a while since I put anything on here, so I was thinking what to do and while doing said thinking I poured myself a beer with my new draught beer machine (my advice, don't get one! they take over your life lol) So pint in hand I was contemplating the things that tie all of us together.

Obviously, the trade itself and the unique way we were trained to think for ourselves and the camaraderie we hold for each other, oh and Beer.

Yep beer, not so much these days in a changed world but us old cold war warriors were awash with the stuff most of the time as there was little else to do, imagine no Computers, no TV, one English Channel on the radio and a SKC movie once a week. This in a garrison town of 9000 + squaddies so the competition for the ladies was fierce.

So, Amstel was two pints for a deutschmark and 7 to the pound in the Craftsmen's club at 4 Field Workshop in Detmold in 73, hence me not remembering much about that year!

Even the major exercises involved beer. My first one was called "Forefront" in the autumn of 73 where I drove a Centurion ARV for almost 5 weeks, as you can imagine it was only the ARV's that had enough space on them to carry 5 weeks' worth of beer.

This brings me onto the tradition of the yellow handbag, most of you old timers will know but for the young lads a yellow handbag was the name we had for the yellow box that 10 small bottles of Herforder Pils came in, these boxes of beer became a bargaining tool for all sorts of events, mostly though to do with ourselves (and sometimes each other) after a successful recovery operation.

Indeed, throughout my career many boxes changed hands, luckily, I didn't have to buy many, the major supply came from young inexperienced Chieftain drivers and their fondness for roadside ditches. I was chatting with a beer to a squadron Sgt after recovering one of his Chieftains and he told me the drivers had all been told to pack a yellow handbag and if they got to the end of the exercise unscathed, they could drink them but if they got stuck the beer was for the Recy Mech's.

I dare say this tradition has died a death as the world has changed so much but I have to say it was fun while it lasted, the iconic yellow handbag is no more (blue and yellow now).

All our get togethers be it the Bow Shackle Ball or the ARV or any event where we meet up, I'm glad to say involves beer and long my it last, now where's my pint.

Steve Robertshaw.





WO & SNCO Reunion – Lyneham

Over the weekend of 20/21 June 2025 the annual reunion of WO & SNCOs took place at Lyneham where 63 serving and veterans got together for the traditional get together and it did not disappoint.

The Friday night consisting of the now popular games evening accompanied by an auction designed to support charities. There was a very good turnout and of course the usual banter and war stories could be heard as you wandered around the various areas, but mostly outside on the mess veranda as the weather was extremely kind.



Saturday saw the BBQ gear getting put to good use and the food, from the Fiji style BBQ pit was delicious, great credit to those budding chefs of Fiji and Nepal origin. Whilst the BBQ was in full flow so was the annual swimming championships, how many lengths of an 8 tonner with the latest tarpaulin style pool can one do, those who ventured in certainly appeared to be enjoying it, God only knows what might have been in that water!!! Whilst the majority of those in attendance were either eating, drinking or swimming there were another dozen out on the golf course.



The Saturday night of course consisted of the formal dinner with all the usual traditions being observed, well almost, there were some very interesting variations of dress code, certainly the most colourful suits and shoes that I have ever seen attending and the new shorts version, all typical Recy Mech good humoured and colourful input, especially when demob is not so far away. A special mention must go to Mr Vice, of Polish origin, for his version of Grace and his Polish style game with Polish unique prizes. As most will know, I have been around for long time in the Recy Mech world and Saturday night, for me, seen another first in the Recovery World, when did anyone ever see 17 Warrant Officers sitting at the top table, of which 7 were Class 1, at a Recy Mech Dinner?? It just demonstrates how the trade has evolved and may it continue to do so.



I had never at a Recy Mech Dinner have witnessed a Brass Band playing, serenading during the dinner and the traditional tune when the toasts were held, a very fine touch indeed and a very good Medics Band. After the dinner and entertainment with Mr Vice was over Stevie Johnstone provided the music, showing of his skills on guitar.



Another thing that you would rarely see at a Recy Mech Dinner was veterans' father and son Mr & Mr Holmes, and both having served a full career as Recovery Mechanics, an exceptional thing to witness.

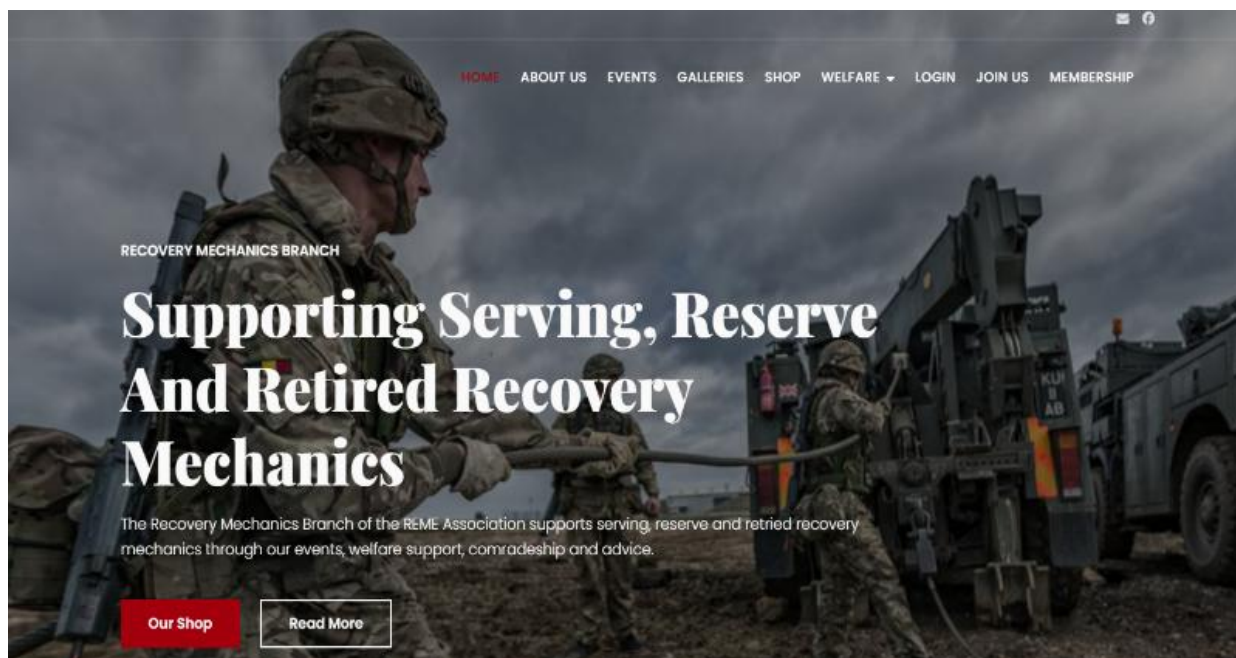
Overall, a great weekend, thank you to all concerned.

Bryan Cronie

Re - Launch of Website Invite.

Just another mention on what was stated under Committee News, there were a few hiccups experienced during the launch of the Registration Invite to the Branch Website. To ensure that we manage to get to all Branch Members the content of the email that you should have received are attached to this Newsletter at **Appendix B** along with instructions and the accompanying letter you should have received, on how to register.

Those of you who did receive the initial invite and registered need not re-apply. The remainder, please follow the instructions when received in the email that will be sent out, get registered and begin to enjoy all the varying content on your website.





NEWSLETTER

RECOVERY MECHANIC BRANCH

REME ASSOCIATION



ANYONE REQUIRING ASSISTANCE – USEFUL CONTACTS

Assistance for the Branch Membership will always be close at hand, we are all in this together, and here to help. In the event of any member experiencing difficult times, they must not hesitate to contact the branch. If we as a group cannot assist with a situation, we certainly know where help may be available.



01302347866
Relate



REME Association Recovery Mechanic Branch
recymechbranch@gmail.com





AND FINALLY

Half a year gone and I have heard people talking about Christmas already, lets hope that when it arrives that it is peaceful. As we all know we are living in very uncertain and precarious times at the moment, every day we waken up to yet more sad news of loss of lives both serving and innocent civilians, it really makes you wonder what these so called great leaders want out of life, but yet they don't have the sense to sit down around a table and stop all the escalation of the wars currently going on – power is a real threat to the innocent, we live in a sad world indeed.

I think we owe readers an apology over the hiccups we have experienced in the launching of the Branch Website which we hoped would have been available to all by now, however that is not the case, but hopefully the attached Appendix B will help solve the issue we have experienced (I am sure that many reading this understand that tasks are fraught with difficulties, did every recovery task you completed always work out 100% as you planned it !!!!) and allow all to register and start enjoying all the varying topics within the Website Menu, including the Shop. Currently the shop does not display many products but that will change soon with further products will be added, polo shirts, tee shirts, hoodies, hats etc. etc. We are also very interested in what you, the members would like to see in our shop, so if you have any ideas or particular items you would like to see in the shop, please lets us know via the normal Branch email at recymechbranch@gmail.com.

You will have read the fine article about the Branch Overseas Trip 2025 earlier in this Newsletter, we have of course had several overseas trips over the last few years, all very successful events. Our Overseas Guru Mark Omahony is already working on the 2026 trip, which may result in a trip to Pegasus Bridge, famed during the D-Day Landings, in June 1944, as the first area liberated in France. These trips are always very sobering and broadens the mind as to what really happened way back in those terrible times. It would be interesting to hear what you; the members would choose if you had the opportunity to travel to one of these historic places – where would you go, let us know your thoughts? Drop an email to the normal Branch email address and let us know?

No doubt many of you will be now thinking of holidays and getting away to re-charge the batteries again, if you are we wish you a great holiday and if anything, exciting happens to you maybe you can send it in for inclusion in the next Newsletter. (must keep it clean)

Till next time

Stay Safe

BC

Attachments:

Appendix A – Bereavement Assistance

Appendix B – Re- Launch of Website Registration.



Appendix A



Bereavement Assistance

Sadly, we all know that we cannot live forever, even Recovery Mechanics. We also know that planning for your loved ones after you've gone is not an easy task. The general arrangements for a final journey are relatively straightforward but as military people there may be other details you would like. The Recovery Mechanics Branch is here to help you wherever we can. You may be aware of what's available to you, but your loved ones will be less likely to know or who to contact.

That's why we have created this form. It can be completed by you so, when the time comes your family and friends will know your wishes and how to carry them out.

Simply download, print and complete the form, maybe with your loved ones, either just part A or both parts as you wish. Then put them in a safe, known place until they are needed.

We have included a QR code and a link to the online version on the form should you wish for the branch to keep a copy of your final wishes. They will be kept in a secure place in line with our GDPR rules and gives peace of mind that should anything happen to the original document; a copy is safely stored for you with us.





Appendix B – Website Registration

Dear All,

Welcome to the Recy Mech Branch's brand-new website!

We are thrilled to have you as a member of our community.

As a token of our appreciation, you will enjoy an exclusive 20% discount in our shop. Simply set up your username and password and log in to automatically apply your savings on a wide range of products designed to enhance your experience with us.

Additionally, you now have private access to our Online Memorial Wall. Here, you can honour and remember our fallen Recovery Mechanics in a meaningful way, sharing memories and tributes with our community.

We encourage you to explore all the benefits available on the website and if you have any questions or need assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Thank you for joining us, and we look forward to serving you!

Warm regards,

Bryan Cronie
Branch Chairman
Recy Mech Branch
hello@recymechbranch.co.uk

Username or Email Address

Password

☐ Remember Me

Log In

[Forgot password?](#)

For those wishing to join the members area on the new Recy Mech Branch website, please go to” <https://recymechbranch.co.uk/login/>” and select forgot password, you will then be redirected to select a new password.

Having gained access to the login page you will see a box like the one on the left, immediately under the login bar you will see the Forgot Password box, using your email address or selected username, click it and you will be redirected, follow the instructions and you can then create your own password. Should anyone have difficulties logging in please email

hello@recymechbranch.co.uk and quote New Website Login as the subject.

