



The Newsletter of Hampshire County  
104 Above Bar Street  
Southampton  
Hampshire  
SO14 7DT



1<sup>st</sup> April 2020

Registered Charity Number 219279

## We Will Remember Them

To all those that have attended their final parade.

*Our sincere condolences to family and friends*

## MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTY PATRON

I, along with the County President and Chairman, am extremely proud of the manner in which everyone in The Royal British Legion in Hampshire is responding to the current national crisis. I want to thank the Area and County staffs, all Branches, members and volunteers for the exceptional work that is taking place, particularly at the local level.

We are living in extraordinary times which are going to demand the best of all of us over the coming months. It will be difficult, especially as many of our members are amongst the most vulnerable, but the comradeship, sense of belonging and strong desire to help others that exists within our great organisation will undoubtedly enable us to win through.

In the meantime, I urge you all to follow the latest Government advice and I sincerely hope you and your families stay safe and well.

**Lieutenant General Sir Mark Mans KCB CBE DL**

## CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

Dear Member,

I wanted to write to you and explain what we as the Board of Trustees and Executive Board are doing in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. This is an unprecedented situation and puts us all in uncharted territory. I understand that this can be a worrying time and wanted to reiterate what the Legion has been doing to plan and prepare as the situation continues to develop.

The health of our beneficiaries, volunteers, members and employees is our priority. We will continue to take our lead from the Government advice, responding to the expert guidance as that is issued, with planning and decisions that we think are right for the Legion.

Government advice is clear on wanting people to work from home where possible. Our offices are remaining open for the time being, however, across the Legion more employees are working from home and teams are swiftly undertaking planning and arranging work to keep the Legion

going. We will review all of our events and make decisions on those over the next couple of days. The strength of the Legion is in our branches and counties and this is more important now than ever. As a member, I know you fully understand and appreciate this and will want to continue in your Legion work, but we do ask you to follow government's advice. We strongly recommend that all non-essential meetings are cancelled or postponed, including branch and county meetings, and that members follow the government advice, particularly guidance on social distancing for the over 70's and vulnerable people, which includes avoiding large gatherings, and gatherings in smaller public spaces such as pubs and clubs. If you have any cold and flu symptoms at all, the right thing to do is to stay at home and not to travel.

Importantly, as the Royal British Legion, we are committed to playing our part to support our Armed Forces Community and our nations. We have set up a separate working group to look at

how members, volunteers and staff can help in their communities and we will be issuing advice shortly. That said, if you find yourself in need of support and are eligible for Legion help, please call the contact centre on 0808 802 8080.

No one will have all the answers in this situation but more than ever addressing these challenges together will make a difference. This remains a rapidly changing situation and when we make any changes in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, we will of course let you know. Please do your best to share this information with all of your members, to help keep everyone up to date. Thank you in advance for your patience and continued support for the Legion and our beneficiaries during this time.

With very best wishes

**Una Cleminson**

**Chairman, Board of Trustees**

### **BCS & Coronavirus**

The current situation provides us with new challenges which require us to be more flexible in our approach to those we support. We need to ensure that while we maintain our service, we are also protecting both beneficiaries and our Branch Community Support volunteers. To that end, from now until advised otherwise, please avoid making any home visits to beneficiaries and instead explore all options of providing support remotely such as by phone, Skype etc.

Please note that from the 17<sup>th</sup> March we have requested that no home visits are made by case worker volunteers to the homes of the people we support so it is appropriate that we apply the same measure to our BCS Volunteers.

There are of course many ways by which we can continue to provide much needed support to those who may be feeling more isolated than ever at this time. Our telephone buddy service is a vital route through which we can check that individuals in our community feel supported; are safe and well; and continue to have a connection.

We would also like to ask our Branches make regular telephone contact to those individuals who you know are, or maybe, particularly vulnerable at this time. We need to make sure that everyone has sufficient food and access to their medication, as well as the reassurance that their needs are being considered. The Royal British Legion has an important role to play in ensuring that if the most vulnerable in our society need to be more socially isolated, they will not be forgotten and a friendly voice is at hand. If you need membership lists,

and are unable to access them on Office 365, please contact your Membership Support Officer. If you become very concerned about an individual, please do not hesitate to contact us on 0808 802 8080 and Area Welfare Team can provide appropriate support.

## County News

### **County Chairman**

*“Your County Committee is liaising with our County Patron, County President and RBL Area Manager so that we can work effectively with Hampshire Constabulary, who are looking for stronger engagement with the voluntary sector during this Pandemic.*

*So that we have an overview of the welfare activity in your areas, can you please reply to this email detailing what activities you are engaged in as soon as possible.*

*I understand that your work will be limited due to health concerns and urge you and your members to always consider this before undertaking any support.”*

Please remember that we can all support each other through this, if you have any questions please feel free to email me.

I look forward to hearing from you all shortly.

**Tim Russell**

Hampshire County Chairman

### **Training Update**

Due to the current circumstances we all find ourselves in I have had to suspend all training in Hampshire for the foreseeable future. I personally have to self-isolate for at least 12 weeks. Stay safe and we will have a big push on training when we receive the all clear.

**Mike Davis**

**Hampshire CTO**

[Hampshire.cto@rbl.community](mailto:Hampshire.cto@rbl.community)

## Branch News

### **Droxford & District**

Please see the attached article from the Droxford & District Branch, who on the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020, celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the meeting was actually “The Comrades of The Great War” at the time, and later transferred to the Legion banner.

## Southampton

The Southampton RBL VE75 event has been cancelled due to the current health crisis.

## Standard Bearers

### Training

ALL Standard Bearer Training is cancelled with immediate effect.

### Funerals & Parades

The RBL National office in conjunction with numerous members head of Religious establishments have taken the precaution of stopping Standard Bearers from attending ANY and ALL Funerals.

All Standard Bearers are reminded of the Government instructions to restrict all gatherings, and therefore NO Standard should be seen on any Parade until further notice

## Poppy Appeal

### Poppy Seminar

The Poppy Seminar has been postponed for the time being, a new date will be published when the current situation eases.

### Current Total

I hope you are well and staying safe in these unusual times.

To the end of February 2020, the total stands at £43.3 million.

Thank you so very much for you and your member's support and hard work to deliver the Poppy Appeal in 2019. Your determination to turn out in all weathers always wearing a big smile is quite amazing.

With very best wishes

***Jenny Sheriff MInstF(Cert)***

**Head of Community Fundraising & Poppy Appeal**

### On-Line Portal Changes

We are currently building a new online ordering site and looking to trial this with some PAOs. I am emailing to ask if you would be happy for me to put your name forward to take part? Not all PAOs suggested will be contacted but it's been requested that I provide several names. In order to be included you would need to have access to and the ability to use Skype.

Please contact Sarah Ferris, County Fund Raiser, Hampshire (North) for more details or to be considered for the trials

## Poppy Village

The Poppy Village and Warehouse at Aylesford is currently shut due to the Government's instructions, and as such no Dated, VE75 or VJ75 pins will be distributed, unless already dispatched. There is a notice on the on-line portal explaining the current situation, and NO orders will be processed until such time as deemed safe to return to work. Please be aware that once the Warehouse reopens, there will be a high volume of orders that will be required to be filled, so dispatch times will take longer than normal.

Please do not place ANY orders via the portal at this time, as they will not be filled, and may get missed when we reopen.

THANK YOU

## County Sports

### County Pairs Golf

The RBL County Pairs Golf tournament returns to The Army Club, Aldershot on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> May (TBC) depending on the situation at the time with the current pandemic – Please see the poster below, and the entry form attached if you are interested. Returns and cheques to Rick Bourne by the 1<sup>st</sup> May to book your slot.

## Notices

### Administration

Dear Members,

We hope that you and your families are staying safe and well at this difficult time. Most of our staff are now working remotely from home so we wanted to provide you with a few administrative updates as a result of our new way of working - please read the information below.

Please take care of yourselves.

### TRBL Buildings

Haig House and Area Offices have now been closed with staff working from home where possible. No post will be collected whilst the offices remain closed. This may result in a delay in reply to enquiries sent to Head Office and regional staff. Additionally, we have closed the Aylesford and Lady Haig factories. Please bear with us as we adapt to our new way of working.

### Finance

Any BFI or Legacy Forms arriving at Haig House through the post will not be processed until further notice. Any forms received via LOMAS or email will be processed as usual.

## Membership Policy & Admin

Please do not to post any cheques for youth badges, youth affiliation forms or expense claim forms until further notice. Expense forms and receipts can be scanned and emailed instead.

## Clubs

Please share the information you receive from us with your associated clubs and give them emotional support in these difficult times when they are forced to keep their businesses closed.

## Membership Services

There is likely to be a possibility of service reduction in call handling at the membership contact centre due to staff working from home. Additionally, membership cards are now being printed once a week, and cheques being banked every two weeks. We will advise when service returns to normal.

Best wishes

*Karolina Brzeska*

**Head of Membership Operations**

## Legion Care Homes

As we have all seen over the past few weeks, the outbreak of COVID-19 has had a huge impact on all businesses and services globally. The support and services provided by the care sector have never been more important and we are taking action to make sure that we can continue to provide critical support to those who are most at risk in our communities.

The safety and well-being of the elderly and most vulnerable of our beneficiaries, including our veteran population, is our highest priority. So, to ensure that we can continue to provide high quality residential, nursing and specialist dementia care to our residents, we're seeking to increase the number of staff that we have working at each of our care homes in order to be able to withstand the challenges resulting from Coronavirus, including the large-scale staff absences due to self-isolation or sickness.

We're looking for new staff to help support our six UK care homes in Taunton, Cromer, Broadstairs, Bexhill-on-sea, Southam and Ripon.

We need people who are available for work, to apply now for the full and part time positions below:

- Nurses
- Care assistants
- General assistants
- Catering staff
- Administrators
- Maintenance staff

In addition, we're also looking to recruit a bank of casual staff members to provide temporary support to the homes when required.

If you are interested in applying for any of the roles, please visit the RBL website <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/quick-links/careers>

Also please share this with your community.

*Dimitra Nikolakopoulou*

Membership Communications Officer

## FRONT-LINE SERVICES WHO ARE WORKING SO HARD IN THIS DIFFICILT TIME

All RBL are reminded to follow the Government guidelines when assisting people in the community, and keep your social distances.

There are many stories of Branch members helping the community, and the Link would like to publish some of your stories and successes, so please get in contact with me at

[hampshirelink@outlook.com](mailto:hampshirelink@outlook.com)





## RBL Hampshire County Sports

The RBL Hampshire County Pairs Golf tournament returns to  
The Army Club, Aldershot on THURSDAY 14<sup>th</sup> MAY 2020

*Come on Branches and Clubs, please join in!*



This golf course, one of the finest in North Hampshire is close to the home of the British Army and hosts many events for serving personnel. It is situated close to Farnborough airport but is easily accessible from the M3 and Blackwater valley main routes. It presents a good challenge with its 6300 yd, par 71 features which run through gently sloping low level woodland.

We have secured the military rate, due to our RBL association so we have an excellent value day at £45.00 per person (£180 per four). This includes coffee and bacon roll on arrival, 18 holes of golf, ham, egg and chips to follow plus a contribution to the prizes. We will also hold a raffle for the Poppy Appeal.

Teams are to be comprised of four players with the best two individual scores in each becoming the best pairing. Tee-offs will commence from 9.30am approx depending on entry size (entry limited to 8 four-balls). Teams will be notified of their exact tee-off positions nearer the date. There are only a few buggies available on the day and YOU will need to book BEFORE then if you require one (01252 337272 and ask for Vivienne).

This is primarily a light-hearted event but the pride of YOUR Branch is also at stake!

The format of play is: Stableford, full handicap (max: gents 24, ladies 30)

There are prizes for the winners and runners up, plus awards for the longest drive, nearest the pin and N.T.P. in 2

Players are VERY MUCH expected to dress and behave in accordance with the regulations for most golf courses. Dress code for the meal and presentations is smart casual.

**The closing date for receipt of entries and fees is FRIDAY 1<sup>st</sup> MAY.**

Your completed entry form **MUST** be accompanied by FULL payment.

Cheques sent early may be post dated to May 1<sup>st</sup>

***Don't delay, get your entry form in today***

## Events Diary

**2020**

ALL EVENTS ARE CURRENTLY SUSPENDED

Once the pandemic is over, dates for rearranged events will be published here.

Please keep the link informed when your events will be taking place.

*Please if you have any events in the pipeline then contact the Hampshire Link Newsletter and we can advertise the event for you.*

## County Websites

RBL Website:

[www.BritishLegion.org.uk](http://www.BritishLegion.org.uk)

County Website:

<http://counties.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/hampshire>

Facebook Page

[www.facebook.com/groups/hantscountyrbl/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/hantscountyrbl/)

Facebook - Email

[Hampshire.web@rbl.community](mailto:Hampshire.web@rbl.community)

Poppy Appeal

[www.facebook.com.poppy.HampshireRBL](http://www.facebook.com.poppy.HampshireRBL)

## *Contact us*

**It's your newsletter!!!**

If anyone has any articles that they would like published in the Newsletter then please contact the editor at:

[HampshireLink@outlook.com](mailto:HampshireLink@outlook.com)

Or

Editor – Hampshire Link  
15 Champney Close  
Whitehill, Bordon  
Hampshire  
GU35 9DX

*(Please ensure correct postage is paid)*

ALL LEGION INQUIRIES  
(including Welfare requests)

Should be directed to the national call centre

**0808 802 8080**

## County Personnel

Patron	<i>Lt Gen Sir Mark Mans KCB CBE DL</i>
President	<i>Col Andrew King</i>
Chairman	<i>Tim Russell</i>
Vice-Chairman	<i>Robert Bartlett</i>
Treasurer	<i>Ges Brown</i>
MSO	<i>Christopher Bolton</i>
Membership Council Rep	<i>Gerry Nunn</i>
Area Manager SW	<i>Craig Spence</i>
Training Officer	<i>Mike Davis</i>
Recruitment Officer	<i>Pat Prior BEM, QVRM</i>
Branch Support – North	<i>Jacki Gatfield</i>
Branch Support - South	<i>Andy Knight</i>
Youth Officer	<i>Vacant</i>
Committee Members	<i>Brian Mansi &amp; Brian Soffe</i>
CFR – Manager SW	<i>Claire Peppiatt</i>
CFR – Hampshire North	<i>Sarah Farris</i>
CFR – Hampshire South	<i>Claire Smith</i>
PAO Coordinator – North	<i>Jacki Gatfield</i>
PAO Coordinator – South	<i>Pat Prior BEM QVRM</i>
Communications Support	<i>Avril Mitchell</i>
Hampshire Link	<i>Darron Back</i>