



## Central News – December 2022

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### Important dates

18 January 2023	Membership Council Meeting
3-4 March 2023	County Chairs Seminar

Please remember to use this [online form](#) to share your feedback about Central News.  
If you encounter issues with links please email [dnikolakopoulou@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:dnikolakopoulou@britishlegion.org.uk) with details of any links you cannot access.

## Season's Greetings from the RBL Membership Team

We'd like to take this opportunity to wish all Members and your families Merry Christmas/Happy Holidays and a Happy and Prosperous New year.

## Annual Conference 2023



The 2023 Annual Conference will take place at the Riviera International Conference Centre in Torquay from 19-21 May. Similarly to this year's conference it will follow a hybrid format meaning delegates and visitors can attend in person or online.

For those interested in attending in person, the venue is located off the seafront, and the conference hall has a capacity of 1500 while there are also 10 meeting and break-out rooms. The large exhibition hall and catering and coffee lounges on-site make this venue ideal for the Conference.

Located in the heart of the English Riviera, the Conference Centre is only 24 miles from the Exeter M5 junction and only 10 minutes walk from Torquay Train Station. The closest airport is Exeter. There are daily flights to Exeter from Belfast, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool, Leeds, Bradford and Newcastle.

You can find out more about the venue [here](#) and visitor information about the English Riviera including guides, accommodation and things to do [here](#).

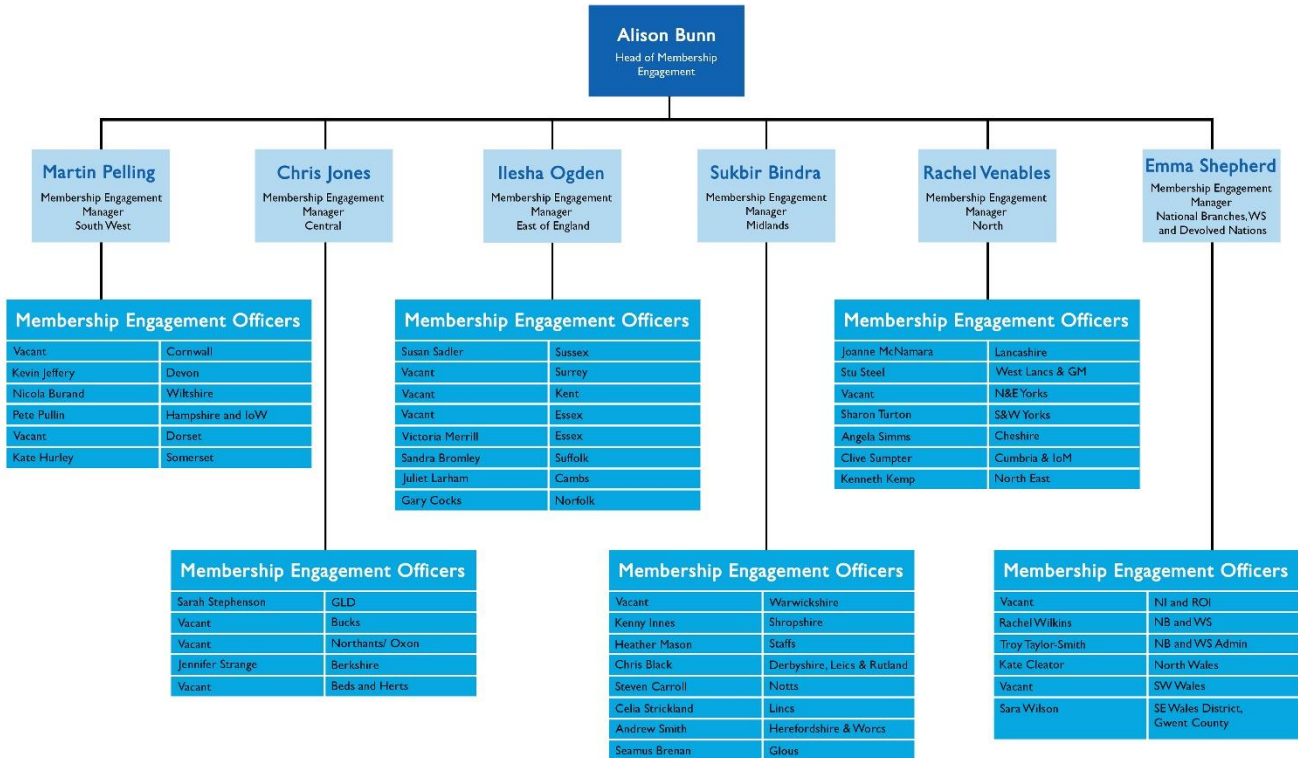
## MSOs job title changing to MEOs

Earlier in the year, all MSOs joined the Membership Directorate to form the Membership Engagement Team headed by Alison Bunn. After reviewing the Membership Support Officer role, a decision was made to change the job title to Membership Engagement Officer (MEO) to better reflect their work, supporting Branches and engaging Members.

MEOs are also supported by 6 Membership Engagement Managers (MEMs), each one looking after specific counties and the respective MEOs.

This change will not affect the way Branches work or communicate with your MSO, who will now be called MEO. Please see below the chart for more information.

## Membership Engagement Team Chart



## Together at Christmas



Together at Christmas is an annual campaign to highlight the support we offer members of our community experiencing loneliness and social isolation.

It was launched in 2019 to raise awareness of the support the RBL can provide individuals experiencing loneliness and isolation at Christmas. The initiative was launched with the support of four generations of The Royal Family, including Her late Majesty The Queen.

This year, to mark our fourth Together at Christmas, we want to showcase the ways in which RBL brings people together at this time of year to support our community in combating loneliness, isolation, and stress around the festive period, and encourage those who may need our help, to get in touch.

### Is your branch organising a Christmas get together?

If your branch is organising a Christmas event between 5 and 18 December that is aimed at bringing together members of your local community, we'd love to hear about it. In particular we'd like to know:

- The size of the event (i.e. how many attendees you're expecting) and location
- What the event is and what activities will be taking place
- How the event will support individuals at risk of loneliness or isolation

We'd like to share photos, quotes and stories from our events in regional and local media coverage and across RBL's social media during the week before Christmas (19 – 23 December).

If you'd like your event to be part of the Together at Christmas banner, please send us more information by 11 December to [socialmedia1@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:socialmedia1@britishlegion.org.uk).

## Membership Council Elections

This is a final reminder for a call for nominations as the deadline to submit forms is 12th December.

If your branch is part of the five regions up for election and has not yet had a chance to consider a candidate, then please consult the election pack for details on the role of a Membership Council Member.



As a reminder the five regions for this election are:

- London
- Northern
- South West Midlands
- East Anglia/Essex
- Manchester/Lancashire

The next stage of the election process will be for all eligible branches in the regions to receive the ballot papers. Details of this will be announced in the new year.

For any questions on the nomination stage of the election, please do not hesitate to contact [MCElections@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:MCElections@britishlegion.org.uk).

## Trustee elections 2023 – Nominations open

Don't forget that the 2023 election process has now started, with four trustee positions available.

Trustees join the Board of Trustees, lead the RBL and are legally responsible and accountable for everything that RBL does. They ensure that the charity continues to fulfil its charitable aims, is well run, and complies with all its obligations.

Is there someone in your branch who might be interested? If so, please ask them to visit our Board of

Trustees web page [here](#) and/or attend one of our “Life as a Trustee” briefing days.

**‘Life as a Trustee’ days**

These will be held at Haig House, 199 Borough High Street, London, SE1 1AA, at the following times:

Date	Location	Time
Wednesday 14 December	Jellicoe meeting room	10:00-13:00
Wednesday 25 January	Earl Haig meeting room	10:00-13:00

**Please note the January date shown is different from the one in the published pack.**

Booking one of the briefing days in London is simple; just ask the member to email [TrusteeElections@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:TrusteeElections@britishlegion.org.uk) requesting the date they would like to attend. We will email them back to confirm receipt of the request and confirm their place.

Eligible branches can nominate one person and should now have received the election packs to enable this. If you haven’t then please contact [TrusteeElections@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:TrusteeElections@britishlegion.org.uk). Nominations close on 13 January 2023 and the ballot runs from 13 March – 4 May 2023.

If you have any questions about trustee elections, including the pack and the nomination process, please contact [TrusteeElections@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:TrusteeElections@britishlegion.org.uk).

**Cost of Living Grants**

Because we know how tough times are now, especially with the large increases to the cost of living everyone is experiencing, we launched our [cost of living grants programme](#).

The programme was designed to allow us to assist those who needed help in a quick and easy way with everyday essentials such as kitchen appliances, clothes, and energy costs.

Officially launched back in October, it proved immediately popular — and we received more than 1,600 applications in the first two weeks alone.



Although application rates have now steadied, we’re averaging around 290 applications a week, and as of 30th November a massive 3,274 applications have been received.

**In numbers**

- We’ve contacted 85% of all applicants — our Contact Centre will be helping to process applications going forward to make sure the application rate remains sustainable

- We've exceeded £1 million of grants awarded
- 87% of grants have been awarded as energy top ups
- 13% of grants consist of a variety of needs such as clothing, food, appliances, and furniture
- The average energy top-up awarded is £140 a month.
- Average age of an applicant is 48 — youngest aged 19, and most senior 100 years old
- 94% of people who provided feedback on the application process rated it either 4 or 5 stars.

We're monitoring the application volumes and the value awarded closely. All new applications submitted after 1st December will initially be considered for six months of support for energy costs on their first application.

This is to make sure that we can help as many people as possible, bearing in mind the cost of living will likely cause great hardship for a few years yet. We've also commissioned an internal audit on the initial month of the programme's delivery to provide assurance that we have robust governance processes in place.

The programme is open to anyone who is [eligible for our support](#) who is struggling to pay for items and services they need. Visit our [cost of living grants webpage](#), to apply online.

## Remembrance Survey

The Remembrance survey launched around two weeks ago, inviting branches to share feedback regarding your Remembrance activities. Thank you to all branches that have already taken the survey. If your branch, hasn't completed it yet, there is still time to provide your feedback by **Monday 12th December**.

This survey will take about 10 minutes to complete. You can access the survey here: <https://survey.savanta.com/?id=c2bc27d9a4S4890f412&lng=en-GB>

If you completed the survey last year, we would still like your branch to participate as the questions relate to this year's Remembrance, and there are some new questions. Please remember that we only need **one completed questionnaire per branch**, so once we have received a completed questionnaire, no-one else from the branch will be able to respond.

It is important that your branch agrees who completes the survey and everyone has the opportunity to give their thoughts, so that we have a branch response, not a personal one. If you feel that you are not the right person to complete the survey, please pass on the link to the most appropriate person.

We very carefully reviewed last year's responses to assess how better you can be supported in your Remembrance work. For example we produced the new Members' Resource packs, which we ask about in this survey.

If you have any questions relating to the survey, please contact The Remembrance Team at the Royal British Legion on [Remembrance@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:Remembrance@britishlegion.org.uk)

Thank you for your help and participation in this survey.

## Executive Director of Membership - keynote speaker at membership conference



Janet Talman, Executive Director of Membership, recently spoke at the Membership Excellence 2022 National Conference as an industry leader, sharing the work undertaken to develop the RBL membership value proposition and enhance the member experience. This conference is attended by many membership organisations, giving us the opportunity to promote RBL Membership to a wider audience and learn from, and connect with, leading experts.