

County Chair's Notes

8th June 2024

D-Day 80th Anniversary

The invitations have gone out across the County to every Branch, to all Town Councils large and small and replies are being returned. It would be my hope and that of the County Committee that every one of the 28 branches in the county could be represented and that if at all possible every branch standard could be in attendance

We are commemorating the lives and actions of those brave men who 80 years ago were part of the liberation force that landed in Normandy either from the skies or the sea on that fateful days, and thanksgiving for those that survived and went on to rebuild their lives on their return home, wherever that may have been in the world. Alongside the civic guests we will be pleased to welcome members of the Northamptonshire Yeomanry Association whose initial landing in Normandy on D Day+2 we are commemorating. As Custodians of Remembrance we are always aware as an organisation that for someone every day is Remembrance Day. Indeed this is the case in my own family as my great uncle Henry was severely wounded during the fighting on D-Day+2, would die of his wounds on D-Day+4 and is buried in the Bayeux War Cemetery. So the D-Day anniversary is always poignant not just for my wider family but for all those thousands who perished on the beaches and landing grounds and across Europe until May 1945 and this continuing Remembrance is why on 8th June 2024 and every day "We Will Remember Them".

Ian Byrnes

Editor's Contact: Northamptonshire.Secretary@rbl.community

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Editor's Notes

Spring has Sprung and it seems like now is the time for loads of updates coming out of Haig House. A revised Charter, Membership Handbook, Claims Form, Membership Application Form etc.

I know that it can be difficult to keep abreast of everything that's happening; however, if you visit the Latest Information page of our County website (link below) you will find all the information you need as it happens.

Also we have included a page all about MAP and MS365 which explains why all branches should be using this excellent administrative tool for all their business.

**PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR ALL THE LATEST
INFORMATION**

TRAINING NEWS

Standard Bearer Training



From April the County Ceremonial Training Team have organised an extra monthly Standard Bearer Training session which will be on the Third Thursday (usually) of each month also 1900-2100hrs.

The full list of dates for 2024 is:

9th and 18th April , 14th and 23rd May (run through for D-Day Service)

11th and 20th June, 9th and 18th July

August - no Training

10th and 19th Sep, 8th and 17th Oct

5th Nov, 10th and 17th December

Each training session will now be in 2 parts - a practical session on the preparation of Standard Bearer and Parade Marshal attire and accoutrements and the second element concentrating on Standard Bearer and Parade Marshal drills.

Tea/Coffee and biscuits will be provided at each session

Training takes place at the Army Reserve Forces Centre Drill Hall,
Clare Street, Northampton from 19.00 to 20.30hrs

Any queries please contact the County Parade Marshal (Nick Fall) via
Northamptonshire.ParadeMarshal@rbl.community

Anyone interested in being a Standard Bearer or Parade Marshal please come along to one of our sessions.

BCS Training

BCS Representatives and Supporters are required to complete Refresher training every two years.

Branches have to be BCS registered before New Starter training can commence (see our [webpage](#) for more detailed information)

**Any queries about branch training please contact
Northamptonshire.CTO@rbl.community**

Using the Membership Administration Portal (MAP) and Microsoft 365 (MS365)

A recent audit of branch MAP accounts have revealed that the majority of branches are not using MAP or MS 365 to its full extent. Some branches are not even using a MAP email account.

So, let's check out what the system can do to help branches be more compliant and work smarter.

What?

MAP is provided by the RBL to provide all Branches (and Counties) with a free to use standard operating system which includes a secure email service, a documents library, membership information, a Branch website administration area, BCS portal and access to the Branch documents and membership records (MS365).

Why?

Branches are required to use MAP and MS365 for all RBL communications and preparation and storage of documentation etc; this includes MS Excel based branch accounts.

The Benefits?

- An easily identifiable email address e.g. Townname.Chairman@rbl.community
- Everyone is on one system.
- Fully accessible from PCs, tablets and mobile phones.
- Once single source of policy and guidance.
- It's a secure system and it's free!
- You cant break it!!!!!!!

How Often?

- The system has to be used regularly (at least once a month) otherwise the login will fail (this is a security feature).
- If your login fails, ask the MEO to reset it.
- You will be asked automatically to change your password every 90 days.

I am already using MAP and MS365

- Great - but are you using it to its full potential? Are you using it regularly?
- Are you using MS365 to prepare all correspondence and minutes etc and saving them?
- Are you saving all your branch photos and archive material on MS365?
- Is the information saved on MS365 kept in a well organised filing system?

Who?

The following Branch officials are entitled to a MAP account:

- Chair (mandatory)
- Vice Chair
- Secretary (mandatory)
- Treasurer (mandatory)
- Membership Secretary
- BCS Supporter (if the branch is registered)

Did You Know?

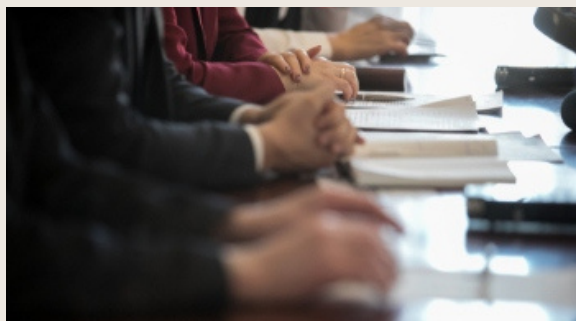
- Without a MAP account, branches will not receive all email communications from Haig House.
- Some policy and guidance is only available on MAP.
- Branch membership lists are only available on MS365.

Why shouldn't I use my own system?

- Your system might not be secure.
- Official RBL information should not be stored on a private device.
- When you leave your RBL post, your replacement will not have any access to your branch data.

No IT Skills?

- No problem - we can arrange training for you at a location of your choosing or at the County Office.
- All you will need is a PC, laptop or tablet with internet access.
- The system is relatively easy to use with practise.



Your County Committee

President	Col John Royle MBE DL	via Chairman
Chairman/Recruitment	Ian Byrnes	Northamptonshire.Chairman@rbl.community
Vice Chairman/Armed Forces Covenant	Phil Blanchard	Northamptonshire.ViceChair@rbl.community
Secretary/Training Officer	Steve Thatcher	Northamptonshire.Secretary@rbl.community or Northamptonshire.CTO@rbl.community
Treasurer/ Youth Officer	Tyler Jeffs	Northamptonshire.Treasurer@rbl.community or Northamptonshire.CYO@rbl.community
CCSC/Parade Marshal	Nick Fall	Northamptonshire.CCSC@rbl.community or Northamptonshire.ParadeMarshal@rbl.community
Publicity Officer	Phil York	via Secretary
Club Liaison Officer	Robbie Paice	via Secretary
Minutes Secretary	Irene Blanchard	via Secretary
Committee Members:	Faith Cosgrove Pat Cutting Peter Higgs	via Secretary

County Standard Bearers

County Standard Bearer	Faith Cosgrove
Deputy Standard Bearer	Mark Taberner-Stokes

Other County Officials

Poppy Appeal Manager	Giles Coleman	GColeman@britishlegion.org.uk
Membership Engagement Officer	Lebo Nyoni	Northamptonshire.MEO@rbl.community
Membership Engagement Administrator	Ellie Nellis	Centralmembership@britishlegion.org.uk

County Office

The County Office is located at the Army Reserve Forces Centre, Clare Street, Northampton NN1 3JQ and is open every Tuesday from 10.00 to 14.00 hrs.

**Telephone: 07876 716478
(Answerphone available out of office hours)**



County Committee Meeting on 20th March 2024 - Key Points

- The Committee agreed to contribute £485.47 towards the cost of centrally-provided welfare support delivered across the County for the quarter July to September 2023. The total cost for the County was £19,418.80.
- It was agreed that RBL Kingscliffe Branch would become a County Supported Branch (CSB).
- The Committee also agreed that all CSBs would be reviewed on an annual basis see if they are able to return to normal status.
- The County Chair reported on the discussions held at the County Chair's Seminar on 1st/2nd March 2024 - it was agreed that a digest of the points raised will be sent to all County Chairs.
- The County Chair updated the Committee on the arrangements for the D-Day 80 Service to be held at the Holy Sepulchre Church on 8th June 2024. All branches have been invited.
- The Committee discussed at length the change in BCS policy whereby all potential BCS requests made direct to branches (not welfare) must be notified to the RBL Contact Centre before any work can be delivered and expressed their concern that delivery of such support might take much longer in future.
- The Committee resolved that all Branch Standard Bearers must attend at least one training session each year.
- The Committee expressed concern that the County Newsletter was not reaching Branch Committee members and all members. It was suggested that Branch meeting agendas should include an item for County News in future.
- The Committee noted that all Branch training (not Standard Bearers) has to be booked on the new Discover learning platform. It is planned that much of the training will shortly be delivered by County training staff (to be confirmed).
- It was noted that the County Recruiting Officer, Training Officer and Community Support Co-ordinator will be attending an RBL Specialist Officer Away Day on 20th April 2024.

Branch Links

- All members of the County Committee are each allocated a number of County branches, which they will visit and assist as necessary with any queries they may have.
- The exception to this is are branches who are in County Administration - the designated Point of Contact for these are the County Chair and Secretary.
- The Branch Links, as they are known, will contact the branches concerned to make contact and arrange visits accordingly. If you have not been contacted then please let the County Secretary know via: Northamptonshire.Secretary@rbl.community.
- Please note that branches may also be visited by any County Officer, MEO or representative of Haig House without prior notice.

Message from County Recruitment Officer Ian Byrnes

1. As County Chair/Recruitment Officer I normally carry packs of 10 of each leaflets and some BCS cards with me when I carry out branch visits.
2. Branches that I am not due to visit and in need of stock can contact me via the County Chair email or by phone at the number given in every County Newsletter and I will either post or drop off leaflets if the branch is enroute to another one.
3. Branch-centred posters can be prepared for any branch on request; have made them so far for Northampton, Thrapston & District and Warmington. I normally include the places covered by the branch in the information on the poster.
4. Point for us all to remember is that we are all recruitment officers not just the person with the title.

CONTACT: Northamptonshire.Chairman@rbl.community for recruitment queries.

Diary Notes

10th to 12th May 2024 - RBL National Conference at Newport, Wales

6th June 2024 - D-Day 80 Commemorations

8th June 2024 - D-Day 80 Service at The Holy Sepulchre Church

30th June 2024 - End of Year for Branch Accounts

Events



Anzac Day 2024 is on Sunday 28th April
at 1.45 for 2pm at Towcester Road Cemetery,
Northampton
All Standards and Members welcome

Branch News

Kettering Branch

As part of our ongoing branch community engagement, we were contacted by the Kettering Masonic Lodges and the Kettering Inner Wheel to help plant cherry trees at the Kettering Parish Church (St Peter & Paul).

“It’s easy and won’t take long ” said Chris from the Masons, what we hadn’t realised is that we had to cut through some heavy duty matting and two feet of hardcore.

Two days later and many aching bits (I had aches where I never could have imagined!) holes were dug and trees planted.

The Masons and Inner Wheel were delighted with our support as only Chris from the Masons was able to take part as other volunteers had let them down.

They have now pledged even more support to the branch and for the Poppy Appeal in 2024.

Giles Coleman, Chair

Finedon Branch



80
D-DAY 6 JUNE 2024

**D-DAY 80 COMMEMORATIONS
IN FINEDON**

- PROCLAMATION
- RAISING THE FLAG OF PEACE
- WREATH LAYING
- POEM FOR SCHOOLS
- RING OUT FOR PEACE
- EVENING OF REFLECTION
- LIGHTING OF THE LAMPS
- THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUTE



**FULL DETAILS WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE
FINEDON PARISH MAGAZINE AND ON THE
FINEDON TOWN GROUP FACEBOOK PAGE**