

Move to Liverpool – Area Office

We have now moved into our new Liverpool Area office, 25 – 31 Williamson Street, Liverpool, L1 1EB. The walk-in centre will be open to the public from Wednesday 18th December 2013.

Message from the Area Manager

As I reflect back on the year, I cannot believe how much we have accomplished: we have moved office (twice), we have gone through a huge recruitment campaign; we have piloted the new ways of working which essentially means we were the first office to operate in the new ways of working; we were the first to open a new High Street office and we were the first to open the new Advice & Information walk in Centre. Those great milestones could not have been achieved without the support of a truly dedicated team of staff, volunteers and members. It's been a lot of hard work too, with loads of training and development work going on behind the scenes. Quite frankly, it's been amazing and I need to take this opportunity to thank everyone, whether you are hands on or working in the background; like a well oiled machine - it could not have happened without ALL aspects of the 'inner gears' all pulling together and working the right way at the right time!

As we close 2013 and look towards 2014, I know that we will continue to deliver great results as a team. This can only be strengthened by the continued volunteer development that is taking place. We welcomed a new cohort of Advice & Information Volunteers who are helping out in the Walk in Centre downstairs as well as within Outreach Locations across Cheshire & Merseyside. A further group of Volunteer Case Workers will soon be undergoing their Conversion Training too which will provide much needed resources to the Welfare Team.

May I take this opportunity to thank everyone for their continued support and dedication and wish you all the best for 2014.

Gillian McKinnon

Gillian McKinnon
Area Manager (Cheshire & Merseyside)

Welcome, Goodbye & Congratulations

Welcome back Heather Brownlow, Advice & Information Officer who has returned from maternity leave.

We will be sorry to see Sandra Evans, Case Officer who will be leaving the Legion in February 2014. Thank you so much for your hard work!

I would like to welcome Jackie Daly the new County Secretary for Cheshire who started with the Legion 7th January 2014.

Mandy Sutton, Advice & Information Team Leader would like to say how MASSIVELY proud and pleased I am with the Welfare team, how they have really stepped up to the mark with the change of job roles and the move into the new office, this is Alysha, Colette, Denise, Jenni, Heather and Sarah. Also a massive thank you to the wider Cheshire and Merseyside team, on how they've all supported us through it, Jane, Dom, Bill, Sandra, Adam and of course, our Leader, Gillian. THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH!

Update from Membership

To make sure that the details held by the County Secretaries are accurate, letters have been sent out to all Branch Chairman and Secretaries requesting current contact information for all branch officials. Could these please be completed and returned as soon as possible. Only one return is needed per branch. The return address is on the form, they can also be sent electronically if preferred. Many thanks.

Training

The next 2 day Volunteer Caseworker Training course will be on 11th & 12th March 2014 at the Liverpool Office. If you would like to attend then please contact jmillington@britishlegion.org.uk

Spotlight on “Life of an Volunteer”

If you would like to appear in our Spring 2014 edition and tell us about your experience working as a volunteer for the Legion then please contact Jane Millington jmillington@britishlegion.org.uk

Future Events 2014

Liverpool will host the UK flagship 2014 **World War I** commemoration event and it’s going to be big, well **giant**, to be precise. The event will take place from 23rd -27th July 2014 and will see the huge marionettes explore the city as part of a brand new moving and emotional story recollecting a time when Britain was preparing for war. If you would like to get involved then email Cheshire&Merseyside@britishlegion.org.uk

Remembrance Day 2013

Each year the nation shows its support for our work through the **Poppy Appeal**. Every poppy helps us to support the British Armed Forces past and present, and their families. The 2013 Poppy Appeal is hoping to raise £37 million. Please visit our website www.britishlegion.org.uk for more information on remembrance events which took place during 2013.

Opportunities to Promote Ourselves

If you know of an organisation or event where we could promote ourselves, please let us know.

Volunteers Needed

We are always looking for new volunteers. If you know of anyone who has some time to spare and might like to get involved, please pass on our details.

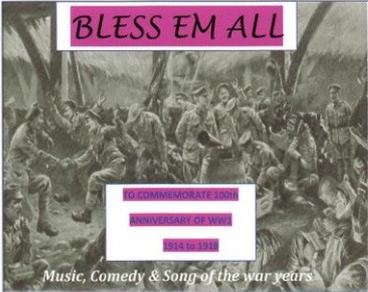
Out of Pocket Expenses

All Volunteers are entitled to have their out of pocket expenses reimbursed to them. As you can imagine and appreciate, this can become a huge administrative process if not managed properly. Accordingly, please can I implore you to follow these guidelines when submitting your expenses: There are two options for submitting expenses – (1) submit them monthly if they go over £25 in a month, or (2) submit them as soon as they get to or as near as £25.

We would also like to pay you via a direct payment process in to your bank (BACS); some of you may have already provided us with your bank details – if so, please accept my apologies but we will need these details again. Jane Millington will be contacting you soon to get this information from you. If you don’t want to be paid in this way, we can still issue a cheque, but this process may take longer.

NON STOP ENTERTAINMENTS
Presents





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Music, Comedy & Song of the war years



Our nostalgic production show with 3 top quality entertainers will take you on a journey through these years

An Afternoon or Evening of Patriotic Music, Fun & Sing-a-long

A Fully self-contained & delivered 2 hour show

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PO Box 10, Liverpool L19 2RD
Tel 0151 427 1910
Mob 07768 747686
E nse@gmx.co.uk



Family Holidays & Adventure Breaks

In 2013 we have exceeded all previous records and managed to reach a greater number of beneficiaries with the two services than ever before. Over 3,600 people on the family holiday service and over 1,400 young people on the adventure break service in 2013. Please note in order to stand the best chance of receiving a holiday in 2014, we need to have received the application by about April 2014. More information is available on the web-page at www.britishlegion.org.uk/can-we-help/care-and-support/breaks/family-holiday-breaks

Secondary Offices in Cheshire area

We now have secondary offices in the Cheshire area, Knutsford and Dale Barracks which have been set up for a variety of reasons, with the view of addressing the needs of the organisation but more importantly, the needs of our beneficiaries. Knutsford is still very much under development, but should be ready for full use by the end of February which contains 1 office to sit 2 people and 1 office to sit 1 person. Dale Barracks has 2 offices both fit 1 person only. If you would like to make use of one of the offices available within the secondary locations then please email jmillington@britishlegion.org.uk

Launch of the new Liverpool Advice & Information Centre

The Minister of State for the Armed Forces, Rt Hon Mark Francois MP visited Liverpool on Tuesday 17 December to formally open the Legion's new public "Pop In" Advice and Information Centre in the heart of the city centre. To coincide with the opening, we have also announced our new national Freephone helpline number, **0808 802 8080**, which will allow people to get help and support from a trained adviser

over the phone, as well as the launch of a new online information service via our website.



"Pop In" Centre launch 17th December 2013

During the event, the Minister met current and former Service personnel, Legion beneficiaries, staff, members and volunteers. He was also introduced to local dignitaries, welfare service providers and other partner Service charities from across the Merseyside and Cheshire area, before being invited by the Legion's National Chairman, John Crisford, to cut a ribbon to mark the opening of the Centre.

Mr Francois said: "This is an area with a very strong Service tradition and currently over half a million veterans live in and around this region, so the demand for this service is not in question.

"The Legion does a remarkable job and offers tangible proof of what can be achieved when communities work together. [It] has become an effective first point of contact by making its services more immediately accessible and is working alongside other welfare service providers and Armed Forces charities in the best interests of the Armed Forces community. The range of practical advice and support available through this new facility is extremely impressive."

Gillian McKinnon, the Legion's Manager for Cheshire and Merseyside, added: "Both

nationally and locally, the Legion recognises that the profile of our beneficiaries is constantly changing and that we must continue to improve our services to reflect that need.

Results of how many people visit the walk-in centre and what information they requested or help needed

Date range: 18/12/13 - 27/1/14

	Comradeship	Welfare	Poppy Calls	Remembrance (PA)	Fundraising	Representation	Volunteering	General	None TRBL	
AM	7	21	1	1	2	0	3	16	1	52
PM	12	17	1	8	2	0	4	19	1	64
TOTAL	19	38	2	9	4	0	7	35	2	116
	16%	33%	2%	8%	3%	0%	6%	30%	2%	

	Comradeship	Welfare	Poppy Calls	Remembrance	Fundraising	Representation	Volunteering	General	None TRBL
AM	13%	40%	>1%	>1%	>2%	0%	>5%	31%	>1%
PM	19%	27%	>1%	13%	3%	0%	6%	30%	>1%

Room bookings

As part of the new ways of working, there are hot desks, meeting rooms and a 25 person capacity, interactive conference room available for use by like minded charities, members, branches, etc. There is not cost associated with this, however we do ask for a small donation should the booking be made by an external organisation.

Bookings can be made by contacting the area office, preferably by emailing c&m@britishlegion.org.uk

PLEASE VISIT US:



ALL WELCOME!

Tea also served

DROP IN COFFEE MORNING AT THE NEW AREA OFFICE:

Date: 25th March 2014

Time: 10.30am – 12 noon

RSVP: Jane by email

jmillington@britishlegion.org.uk

Meet the team, have a look around and enjoy a cuppa with friends! Or pop in at

25 – 31 Williamson St, Liverpool, L1 1EB

Thank You

A big thank you to our Volunteers Gary Rayson, William Harvey, Beverley Clay, Frank Audoire, Jane Abraham, Mark Perry, Joanne Oakes, Jackie Jones, Paul Owens and Barry Cashen who have taken on the Information Volunteer role to support the staff in the newly opened Walk-in centre in Liverpool. If you would like to attend the Information Volunteer training then please email jmillington@britishlegion.org.uk

Many thanks to Mary Jarman and Trish McCormack for providing administration support to the Welfare Team.

Special thanks from Kate Brown who wrote to the Legion about a specific member of The Royal British Legion whose actions have touched Kate's heart and those of all her family. His name is Ian Mackie and volunteers at our Crosby branch. In April, Kate's Grandfather, Bill Bliss sadly passed away at the age of 91. He had served in the RAF in WWII and survived many bombing raids over Germany. Two days before his funeral Kate called into our Crosby branch to see if there was any way we could recognise Bill's efforts during the War as he had never even received a medal during his lifetime (Kate's Grandfather was very humble and after losing most of his close friends he always felt he never deserved a medal). Kate spoke to Ian Mackie who is the Standard Bearer for the Crosby area. Kate said "he was so friendly and welcoming and asked me when the funeral was and, even with such short notice he promised he would attend"

"Not only was Ian proudly standing outside the crematorium wearing his full uniform and holding the heavy standard, but he had also taken it upon himself to find out where my Grandfather was resting, contact the funeral directors and take The Union Jack flag there to cover my Grandfather's coffin".

"When the funeral car pulled up outside our house it looked as though my Grandfather was having a state funeral. The whole family was so proud and I am sure my Grandfather would have been looking down feeling the same. Words cannot express how grateful we were to Ian for his kind actions, with heartfelt thanks"

Kate Brown

WW1 Commemoration events

2014 sees the centenary of World War 1 and TRBL will be taking an active role in many local events. Obviously there will be a great deal at a

local level and the area office will need all the support it can get as we are fairly thin on the ground and will need to continue to support beneficiaries. Accordingly we are asking Branches to get involved as much as they can and to let us know what your involvement will be in order to avoid duplication. No doubt this will be via your County Secretary. HQ are in the process of developing a field pack on the Centenary including lines to take and this is due for release in April along with a slate of national projects that can be engaged on a local level. However decisions on local/regional participation need to be taken and supported at the area level, not by HQ - the field pack will include guidelines on this also.

Project Headstones



TRBL are in the final throes of developing a partner agreement with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) that sweeps up a number of initiatives & one of our key, shared projects seeks to provide local support in the restoration & maintenance of the >300k war grave headstones within the UK – Project Headstone. We hope to see Branches providing local leadership together with aiding in the generation of local community support. Clearly this may well include volunteers from all walks of life but also Schools, Cadet Groups etc; these latter groups will be very keen to be involved. It would also be fantastic to see Branches working closely with local military units; the MOD is actively encouraging local commanders to support initiatives such as these as a means of

forging better relationships with the communities within which they will now remain. It follows that from local projects such as these will come opportunities for the Legion to raise its local community profile whilst at the same time perhaps recruiting non-affiliated but interested volunteers to join us within the Legion membership.

Classified space

Visit Our Poppy Shop!

Visit our Poppy Shop for jewellery, clothing, gifts, remembrance gifts, Christmas cards and gifts.

You can order your copy online

<http://www.poppysshop.org.uk/> or order over the phone **0300 1239 110**. If you are a member of the Legion then when ordering goods please add the information code – member15 for 15% discount at Poppy Shop.

Interested in a walking weekend in the Dales (16 – 18 May 2014)?

Anyone interested in taking part in a walking weekend in the Dales? Or maybe even have a stab at the 3 Peaks Challenge? The weekend is organised by a hiking club. You would stay in the Old School Bunkhouse in Chapel Le Dale.

People attending the weekend have the choice of doing whatever walking they like – from easy strolls right up to The Yorkshire Three Peaks challenge (Ingleborough, Pen-Y-Ghent and Whernside), a classic walk of 24 miles in under 12 hours. Or you can do just one peak, have lunch in Horton and get the train back, travelling over the famous Ribbleshead Viaduct. In Ingleton there is the Waterfalls Walk, which takes you up past a series of waterfalls in a deep wooded gorge, great for a short stroll before a pub lunch. There are also some of the best caves and potholes in the country, including White Scar Caves,

Ingleborough Show Cave, and Gaping Ghyll which is a pothole 365 feet deep.

The weekend costs £40, which includes bunkhouse accommodation and breakfasts. The bunkhouse sits in the shadow of both Ingleborough and Whernside and, although quite remote, has a pub about 200 yards away that does great food in the evenings. Spaces are limited, so they will be allocated on a first come, first served basis until we have enough folk. We just need people to make a firm financial commitment to the weekend so that we don't let the club down.

Further details on the area here:

<http://www.oldschoolbunkhouse.co.uk/>

<http://www.thethreepeakschallenge.co.uk/yorks-hire-three-peaks-challenge/>

<http://www.ingleton.co.uk/>

<http://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/>

If you're interested please email Jane at jmillington@britishlegion.org.uk

Partners

We will soon be welcoming RFEA in to our new Area Office. They will be using an office on the 2nd floor and take occupation on 28th March. Combat Stress will also be joining us on the 2nd floor in the near future.

Contact us - by post / visit:

25 - 31 Williamson Street

Liverpool

L1 1EB

Tel: **0808 8028080** (Enquiries / Contact Centre)

Email: Cheshire&Merseyside@britishlegion.org.uk

Next edition

Our next edition of the newsletter is already being put together; if you have any articles you would like to be included, please email Jane Millington at the above email address.