

KENT YOUTH NEWS

BRANCH SECRETARIES – PLEASE SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH YOUR BRANCH AND ALSO WITH YOUR AFFILIATED UNITS.

AFFILIATION NEWS

There have been several new affiliations recently which is excellent news. These include affiliations between Gravesham and Ebbsfleet and Gravesend Det. Sqn RE, Rochester and Strood and Trinity School, and New Romney with the New Romney Sea Cadets. Special congratulations must go to RBL Sittingbourne and Milton Regis who have affiliated with.....



.....the 1st Sittingbourne Boys Brigade



..... the 2230 Sittingbourne Squadron ATC



..... the Sittingbourne Army Cadets.....



.... and TS Wyvern.

They were already affiliated with 1st Murston and Bapchild Cub Scouts and the Sittingbourne Maritime Cadets and they have shown true commitment to the affiliation programme. Well done Sittingbourne and Milton Regis!

If you have any photos of affiliation ceremonies which you would like included in the future, please send them to the County Youth Officer Susan Foster at susanfoster61@btinternet.com

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

The Legion has recently adopted a revised youth policy in order to provide clear guidance to Legion members who are responsible for the supervision and conduct of Legion youth and youth related activities as to how they will execute those responsibilities and also to increase youth engagement within the membership structure.

To protect the future of the Legion, we need to recruit more young people. In July 2015 there were only 792 youth members nationwide. Affiliations are an excellent way to raise awareness about the Legion but we need to convert these young people to become members as individuals.

The latest reported figures show that there are 1392 affiliations in total, indicating that 35% of the UK's cadet forces are affiliated. The main affiliated groups are as follows :

	Service	Percentage
621	Army Cadets force detachments	44.6%
353	Air Training Corps squadrons	25.3%
163	Sea Cadet Corps	11.7%
31	Combined Cadet Forces	2.2%

Separate research has been carried out to investigate the level of activities affiliated youth organisations experience as part of the affiliation scheme. Highest involvement is in participation at Remembrance parades and Remembrance ceremonies, closely followed by poppy appeal collecting. Local Legion events and joint community events feature strongly with lesser involvement in the Duke of Edinburgh volunteering. However, there is no great level of activity, just an average amount.

Youth organisations were also asked about the level of communication that they receive about Legion events and activities. No regular communication was reported, and at best was reported as between seldom and some.

In Kent we have 43 branches where there is no affiliation in place.

We clearly could do so much better.

Where we have affiliations in place we need to ensure that we keep up regular communication and involve our young people to the maximum in all areas of activity.

An affiliation is not merely a matter of hanging a certificate on the wall. It needs constant work and commitment on both sides but there are so many advantages to be gained – greater poppy appeal collections, greater awareness amongst our young people of our veterans who can share their past experiences and this will all help to protect the future of the Legion

Young people have parents who can sometimes offer valuable help to Legion branches. They need to be welcomed with open arms – I do not believe there is a single branch which would refuse new members.

If you would like help to affiliate with a youth unit, please get in touch and I will do all I can to assist.
Email to susanfoster61@btinternet.com

The future of the Legion depends on us working together to encourage young people **NOW**.

POPPY APPEAL

The biggest and best advantage of an affiliation is the mutual rewards gained during the Poppy Appeal. The home Branch will always get more public donations to cadets in uniform which boost the Poppy Appeal collections and this can be very rewarding for the young people themselves. Although it works well without an affiliation, it is good for cadets to get just recognition and they love wearing an extra badge on their uniforms (where allowed).



Above left : Aylesham KACF help out at Lidl, Hawkinge, where they raised £445 in four hours.

Above right : schools can be affiliated too, where children can have fun manning a poppy stand with a teacher watching over them.

Left : Could this be the youngest poppy collector? This young man comes every year with his father to help me at my local supermarket during the final shift of the fortnight, showing true commitment. I daresay he will grow up supporting the Legion with the same dedication as his father.



During this year's Poppy Appeal I visited Hythe Cubs with the President of RBL Hythe to make poppies, paper plate poppy wreaths and to talk to the children about the RBL. The children laid their wreaths at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday and were greatly admired by the general public.

If you are on Facebook please visit and like our page – RBL Kent Youth – to keep up to date with happenings around the county.

Please send any articles relating to youth matters for inclusion in future editions of County News to the County Youth Officer, Susan Foster at susanfoster61@btinternet.com