



REMEMBRANCE • SUPPORT • ADVOCACY

New RNZRSA Poppy Frequently Asked Questions

Why did we need a new poppy?

The RNZRSA was served very well for many years by the hard-working volunteers in Christchurch who produced all our poppies on a purpose-built machine.

The materials used to make the old poppy were largely plastic-based and the machine was becoming less reliable and nearing its end of life.

The plastic-based poppies were causing issues at cemeteries and memorials as the non-biodegradable materials became caught up in lawn mowers and created issues for caretakers.

As the existing stocks of materials used to make the poppies began to run low, work was undertaken to determine whether a biodegradable poppy could be manufactured by modifying our existing set-up. It was determined that the cost involved in upgrading the machine, combined with the cost of sourcing biodegradable materials, would exponentially increase the cost of producing the poppies and result in significant financial losses unless the costs were passed on to Associations. This would mean higher costs to conduct the Poppy Appeal, and ultimately less funding available to support New Zealand's veterans.

The RNZRSA determined the best course of action was to seek a third-party provider for the poppies.

Why didn't we go with a New Zealand made poppy?

A project was stood up to look for options for a replacement poppy, with the preferred option being to source one that was manufactured in New Zealand.

No option could be found that would not result in a significant increase in the cost of production - except from New Zealand based companies that would manufacture the poppies off-shore.

Quite coincidentally, while the RNZRSA was searching for potential suppliers, the Royal British Legion (RBL) announced their move to the production of a sustainable poppy for their own fundraising campaigns.

Like the RNZRSA, the RBL uses the Haig Poppy as their symbol of remembrance. They were approached to see if they would consider allowing the RNZRSA to use the RBL-produced poppy for our own Poppy Appeal – and the rest as they say, is history!

We are incredibly grateful to the RBL for their generosity. Allowing us to use the sustainable poppy produced by them provides reassurance that the supply chain for all materials is ethical, and being able to source the poppies from a purpose-built bulk manufacturing facility means the costs are kept to a minimum.

How much will the new poppy cost?

Like its predecessor, the new poppy is gifted to members of the public in return for a donation of any size.

How do I attach the new poppy to my clothing?

As a paper product, the new poppy is less pliable and difficult to pin - so comes with a strong adhesive label to allow the poppy to be worn on all types of clothing.

Where is the new poppy made?

The new poppy is made by the Royal British Legion in their factory in Kent, England.

Can I still get one of the old poppies?

Some communities will still have the old plastic-based poppy available as they waste out their existing stocks. Most RSA's will have a mix of old and new poppies available in 2026.

What is the new poppy made from?

The new poppy is made entirely from paper and is completely biodegradable. The paper used to create the poppies is made using a blend of renewable fibers from responsible sources - 50 percent of which has been recovered from the waste used in the production of coffee cups.

Can I recycle the new poppy?

Unfortunately, due to its small size, the new Poppy is currently unable to be recycled in New Zealand. As a paper product it is completely biodegradable and is much more sustainable than the old plastic-based poppy.

The new Poppy has a leaf, does it signify anything?

The new poppy is produced by the Royal British Legion for their national day of Remembrance which is held on the 11th of November – Armistice Day. They have placed the leaf on the poppy at the 11 o'clock position to represent the signing of the Armistice Agreement that ended World War One at the 11th hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th month in 1918.

New Zealand is an outlier as the only country in the Commonwealth that does not hold its Poppy Appeal in conjunction with Armistice Day – with our Poppy Appeal being held around the same time as our major commemorative activity on the 25th of April each year (Anzac Day).

The poppy's leaf is a generic green leaf shape and is not a specific botanical leaf.

The addition of the leaf does not diminish the Poppy's relevance here, in fact the first poppies ever used by the RNZRSA also included a leaf. The Poppy remains a universal symbol of remembrance, honouring service and sacrifice and is able to be worn at any time.