

Membership Handbook

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rbl.org.uk



ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

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Glossary

Almonisation A process through which the Royal British Legion seeks to share the cost of a grant made to support a beneficiary. Counties are encouraged to contribute their funds to the cost of community support interventions in their area. RBL also almonises from regimental associations and other charities and organisations able to give a financial grant.

Branch event An event held by branches in their area with the aim of recruiting new members, raising funds for the branch or for the purpose of Remembrance.

Compliant branch A compliant branch is one that submitted its annual accounts before 30th September for the financial year that ended on 30th June of that year, and submitted its MS1 form before 31st December of that year. (County Supported Branches do not submit accounts and are therefore compliant if they submitted the MS1 form by 31st December.)

County Supported Branch A branch operating under a specific set of amended governance and finance structures.

Delegated authority limit The amount that a Treasurer can spend without the specific approval of the Committee. Only the Committee can authorise proposed spending above this limit.

Formation A RBL branch, County, District or Section. A branch is a group of members that can form locally or based on shared interest. A County (which is the same as District or Section) is a group of branches that can encompass a geographical area (for example, Kent County or Northern Ireland District) or shared interests such as Women's Section or National Branches District.

LOMAS RBL Online Membership Administration System, where Treasurers manage a formation's finance.

Membership Council A committee established by and accountable to the Board of Trustees with such responsibility for the management and administration of members and membership issues as the Board of Trustees may from time to time determine.

Negative voting Voting 'against' a candidate by any annotation other than the one required by ballot paper sign to vote for a chosen candidate.

Quorate Having the necessary number of people present for decisions to be allowed to be made.

Quorum The number of people needed at a meeting so that decisions can be made.

Remembrancetide The period between 14th October and 14th November when Poppy Appeal and Remembrance activities take place to commemorate those who serve and raise funds for those who need support.

Ringfenced Fund Is a fund designated for a specific purpose.

Spoilt ballot paper A spoilt ballot paper is one that cannot be counted because there is no vote for a candidate, a vote against a candidate or a required signature is missing.

Women's Section Women's Section is a group of branches that welcome both women and men. It used to run as a sister charity to the Royal British Legion until 2015. Its proud history and legacy is safeguarded by Women's Section Central Committee, which also oversees specific funding schemes for which the Women's Section fundraise.

Br Branch

BFI Branch Funds Initiative

BPT Branch Property Trust

BCS Branch Community Support

CSB County Supported Branch

IE Independent Examiner

LCC Legion Complaints Committee

MAP Membership Administration Portal

MEO Membership Engagement Officer

MH Membership Handbook

RBL Royal British Legion

SGM Special General Meeting

TOR Terms of Reference

WS Women's Section

About the Membership Handbook

This handbook has two sections:

- **Policy guidance** guides you in your day-to-day Royal British Legion activities.
- **Information** tells you how the Royal British Legion membership organisation works.

It also has two purposes:

- To help you to comply with UK charity law and with the Royal British Legion's policies when going about your RBL activities. Where you see the words 'must' and 'must not', or 'do' and 'do not', these instructions are a requirement of law or of RBL policy.
- To help you to run a happy and successful branch, County, District or Section. It is good practice to follow the instructions in the handbook as many have legal or policy requirements that will help with compliance of the Royal Charter and RBL policies.
- This book is detailed but not completely comprehensive, so if you have any questions that aren't addressed here, ask your MEO (Membership Engagement Officer) for help.
- Where you see the word 'County' or 'Counties', these terms cover all Counties, Districts and Sections.

The Royal Charter

The Royal Charter directs all of the Royal British Legion's work. It is a governance document that is recognised by the Government and the Charity Commission. It is enforceable in law. You can read the Royal Charter through the RBL's [website](#).

This handbook sits alongside the Royal Charter. It was created to help RBL officers; committee members and RBL members make sure they're acting within the rules of the Royal Charter.

Policy Guidance

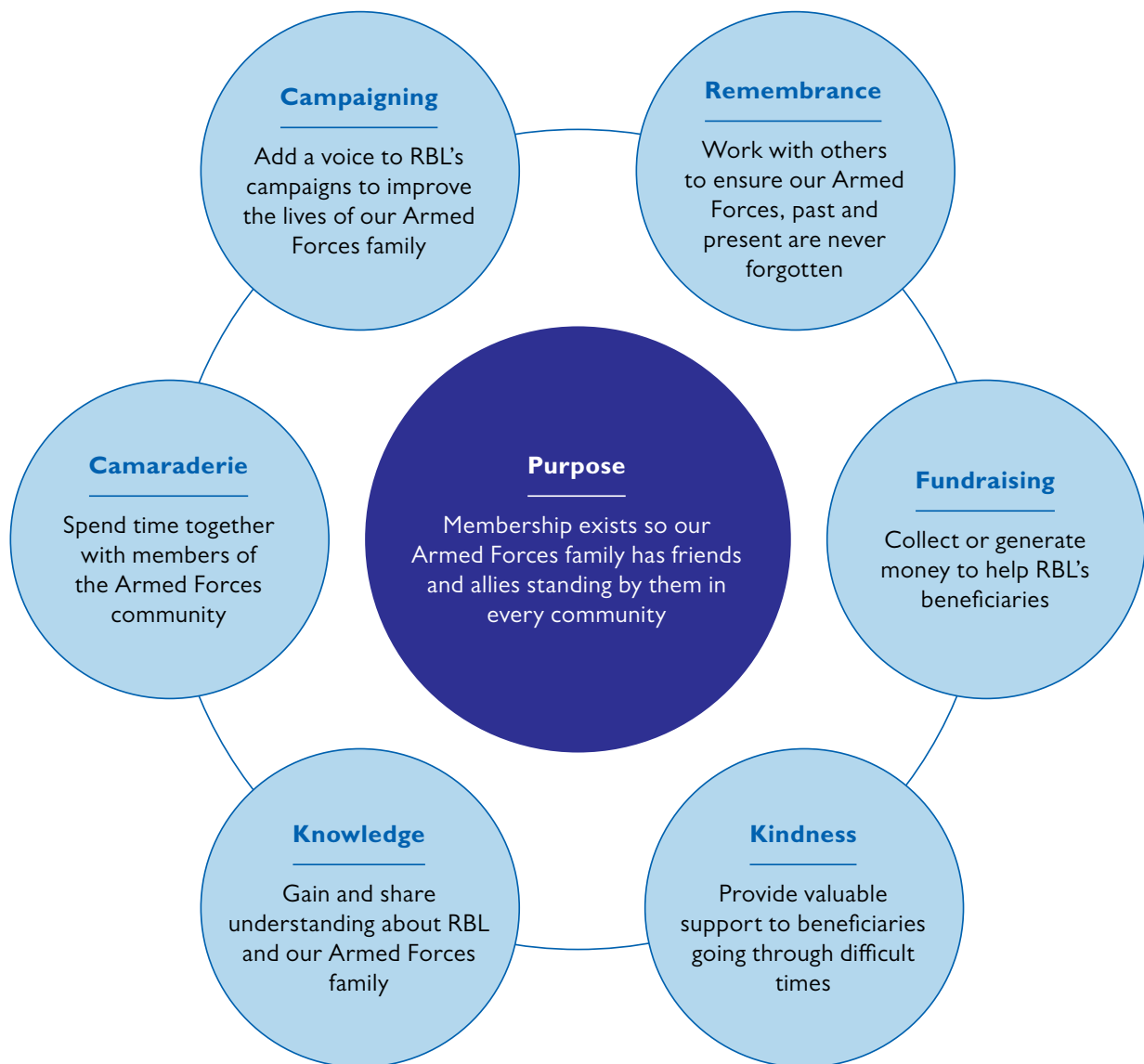
This section of the handbook will guide you in day-to-day Royal British Legion matters. If you follow the guidance in the following pages, you will be acting within the law and in accordance with the Royal Charter and RBL policy.

Everyone is welcome to become a RBL member. You can join via www.britishlegion.org.uk, by phone or by calling our free helpline, or by completing a membership application form available from branches. Every member has to join a branch and pay an annual fee. Membership will be renewed annually, and unpaid membership will be cancelled. If you decide not to be a member for any reason, your membership can be easily cancelled at any time.

1. Purpose and Value of Membership

Membership exists so our Armed Forces family has friends and allies standing by them in every community.

Our members bring value to the RBL through six core functions as shown below:



What it means to be a RBL member

Values and conduct

As local representatives of the Royal British Legion, members are expected to behave with integrity, to work together and to trust each other. Our values apply as much when dealing with people face to face as when communicating online, whether through official RBL channels, social media or personal emails.

We have ten guiding principles:

1. Respect and maintain the confidentiality of RBL information (unless you need to disclose something to prevent harm to yourself or to others, or to prevent financial or reputational risk).
2. Follow the organisation's policies and procedures.
3. Remain neutral and unbiased in all RBL activities.
4. Promote equality and diversity without being discriminatory.
5. Be dedicated to the responsibilities you have agreed to.
6. Be respectful and considerate towards others.
7. Guard the reputation of the RBL and build positive relationships internally and externally.
8. Ensure that no personal benefit or conflict of interest arises from your actions.
9. Be responsive and proactive in dealing with others.
10. Put comradeship at the heart of what you do.

We have five values that we maintain:

1. Service

We support and serve.

We are compassionate.

We provide great customer care to all the people who come into contact with us. We are accountable and act with integrity.

2. Excellence

We strive to be the best we can.

We are effective and efficient.

We are bold.

We are open to innovative ideas and approaches, challenge each constructively, and are willing to learn.

3. Collaboration

We value working together and with partners to achieve shared goals. Through strong communication and support, we build trust with each other and treat everyone with respect and honesty.

4. Valuing our people

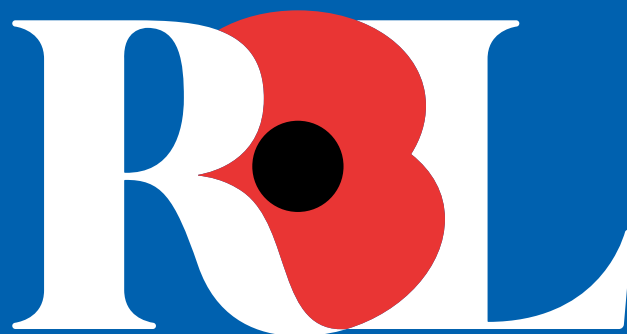
We support, encourage and provide opportunities for all our people, ensuring we recognise and value everyone's contribution.

5. Passion

We are passionate about our role and contribution.

With a positive outlook, we are committed to our work.

Policy Guidance



ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

2. Running my formation

2a. Management and finances

BRANCHES	General Branch Meeting	Annual General Meeting (AGM)	Special General Meeting	Committee Meeting
Frequency	Quarterly (minimum)	Once a year	As required	Quarterly
Dates	Committee to decide	Between 1st October and 30th November	As required	Committee to decide
Chair	Branch Chair or Vice Chair in their absence			
Notifications	Committee to decide	At least 21 days before to all members	At least seven days before to all members	Committee to decide
Attendees	Members	Members; (optional) guests, County reps, staff	Members	Committee
Quorate requirements				Four Committee members form a quorum
Objectives	<p><i>Suggested:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide updates on the local and wider work of the RBL • Provide updates on branch past and future activities • Make decisions • Nominate candidates for elections at County and national levels • Vote on candidates for elections at County and national levels 	<p><i>Suggested:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review previous year's activities • Agree next year's activities • Elect officers and Committee members • Nominate candidates for elections at County and national levels • Vote on candidates for elections at County and national levels • Debate and agree motions for County and Annual Conference 	<p><i>Suggested:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove from office or position a branch Committee member • Elect another member to replace the removed member or fill in a vacant post • Discuss any other urgent matter of importance and make appropriate decisions 	
Other		Members can add items to the agenda if they submit them before the deadline specified by the Committee	Meeting can go ahead only if the Committee decides it is needed or it has been requested by a minimum of two thirds of members	If a Committee member is absent for three meetings in a row in a 12-month period, they are deemed to have vacated the seat unless a valid reason has been provided and accepted by the rest of the Committee

Any reports presented at the meeting and minutes of previous meeting must be circulated to the attendees at least three days before the meeting. If community support cases are discussed during the meeting, the personal details of beneficiary/beneficiaries must not be disclosed.

COUNTIES CONT:	General Branch Meeting	Annual General Meeting (AGM)	Special General Meeting	Committee Meeting
Frequency	Annually in January at minimum	As required	At least four times a year	As required
Dates	To be decided by the County Committee and County Conference Committee	Within 21 days of a valid request	To be set at its first meeting after the Annual Meeting of County Conference	Within 14 days of the request being received
Chair	County Chair or Vice Chair in their absence			
Notifications	<p><i>At least:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 weeks before: branches notified about date/time/venue • Four weeks before: branches submit nominations for County Committee, County Conference Committee and National Conference Committee and Motions and Charter Motions for Annual Conference and/or County Conference • Six weeks before: branches receive provisional agenda. • Two weeks before: branches submit amendments to motions. 	<p><i>At least:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven days before to all branches 	N/A	<p><i>At least:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven days before to all Committee members
Attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors (members, guests) • Delegates: compliant branches and County Supported Branches (but not sub-branches) can appoint: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One delegate if a branch has 300 members or fewer or two delegates if a branch has more than 300 but fewer than 1,000 - Three delegates if a branch has more than 1,000 but fewer than 1,500 members or additional delegates for every 500 members over 1,000 		<p><i>Required:</i> County Officers and Committee members</p> <p><i>Optional:</i> Membership Council representative</p>	<p><i>Required:</i> County Officers and Committee members</p> <p><i>Optional:</i> Membership Council representative</p>
Quorate requirements			At least half the members entitled to attend and to vote must be there to make the meeting quorate	At least half the members entitled to attend and to vote must be there to make the meeting quorate

COUNTIES CONT.	General Branch Meeting	Annual General Meeting (AGM)	Special General Meeting	Committee Meeting
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declare results of the County elections • Approve amendments or additions to the County by-laws (requires a two thirds majority vote) • Pass resolutions requiring specific actions from the County Committee • Vote on submitted motions that have been approved by the Conference Committee • Elect Committee members • Elect County Conference Committee members • Elect a candidate to the National Conference Committee • Announce the results of County Chair and/or Vice Chair elections • Review the accounts for the past year • Review the County Plan covering the next three years • Review reports and the progress made with the County Plan over the past year • Consider any discussion papers on relevant topics approved by the County Committee on which the views of the membership should be sought 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss a single matter of extreme urgency or importance • Remove from office an officer of the County Committee or member of the County Committee 		
Other	<p>The meeting can go ahead if at least three branch delegates are there at the start of and throughout the meeting</p> <p><i>Delegates:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can speak and vote • Must be current RBL members • Must not be RBL employees • Must not be County Officers or members of the County Committee <p>Motions cannot be proposed and seconded by delegates from the same branch</p> <p>Minutes must be sent to Head Office, Membership Engagement Manager and Membership Council representative within three months of the meeting</p>	<p>Meeting must be called at the direction of the Board of Trustees, the County Committee or of at least one quarter of the branches in the County</p>	<p>Minutes to be distributed to the Membership Council representative and the Membership Engagement Manager</p> <p>If a Committee member is absent for three meetings in a row in a 12-month period, they are deemed to have vacated the seat unless a valid reason has been provided and accepted by the rest of the Committee</p>	<p>Meeting must be called at the request of any eight members of that Committee</p>

For details of how national meetings are held, please refer to the [Royal Charter](#); and to the Standing Orders, available through Microsoft Office 365 (O365) or your MEO, for the Conduct of Annual Conference.

2.a.(2) Administering the Membership

Branch membership lists are kept online on the Microsoft Office 365 (O365) portal. For access and information, speak to your Membership Engagement Officer (MEO). Branches should decide to set a joining fee and/or an annual subscription fee, both of which must be decided by the members at branch Annual General Meetings. Each of these fees must not be less than £1. Membership fees are not payable by youth members as stated in The Royal Charter.

Branch Committees must tell Head Office what their membership, joining and subscription fees are using the branch rates letter each year. If the membership team at Head Office does not receive this information before the reply date on the branch rates letter, then the fees for the forthcoming membership year will revert back to £0.00/€0.00. Branches should actively help members to renew their membership. Their MEO can help with any queries. Please forward any cheques or applications within 30 days of receipt to avoid delays processing them.

Members should transfer their membership to another branch. If they have paid their membership fee and any subscriptions due to their current branch, they will not need to make any additional payment in their current membership year.

Branches must not refuse membership unless they have valid reasons. Any objections to an application must be made to the County Committee via the MEO. The Membership Council will make the final decision on whether the application should be accepted in consultation with the County Committee.

2.a.(3) Financial Management

Branch and County banking

Branches must have only one bank account. This must be a current account held preferably with Lloyds Bank or Barclays. It must be held in the name of 'The Royal British Legion – [branch name]'. Personal accounts or accounts in the name of Committee members must not be used for branch transactions, even as a temporary measure.

If a branch has more than one account, it must close the additional account(s) and transfer the money to the Branch Funds Initiative (BFI). If you're not sure what to do with a bank account, contact your MEO for help.

Branches should keep enough money in their current account to meet their day-to-day requirements. For most branches, this will be £1,000 or less. All funds that are surplus to day-to-day requirements must be placed in the BFI. The maximum amount of funds that branches can hold in their current account is £5,000; anything more than this must be placed in the BFI.

If your branch banks with Lloyds, you can access internet banking via RBL's corporate internet banking platform. If you need help to set this up, contact your MEO or Branch Accounts team in Head Office. Branches banking with other banks are not permitted to set up internet banking without the express permission of the Finance Department. This is to ensure that appropriate financial controls are in place over all branch transactions.

How to manage branch funds

The Branch Committee, under the leadership of the Branch Chair, is responsible for the branch funds. It must make sure:

- That there are adequate controls and accounting records.
- That branch expenditure complies with the policies and procedures of the RBL and with charity law.

Branches should create a simple budget for the year, setting out the income they expect to generate and what they expect to spend.

Day to day, the Branch Treasurer maintains the branch accounts. The Branch Committee should approve the Branch Treasurer's delegated authority limit, generally between £250 and £500, depending on the size of the branch.

Branches should record their income and expenditure in separate funds (Benevolent Fund or General Fund). A fund is simply a way of recording income, expenditure and cash separately in the branch accounts. This does not mean that each fund requires a separate bank account. A branch can have more than one fund in its current account and Branch Funds Initiative. At the end of the financial year, the sum total of all funds held by the branch should equal the total amount of cash held in the current account and BFI.

If branches have funds that are surplus to requirements, they should consider making a donation to the [Poppy Appeal](#), making a transfer to the County Welfare Fund or donating to a Royal British Legion care home. This will ensure that the funds are used to support the RBL's beneficiaries. You can ask your local Community Fundraising team or check the Fundraising Handbook about other projects and ideas.

Value Added Tax

(VAT)

Branches and Counties sit outside of the Royal British Legion's VAT arrangements. This means that branches and Counties are unable to register for VAT. Branches must not charge VAT on any invoices they raise and are unable to reclaim any VAT they are charged by suppliers and other third parties. Branches cannot sell merchandise and cannot give away merchandise for a suggested donation of more than £1, e.g., jewellery, bags, clothing, etc. Doing so would constitute a taxable supply. It is permissible to give away small items in exchange for a suggested donation, provided the value of the item is £1 or less, e.g., a pen.

Gift Aid

Members are encouraged to Gift Aid their membership fee when they join. Gift Aid Members can add or remove a Gift Aid declaration at any time by contacting the Membership Services team via email to membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk or by logging into the Membership Self-Service Portal.

Note: any Gift Aid donations cannot be paid into branch funds as branches cannot claim Gift Aid directly. The RBL will claim Gift Aid centrally and only on donations and gifts received directly to its accounts.

Branch Funds Initiative (BFI)

To withdraw funds from the BFI, you can apply by post/email using the appropriate form or via the Royal British Legion Online Membership Accounting System (LOMAS). The Finance Department will transfer the funds within a week of receiving a correctly completed and authorised BFI withdrawal form.

To deposit funds in the BFI, send a cheque to the Finance Department made payable to The Royal British Legion with the BFI deposit form.

Dos and don'ts for spending branch and County funds

Do:	Don't:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use funds to further the charitable aims of the RBL. • Spend funds on events (for example, to recruit new members, for Remembrance events or to raise funds for the RBL). • Keep invoices or receipts for everything you buy with RBL money. By law, all invoices, receipts and vouchers must be securely retained for seven years. If you don't have an invoice or receipt, the person who has spent the money must create and sign a voucher, detailing what the money was spent on and how much. The voucher must be countersigned by a Branch Officer who had nothing to do with the purchase. • Keep the branch cheque book and paying-in book in a locked safe or drawer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use funds for the purchase, construction, repair or maintenance of memorials unless the memorial is owned by the branch and responsibility hasn't been passed on to another party. Memorials are usually the responsibility of the local authority. • Use funds to accumulate more money. • Sign blank or partially completed cheques. • Sell goods. The Royal British Legion as a charity cannot trade; that is why goods can only be sold through a separate trading company (Poppy Shop). Branches and Counties are part of the charity and therefore must not trade under charity law. However, they can offer low-value items sourced from the RBL (such as pins, pens and wristbands) for a suggested donation (not a minimum donation) to raise funds. Please note that any income from items produced by the Poppy Appeal must be sent to Poppy Appeal. • Use funds to subsidise another branch, a RBL club or any other third party. That includes loans or making reductions or deferrals of charges due to the branch. If this happens, the Branch Committee members responsible may be found personally liable to reimburse the charity. • Give grants or make donations to other charities. The only exceptions are a donation to a local ex-Service charity with the approval of the Operations Directorate through the local MEO, or a donation to the Central Benevolent Fund to be allocated to a grant that the Board of Trustees has already agreed. • Use funds for paid employment. • Procure your own resources – branded products are available via your MEO all year round and from Poppy Shop during Poppy Appeal. • Enter into any financial credit or lease agreement (including the rental of property or equipment).

Rules on cheque and cash handling

You can read the full policy (SOP131) if you request it from your MEO, but below are some day-to-day rules to help you keep your transactions in order – and to help protect the Royal British Legion from fraud.

- A branch's bank account must have up to four mandated signatories, all of whom must be Branch Committee members. At least two signatories who are not related to each other must sign every cheque. It is the Branch Committee's responsibility to make sure the list of mandated signatories is up to date when members leave or join the Committee.
- Check bank statements as soon as you receive them. Investigate any unexplained entries immediately. If you suspect fraud, tell your MEO.
- Reimburse petty cash only when you see a receipt and only directly to the claimant.
- Keep the branch petty-cash float as low as possible and reconcile it monthly. Any expenditure above £50 should be reimbursed by cheque. You can find the petty cash policy (SOP3) on Microsoft Office 365 (O365) or request it from your MEO.
- All expense claims should comply with the RBL's expenses policy (SOP42), which is available on Microsoft Office 365 (O365) or from your MEO. All claims must be submitted on the correct form, signed by the claimant and with receipts attached. All expense payments must be approved by the Branch Committee (at least their Treasurer and Chair) before payment.
- Issue a receipt for any cash or cheques given to the branch, unless the donation is part of a cash collection. Any cash received should be counted as soon as practically possible in the presence of two people. Use the SOP131 form, available on Microsoft Office 365 (O365) or from your MEO, to record the amount counted.
- If cash or cheques cannot be banked immediately, they should be placed in a sealed envelope, petty-cash tin or collection box and locked in a safe or a drawer.
- Cash and cheques must be banked within three days of receipt. Any cash receipts in excess of £1,000 must be banked within 24 hours. The longest you can leave it to bank cash and cheques is one week after receipt.

How to submit your annual return

Please refer to the Guide to Completing the Year-End Branch Return, which is updated annually and sent to Treasurers with the Branch Return Forms. You can also get a copy of this guide electronically from your MEO, or on the Membership Administration Portal (MAP).

New branches are not required to submit a branch return in their first financial year until they have been operating for six months.

Each year, a number of branches are selected for audit by the Royal British Legion's statutory auditor or the internal audit and compliance team. Branches are more likely to be selected for audit if they are holding substantial RBL funds, have failed to submit their return on time or have failed to respond to queries on their return from the MEO, or the Finance Department.

Funding and insuring branch events

Branches must attempt to secure services for their events at little or no cost where possible.

Any expenditure associated with the event must be reasonable and proportionate. All branch events should be discussed and approved at a minuted Branch Committee meeting in advance of the event.

The Royal British Legion holds public liability insurance in the event that it is held legally liable for injury to a third party or for damage to third-party property.

Branch events are covered by the RBL's insurance policy. This includes branch Standards paraded at such events, whether within the UK or overseas.

As far as Remembrance events are concerned, responsibility for organising Remembrance Parades should be passed to the local authority.

Parade safety for Remembrance events is the responsibility of a Civic Authority. Temporary Traffic Management Operations (TTMOs) may only be organised and deployed by the Civic Authority and on no account should RBL staff or volunteers be deployed to manage. Where RBL has to be the event organiser (because the Civic Authorities refuse) RBL may take this role but there can be no street Parade, no road closure and, therefore, no need for a TTMO unless this aspect of the event is owned by a Civic Authority. Whilst the branch can be involved in determining a Parade route, it should not itself contract with a third party and may not take responsibility for the design, and deployment of a TTMO.

RBL does not own or insure TTMOs. That is because the law relating to the safe deployment and removal of a TTMO is complex and should be left to local authorities or the police, who are the experts. These are formal arrangements and branches should not seek to make local arrangements with their local police or any other organisation or individuals as these would also not be covered. The requirements of the various Health & Safety regulations and Road Traffic Acts are complex, leaving the branch and RBL vulnerable to the human cost of dealing with serious road accidents and liability issues. As a result, our insurers will not provide cover. This policy does not only apply to Remembrance events, but any branch event where a road closure is being considered.

Therefore, any branch owned and organised event, including Remembrance events, must be:

- i. Static i.e: no Parade on the public highway or movement of participants and crowd from one location to another along or near roads.
- ii. Completely off-road for both participants and other observers, including ensuring that any attending members of the public would not be on or near to a road in such a way that management of traffic would be required to ensure safety.
- iii. Organised by and agreed by the branch and recorded as such in branch minutes. Individual members may be the lead for a branch event but should not organise events, including Remembrance events, acting as an individual.

Any events organised by members that are of a social nature, such as Christmas meals, or travel, such as trips to the National Memorial Arboretum, visits to Regimental Museums or trips overseas, are not RBL events and therefore are not covered by the RBL's insurance policy. Any income and costs related to these events are not charitable income and expenditure and should not pass through the branch accounts. They must be held and accounted for separately. Under no circumstances may RBL funds be used to subsidise social events for members.

If you're planning a large fundraising event (with expenditure of more than £1,000), please check with your Community Fundraiser that it doesn't clash with any other large event.

How to deal with legacies

If a branch is notified of a legacy, the branch must contact the Legacy Admin Team at the earliest opportunity on legacies@britishlegion.org.uk or call the Legacy Administrator on 020 3207 2389.

The Legacy Admin Team manages, receipts and allocates all legacy income to ensure that the correct amount is received and that funds are used in the manner specified in our Royal Charter and the Will. All correspondence relating to legacies must be sent to the Legacy Admin Department as soon as possible.

Where a legacy is specifically gifted to the branch, the legacy shall be paid to the branch if under £5,000; legacies over £5,000 will be placed into a Trust held for the benefit of the branch. The Royal Charter sets out that legacies should only be used for furthering the RBL's objectives which means use is restricted to welfare and Remembrance activities, so it is not possible to place the legacy income into the branches BFI account.

To make a withdrawal from a Legacy Trust the branch should use form SOP163 which is available from the Legacy Admin Team or on the intranet. In accordance with Charity Commission requirements to prevent funds being held in trusts indefinitely, the Legacy Admin Team will review the Legacy Trust Portfolio annually and, where funds remain unspent, will liaise with the branch to find ways to spend it.

To prevent double accounting, legacies held in Legacy Trusts at Head Office should not be listed in branch accounts as this would mean they are accounted for twice.

2.a.(4) Recruiting and retaining members

Branch members, County Recruiting Officers and Recruiting Advisers are responsible for recruiting activities, but it's up to every member to bring new people into the Royal British Legion. Find out everything you need in the Recruitment Handbook, available through Microsoft Office 365 (O365) or from your MEO.

2.a.(5) Training

Training is provided by the Membership Training team in Head Office or by the County Training Officers. Any queries about membership training should be sent to the Membership Training team via email on membershiptraining@britishlegion.org.uk. More information about training can be found in the Membership Training Handbook, available in the MAP.

2.a.(6) Forming, amalgamating and closing branches and Counties

Amalgamating Counties and branches

These are the steps that must be taken:

1. The Chair and Committees of the Counties agree to the restructuring, and to write to the Chair of the Membership Council for approval, copying in the relevant Membership Council representative.
2. Once the Membership Council has agreed, the Counties (branches) must call a joint Special General Meeting of their County Conferences at which branch delegates must vote by simple majority whether to approve the formation of the new County. The relevant Membership Council representative should be at this meeting.
3. If approved, branch delegates must elect the new County Committee, Chair and Vice Chair to serve until the next Annual Meeting of County Conference. Following the election of the new County Committee, Chair, and Vice Chair, the previous County Committee, Chair and Vice Chair retire immediately. Branch delegates must also elect three non-County Committee Members as members of a new County Conference Committee.
4. County Treasurers must close their accounts on the date of the Special General Meeting at which the amalgamation was approved, prepare them for independent examination or audit and for adoption of the annual accounts at the next Annual Meeting of County Conference.
5. All of the funds of the constituent Counties must be passed to the new County Treasurer to form the new County funds.
6. The old County Standard should be laid up, with a new one obtained and dedicated.
7. Alternatively, the panel of one of the previous County Standards may be altered.
8. Remembrancetide must continue to be conducted on the basis of the constituent Counties until the new County is formed at the first Annual Meeting of County Conference. After that, the new County assumes responsibility for the co-ordination of events during Remembrancetide.
9. As soon as possible after their election, the new County Committee must set the date of the Annual Meeting of County Conference and draft new County by-laws for approval by the Annual Meeting of County Conference. The Committee should appoint:
 - A County Treasurer
 - A County Secretary
 - A County Training Officer
 - A County Recruiting Officer
 - A County Youth Officer
 - A County Parade Marshal
 - A County Standard Bearer (until the next competition)

10. For the remainder of the first RBL financial year, the new County budget is to comprise the sum of the budgets of its component Counties. The balance of the County budgets for the financial year is to be channelled through the new County instead of the former Counties. The County must propose its own budget bid for the following year.
11. At the next Annual Meeting of County Conference, delegates must approve the accounts of the constituent Counties closed at the date of formation of the new County. At the conference, the results of the postal ballot for County Chair and Vice Chair should be announced. The Chair should be elected for three years and the Vice Chair two years, to allow for continuity. After that, the Vice Chair's term should be three years. The full County Committee should also be elected following normal election rules. Retiring Committee members may stand for re-election. The County Treasurer should be appointed and the County by-laws adopted.
12. This process is followed for amalgamation of branches.

Forming a County

These are the steps that must be taken:

1. The Chair and Committees of the branches wishing to form a new County agree to the restructuring and to write to the Chair of the Membership Council for approval, copying in the relevant Membership Council representative.
2. After the Membership Council has approved the new County, the branches that will form the new County must organise branch meetings to put forward nominations for the County Founding Committee. Head Office staff will distribute nomination forms for Committee Officers and members, guidelines and a timetable to all branches concerned.
3. The nomination forms are to be returned to Head Office and the subsequent election will be coordinated by Head Office.
4. The founding County Committee consists of seven elected members, a County Chair and County Vice Chair. All are elected for three years. The seven candidates with the most votes will be the members of the County Founding Committee.
5. Less than four weeks after their election, the County Founding Committee must appoint a County Treasurer and County Secretary. Each must be appointed until the first Annual Meeting of County Conference.
6. The County Founding Committee should set the date of the Annual Meeting of County Conference and start the process of drafting new County by-laws for approval by the branch delegates at the Annual Meeting. The County Founding Committee will act as the County Conference Committee for the first Annual Meeting. Minutes of the first meeting of the County Founding Committee must be sent to Head Office.
7. At the first Annual Meeting of County Conference after the Special General Meeting, up to a further eight Committee members may be elected by branch delegates. County Committee members will serve for one, two or three years (initially decided by County Conference to avoid all the Committee changing at once).
8. The branch delegates must elect a new County Conference Committee.
9. As soon as possible after their election, the new County Committee should appoint a County Training Officer, a County Recruiting Officer and a County Youth Officer.

The County Treasurer and County Secretary appointed at the first County Founding Committee meeting remain in post until the Annual Meeting of County Conference the following year.

10. The County Committee can appoint a County President.
11. A new County Standard is to be obtained and dedicated in accordance with Royal British Legion practice. The County Committee shall also arrange the appointment of a County Standard Bearer.
12. The County Committee must appoint a County Parade Marshal.
13. Remembrancetide must continue to be conducted on the basis of the constituent Counties until the new County is formed at the first Annual Meeting of County Conference. After that, the new County assumes responsibility for the co-ordination of events during Remembrancetide.
15. Once a bank account has been opened, all branches in the new County will make a donation to the new County Committee in order to meet initial administration costs. The County Founding Committee will make a recommendation to branches on the amount to be paid into the County account.
16. The County must propose its own budget bid for the following year.

Forming a branch

A new branch needs at least 15 members or potential members aged 18 or over to have a meeting about it. It must pass the following resolution:

“That this meeting hereby accepts the Objects of the Royal Charter, the Schedule of Rules and the Membership Handbook and formally establishes a branch.”

A County representative must attend the meeting where the proposal to form a branch is being discussed to offer guidance and support. If the meeting agrees to form a new branch, then form MS9, available from your MEO, must be completed. The MEO must send the completed MS9 to the relevant Membership Council rep and to Head Office for approval by the Membership Council. A County Committee may stop the formation of new branches where there is already a branch in existence.

Closing a branch

1. If a branch cannot be revived and it is impractical to amalgamate it with a neighbouring branch or form a County Supported Branch (CSB, branch members or the County Committee can decide to close the branch. Such closure must be approved by the Membership Council.
2. The branch subject to closure holds a Special/Extraordinary General Meeting where the following are discussed, decided on and minuted accordingly:
 - a) to close the branch.
 - b) where the branch members wish branch funds (including any branch legacies or any BFI funds that are not connected to a Branch Property Trust (BPT)), to be allocated. Accounting documents such as cheques or BFI transfer forms to be completed and

signed at this meeting. If there is a BPT, and timing cannot wait, then all branch monies must be transferred to the branch general BFI account pending the BPT (Property) BFI being set up with the branch members indicating their preference for how remaining balances not connected to a branch property or legacy trust should be allocated.

- c) if a branch has a BPT and funds within the General Account are derived from the BPT (rental income) then this money must be transferred into a BPT (Property) BFI account held at Head Office.
 - d) what to do with the branch Standard. Is it going to be laid up or passed to the County/District for either safekeeping or training purposes?
3. MEO contacts Finance to see if there is a BFI, BPT or legacy trust.
 4. MEO also contacts Audit Team to see if there is an open audit or any other concerns.
 5. MEO offers opportunity for members to transfer to another suitable branch.
 6. At this stage it should be clearly identified what type of BFI Account(s) the branch holds, what, if any is BPT or legacy trust money and what is unrestricted branch funds for disposal with the bank balance as per the branch's wishes.
 7. The MEO completes the MS5A and submits it, along with all other supporting paperwork to the Membership Council Representative and County Chair for examination before the application is presented to County/District Committee for approval.
 8. County/District Committee consider and agree to closure application being put forward to the Membership Council once branch has arranged for bank account(s) to be closed, submitted a final set of accounts and cheque(s) for the branch's final balance(s) made payable to wherever specifically within the Royal British Legion, the branch wishes their funds to go to.
 9. Membership Services team sets the branch status as pending closure on CARE, until able to update status on CARE as closed.
 10. Closure forms sent to Membership Governance Co-ordinator (MGC) who checks all necessary parties have signed and then forwards all paperwork to the Branch Finance Compliance Group where Membership Council Representative(s) will request that the Membership Council approve the branch closure to complete the audit trail in the Membership Council meeting minutes.
 11. Once confirmation of closure of bank account(s), including BFIs has been received along with a zero-balance statement(s) uploaded to branch accounts database on SharePoint by the MEO the branch's status can be set as closed on all systems.
 12. The following are worth noting:
 - a) Branch cannot become a (CSB) unless it has fully completed the process of closing its bank account(s), including BFI, and transferring all funds to the County/District.
 - b) The same criteria should apply when a branch is closing.

- c) Obtaining cheque(s) for the branch's final balance(s) should be an absolute requirement as this ensures the funds are allocated and accountable. In the past branches have claimed they have sent closing balance cheques to various parts of the Royal British Legion, for example the Poppy Appeal, but there has been no record of these cheques having been received or paid in.
- d) BFI accounts are essentially another bank account and therefore it is important branch members are aware of their existence and given the opportunity to identify where, in the case of BFIs not associated with a property, they wish these funds to go.
- e) Under this approach we should be in control of knowing where the branch funds have gone thereby preventing future phantom branches.

Becoming a County Supported Branch (CSB)

A CSB is a method of operating for branches that are struggling to form a Committee. To become a CSB, a branch applies to County Committee and the Committee will approve the new branch status if:

- The branch is no longer viable in its present form for a specified reason (e.g. unable to form a committee, unable to recruit a Treasurer).
- The branch is unable to fully comply with the Royal British Legion compliance requirements (governance and financial).
- Other than the specified reason for not being viable, the branch is active in its local area and closing would result in a loss of RBL representation in its local area.
- There is no likelihood of potential committee members coming forward, even if the branch were to face closure.

Outgoing officers will close the bank account and hand over any funds to their County to be held as a restricted fund for the branch – these funds are available to CSB through the County Treasurer. The CSB will appoint two members to act as Point of Contact, who must be able to communicate electronically.

On becoming a CSB, the outgoing Treasurer must complete a final set of accounts showing remaining funds transferred to County and supply a ZERO Balance Bank Statement once received. CSB status will not be applied until the Accounts have been received along with the Final Funds.

CSBs are only required to submit their MS1s by the 31st of December to be considered compliant. Once CSBs are deemed compliant, they can participate in elections and send delegates to Annual Conference.

A branch in administration, whereby the County Committee are the surrogate Branch Committee, is not compliant and therefore is not permitted to vote in elections or send delegates to Annual Conference, including where the branch was compliant in the preceding year during a period where it was not in County administration.

Returning to full branch status from CSB

CSBs should apply to return to full branch status with their County approval when the branch is able to form a full committee and regain control over their funds. MEO and County Committee will be able to guide a branch through this process which will involve elections of the new committee.

County Administration

The decision to take a branch into County Administration is a serious matter and is for the judgement of the County Committee. County Administration is a temporary measure where the branch is supported by the County Committee instead of a Branch Committee and all branch affairs including bank account, are under the control of County until the branch can return to normal. To take a branch into administration the County Committee should appoint two County Committee members as Points of Contact for the branch.

A branch may be taken into County Administration where:

- A branch is unable to form a committee or a committee stands down.
- A branch is temporarily unable to function.
- A branch is not demonstrating the Royal British Legion's values and behaviours, has not followed the rules as laid down in the Royal Charter and the Membership Handbook or has not followed relevant RBL instruction, policy and procedures. In this circumstance, prior to taking a branch into administration, the County Chair should appoint a member of the Committee to work alongside the MEO to support the branch to resolve the issues within a given timeframe.

The County Committee should advise the Membership Council Representative why it is felt necessary to take the branch into County Administration. The Membership Council must then be kept informed at all stages. To take a branch into administration the County Committee should appoint two committee members as Points of Contact for the branch.

A letter should be sent to any existing Branch Committee informing them that the branch is being taken into administration, that they no longer hold committee roles and that all required documentation should be handed to the County Point of Contact.

All members of the branch should then be informed that the branch has been taken into administration. The Points of Contact should then work with the MEO to resolve any existing issues within the branch before aiming to re-establish a Branch Committee via a Special General Meeting (SGM). Once a new committee is in place, a member of the County Committee should remain as a Point of Contact and mentor for the new committee until it is properly established.

In many instances it may be necessary to inform one or all of previous committee members that they are not permitted to stand for election at the SGM and these members must receive written permission from Membership Council Representative to stand for any future officer appointment or to become a committee.

The process for the Membership Council taking a County into administration should follow the same guidance as above.

2.b. Activities for members

Members who take part in activities with their local branch or County will often find that they get more out of their membership and feel more connected to the Royal British Legion's work. During the course of the year, branches should carry out their fundraising and community support responsibilities, but they should also spend time on other activities.

Events of a social nature (funded by members and not by branch funds) might include trips to the National Memorial Arboretum, Christmas meals, visits to Regimental Museums or travelling to places of interest. Members can also participate in sports competitions with other branches at County and Regional level. There are currently competitions for bowls, snooker and darts in some areas.

Members driving on behalf of the RBL in a volunteer role must be legally entitled to drive and have a full driving licence. Once a person reaches the age of 70, they have to renew their driving licence every three years. When a volunteer is using their own vehicle in their voluntary activities, they should tell their insurers but make it clear that they will only receive out-of-pocket expenses and that this is not commercial use of the vehicle. Association of British Insurers insurance companies do not charge an extra premium for volunteer drivers. Branches often help with local Remembrance events and funerals. Guidance for ceremonial activities for branches can be found [here](#).

2.b.(1) Branch Community Support (BCS)

BCS is how branches promote the objectives of the Royal British Legion and provide support for local RBL beneficiaries. Every branch wishing to carry out BCS should appoint a Branch Community Support Representative.

The MEO can provide advice on how a branch can register for BSC and can arrange the required training courses.

Through BCS members can support individuals as Telephone Buddies or Home and Hospital Visitors. Branches can also take part in Community Activities that bring communities together in comradeship, Remembrance or providing a touchpoint which put the branch at the heart of their community.

Anyone taking part in Telephone Buddy, Visitor or Touchpoint roles must meet strict training and screening requirements; these are necessary to protect the organisation, our volunteers, members, and beneficiaries.

2.b.(2) Sending delegates to Annual Conference

Every compliant branch and County can send a delegate to Annual Conference. Branch and County delegates can speak, but only branch delegates can vote. Branches with more than 300 members may send a second delegate. Branches with more than 1,000 members may send one further additional delegate for every 500 members over 1,000.

Members of Royal British Legion staff should not attend Annual Conference as voting delegates. Branches and Counties may put forward motions for Annual Conference, as long as they have been approved at the relevant Annual County Conference. Two delegates of the same branch may not propose and second the same motion.

How things work at conferences

Read the Standing Orders, available through Microsoft Office 365 (O365) or by request to membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk for conference protocol and process.

Delegates' expenses

Delegates are able to claim their travel expenses, part of which will be paid by Head Office and the remainder by the branch or County.

2.c. Flying flags

For information on flying flags please see the Ceremonial Handbook.

3. Complaints

The Royal British Legion takes seriously all complaints about the services it delivers to its members and stakeholders; about the integrity and propriety of all its employees, members and volunteers; and about its policies and procedures.

The RBL is committed to making its complaints-management process accessible, fair and transparent. All complaints made will be appropriately investigated as quickly as possible and, where appropriate, the complainant informed of outcomes and any action taken in line with the current complaints and grievance procedures.

a. Procedures for different kinds of complaints

If you have received a complaint about a member or you want to make a complaint about a member, you can contact the RBL Complaints Committee (LCC) via email legioncomplaints@britishlegion.org.uk or on the Membership Administration Portal (MAP) on Microsoft Office 365 (O365). More on handling complaints is covered under the Membership Council section of this handbook. In exceptional circumstances, the Membership Council Chair has the power to expel a member where necessary.

If you are unhappy with how your membership queries have been handled, please contact membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk

For complaints about fundraising activities, refer to the Poppy Appeal Organiser Handbook, available through Microsoft Office 365 (O365) or your Poppy Appeal Organiser/Manager. Where you receive a complaint about a BCS Supporter or a BCS Supporter makes a complaint, this should be referred to and dealt with by the Head of Membership Engagement and handled in accordance with the Operational Complaints Procedure.

Following the investigation, the BCS Rep will be informed of the outcome. It should be noted that if a complaint about a BCS Supporter is upheld then action may be taken to remove that person from the BCS role. The branch must uphold any decision made. If you are making or have received a complaint that relates to club membership, the club committee should be approached first.

4. Elections

For information on how the Royal British Legion is organised, see sections 'About the Royal British Legion' and 'About Formations' later in this handbook. Many roles within the RBL are elected by members.

a. Rules

- No canvassing is allowed.
- Nomination forms must be signed by the candidate to show they have accepted it.
- All forms relating to elections should be completed in block capital letters.
- Spoilt ballot papers will not be included in any count.
- If there is only one valid nomination, that person is elected. Negative voting, including the 'for or against' type, is not allowed and will render a ballot paper invalid. If there is more than one candidate, every compliant branch in the electoral region will have the opportunity to vote.
- Candidates for the National Branches District must live in the UK.
- Candidates for any overseas district must live in the European Economic Area.
- Ballot papers that are incorrectly filled in or that have arrived after the deadline are declared void.
- Candidates cannot be nominated for both positions of County Chair and County Vice Chair in the same election year.
- Ballot papers and candidates' CVs must be presented at a branch meeting (not a Branch Committee meeting).
- The candidate who gets the most votes is the winner.
- In the event of a tie, the result is decided by drawing lots.

Members and Life Members are entitled to vote, hold office and be members of any council or committee. However, members are not allowed to hold office or be elected if:

- They possess any previous convictions or circumstances which may mean that they are not suitable for the role.
- They have been removed from trusteeship of a charity by a court of law or by the Charity Commission.
- **They are deemed unsuitable by the LCC.**

BRANCHES

General notes	<p><i>Only Current, Adult, or Life Members may be nominated.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There can be only one nominee per branch for each position. • If branch members nominate more than one member for County or National elections, a vote is held. The nominee who gets the most votes is the winner. If there is a tie, the final nomination is determined by lot between the tied candidates. • If only one nomination is received, the candidate is deemed elected.
Nominations	
Board of Trustees, National Chair & National Vice Chair	<p>Refer to Royal Charter and the Election Pack issued annually to all branches in November.</p>
National Conference Committee	<p>Refer to Annual Conference Special Circular issued annually to all branches in October.</p>
Membership Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Secretary to the Membership Council will issue nomination papers to each compliant branch by 1st October. • The nominee must be a branch member of that Electoral Area and live either in the Area or adjacent to it. • Candidates for the National Branches Region must live in the United Kingdom. • Candidates for Overseas must reside in the European Economic Area. • The nomination must be proposed, seconded and voted on at a branch General Meeting. • The Branch Secretary must send to the RBL Governance team the branch's nomination form with a copy of the candidate's CV. The nomination form must be signed as accepted by the candidate.
County Chair & County Vice-Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MEO must request nominations from branches by 1st July and circulate the nomination sheet. • Compliant branches may only nominate one current member per branch for each post at a branch General Meeting. • The nominee does not need to be a member of the nominating branch but must belong to the branch in the County where elections take place. • Once elected, they cannot remain a voting member of any Branch Committee. • Where a CC or CVC is Branch Chair and a replacement cannot be found, threatening the existence of the branch, the candidate can stay in both roles for up to three months until a new Branch Chair is in place. • Any conflicts of interest arising during this period must be declared. • Candidates for the National Branches District must live in the United Kingdom. • Candidates for any Overseas District must live in the European Economic Area. • Candidates cannot be nominated for both positions of Chair and Vice Chair in the same election year. • The MEO must receive the branch nomination, accompanied by the candidate's CV and a passport-sized photograph, no later than 5pm on the second Monday in September.
County Committee (at least seven but no more than 15 members) AND County Conference Committee (three members out of six)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MEO must request nominations from branches by 1st July and circulate the nomination sheet. Compliant branches must nominate no more than one current member per branch for each post at their branch General Meeting.

Nominations (cont.)

Branch Officers (Chair, Vice Chair (optional), Secretary, Treasurer (appointed, not elected) & Committee members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The nomination sheet listing branch office and tenure must be made available to members 21 days before the branch Annual General Meeting. Completed nomination sheets – including the name of the nominee, membership number and name of the proposer and seconder – must be sent to the Branch Secretary at least seven days before the branch Annual General Meeting.
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Actions prior to election

Board of Trustees, National Chair & National Vice Chair	<p>Refer to Royal Charter and the Election Pack issued annually to all branches in November.</p>
National Conference Committee	<p>Refer to Annual Conference Special Circular issued annually to all branches in October.</p>
Membership Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RBL Governance team will check if the nomination is valid and inform the candidate and the branch that it has been received. They will also inform the branch and the candidate if the nomination has been rejected due to branch non-compliance. If there is more than one nomination, the RBL Governance team must forward all nominations to an external company such as Electoral Reform Services, who will conduct the election. Candidates' CVs and ballot papers, accompanied by a pre-paid envelope, will be sent to compliant branches in the electoral region.
County Chair & County Vice-Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MEO must check if the candidate is a current member of a branch in the County and inform the candidate and the branch that the nomination has been received. They must also inform the branch and the candidate if the nomination is rejected. If there is more than one nomination, the MEO must send ballot papers to compliant branches by 1st October with a return pre-paid envelope addressed to Head Office.
County Committee (at least seven but no more than 15 members) AND County Conference Committee (three members out of six)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The MEO must check if the candidate is a current member of a branch in the County and inform the candidate and the branch that the nomination has been received. They must also inform the branch and the candidate if the nomination is rejected.
Branch Officers (Chair, Vice Chair (optional), Secretary, Treasurer (appointed, not elected) & Committee members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Branch Secretary must check if candidates are current members and if they consent to stand for position. The master nomination must be created and circulated to members.

Voting

Board of Trustees, National Chair & National Vice Chair	Refer to Royal Charter and the Election Pack issued annually to all branches in November.
National Conference Committee	Refer to Annual Conference Special Circular issued annually to all branches in October.
Membership Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branch members must decide on their preferred candidate at a branch General Meeting and mark their choice on the ballot paper. • The Branch Secretary must ensure the ballot paper is signed by two Branch Officers, is clearly annotated with the County/District name and states that it contains ballot papers and send it to the external company. • The external company receives and retains all returned envelopes in a secure place and notes any envelope that has been opened or not sealed correctly and immediately reports it to the RBL Governance team. • The external company opens and counts the votes for each candidate. • Any branch ballot paper that has been completed incorrectly or arrives late will be declared void and the envelope and the papers forwarded to the Director General, who will inform the branch concerned. • The elected candidate is the one who gets the most votes. • The external company will inform the RBL Governance team of the result of the ballot. The RBL Governance team will then inform the candidates and RBL formations. • In the event of a tie, the National Chair, witnessed by the Director General, will draw lots.
County Chair & County Vice Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MEO must check if the candidate is a current member of a branch in the County and inform the candidate and the branch that the nomination has been received. • They must also inform the branch and the candidate if the nomination is rejected. • If there is more than one nomination, the MEO must send ballot papers to compliant branches by 1st October with a return pre-paid envelope addressed to Head Office.
County Committee (at least seven but no more than 15 members) AND County Conference Committee (three members out of six)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By ballot at the Annual Meeting of County Conference.
Branch Officers (Chair, Vice Chair (optional), Secretary, Treasurer (appointed, not elected) & Committee members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By ballot by eligible members present, unless the position is unopposed, in which case the person is elected automatically. Election of Branch Officers takes place before the election of Committee members.

Term

<p>Board of Trustees, National Chair & National Vice Chair</p>	<p>Refer to Royal Charter and the Election Pack issued annually to all branches in November.</p>
<p>National Conference Committee</p>	<p>Refer to Annual Conference Special Circular issued annually to all branches in October.</p>
<p>Membership Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three years.
<p>County Chair & County Vice Chair</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three years. • No person may serve more than three terms as a Chair or Vice Chair. However, this does not exclude one person from being elected for three terms as a Chair and three terms as Vice Chair.
<p>County Committee (at least seven but no more than 15 members) AND County Conference Committee (three members out of six)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One, two or three years as decided by the Branch Committee.
<p>Branch Officers (Chair, Vice Chair (optional), Secretary, Treasurer (appointed, not elected) & Committee members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be decided by the Branch Committee.

Vacancy occurring mid-term

Board of Trustees, National Chair & National Vice Chair	Refer to Royal Charter and the Election Pack issued annually to all branches in November.
National Conference Committee	Refer to Annual Conference Special Circular issued annually to all branches in October.
Membership Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Membership Council Chair must co-opt a member from a branch in the electoral region unless more than 15 months of tenure is left – in this case new elections are arranged.
County Chair & County Vice Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next highest-placed candidate in the latest election must fill the vacancy until the end of the term. If there is no such candidate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If there are less than 15 months until the end of the term, the Committee must co-opt a temporary replacement. - If there are more than 15 months until the end of the term, a new election must be started within one month and completed within four months. Follow the steps explained on the left.
County Committee (at least seven but no more than 15 members) AND County Conference Committee (three members out of six)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee must co-opt a temporary replacement until the next Annual Meeting of County Conference when a new election must be held.
Branch Officers (Chair, Vice Chair (optional), Secretary, Treasurer (appointed, not elected) & Committee members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The position must be filled until the end of the original term by co-option to the Branch Committee, which will be subject to confirmation by election at the next branch Annual General Meeting. Co-opted members may propose, second and vote.

b. Standing for election

Candidates are not allowed to canvass. But they can:

Create a CV no longer than one page of A4, with a passport-size photo attached.

- Consider what will help the decision of voters: for example, RBL-specific experience, relevant professional experience and a personal statement.

They should bear in mind that CVs may be edited before they're distributed to voters. Candidates may be asked to make alterations (which they can accept or decline).

5. Fundraising

Counties and branches have a key role in fundraising and should play their part in the Poppy Appeal. There will be committees looking after County funds and branches will look after branch funds.

In addition, Counties and branches may raise funds for their General Funds but must keep this activity separate from the Poppy Appeal and not use Poppy Appeal branding for this purpose. This is because Poppy Appeal branding may suggest fundraising for the Poppy Appeal and create confusion over how the funds will be spent. Also fundraising for the General Fund must not take place during Remembrancetide.

Counties/Districts and branches are not permitted to produce their own branded merchandise.

It is good practice for Counties to form a County Fundraising Committee. This may comprise people who are not Royal British Legion members but have been chosen because of their local standing and influence or their experience in fundraising.

Bear in mind that fundraising is a regulated activity with its own [national code of practice](#). This code applies to volunteers as much as to paid fundraisers, so if you're doing any fundraising at all, you should be aware of it. If you have any questions, contact your Poppy Appeal Manager (PAM) or Supporter Care (supportercare@britishlegion.org.uk).

a. The Poppy Appeal

1. Key timings

The Poppy Appeal is the Royal British Legion's largest fundraising campaign; it launches at the end of October and concludes on Remembrance Sunday. The Poppy Appeal dates will be communicated each year. Street collections take place during this time with London Poppy Day generally being held on the first Thursday of November.

2. Roles and responsibilities

The Poppy Appeal is run by a community of just under 4,000 Poppy Appeal Organisers (PAOs). PAOs oversee the behind-the-scenes organisation of volunteers, collection locations and stock, and are inducted and trained before they start their role. Branches should support the PAOs and PAMs in the successful delivery of the Poppy Appeal.

3. PAO and volunteer appointment and removal

PAOs are recruited and appointed by the Community Fundraising Team who have overall responsibility for delivering the appeal. Please note that new PAOs can only be recruited by the Community Fundraising team and not by branches.

As well as the above, the Community Fundraising team also manages the retirement, resignation and, in some cases, removal from post of PAOs. The decision to remove a PAO from post will be at the discretion of the Director/Head of Poppy Appeal only.

4. Charity and trading activity

Please be aware that during the Poppy Appeal both charity and trading activities take place.

All products sold, or given as a donation should be compliant with a legislative requirement to ensure that they are safe. RBL underscores the utmost importance of strict adherence to legislative requirements governing the sale or donation of products. To ensure the safety of consumers and uphold the organisation's reputation, all products must undergo rigorous testing and documentation verification.

RBL, supported by an experienced product team and a product safety adviser, meticulously assesses and guarantees compliance for all items available in the Poppy Shop or associated with RBL appeals. It is imperative that all products be procured through approved processes, with branches strictly prohibited from independent procurement.

Additionally, the usage of the Seal, incorporating a royal crest, is restricted to specific purposes and cannot be employed for fundraising without the Lord Chamberlain's consent. This comprehensive policy serves to maintain the integrity and success of RBL initiatives, requiring unwavering adherence from all staff members and branches.

If you have any questions regarding the difference between charity and trading activity, please consult your MEO.

5. Where to go to for help and support

If you have any questions regarding Poppy Appeal activity or collections, please contact the Community Fundraiser for your area. In the event of a complaint or concern please contact your MEO and they will be able to escalate the issue according to the appropriate procedure.

For branch members who are also PAOs, please refer to the PAO Handbook, as this is the primary source of information for the Poppy Appeal. This is reviewed on an annual basis and may be updated, so please ensure you are referring to the most recent version, along with any communications from your Community Fundraiser during the year, such as the seminars and various mailings.

Counties and the Poppy Appeal

Counties should work with PAMs to ensure that proper arrangements are in place for the distribution of Poppy Appeal materials (poppies, trays, posters, etc.) and merchandise, and for the collection, security and banking of the monies received.

Remember that this merchandise can be used only for raising funds for the charitable objectives of the RBL and not for the running costs of the branch. Branches must make it clear to their donors if they raise funds (outside of the Poppy Appeal) for the branch funds and not the Poppy Appeal.

PAMs will organise regional seminars as required, so that PAOs can be trained and briefed.

Counties should also make full use of awards and certificates for achievements in the Poppy Appeal for Counties, branches, clubs, individuals and businesses.

Branches and the Poppy Appeal

Branches should be guided and assisted by the Community Fundraiser to organise the Poppy Appeal. The Community Fundraiser will appoint a PAO with support of the branch and needs to be kept up to date if the person holding the role of PAO changes.

All fundraising during the Poppy Appeal must be for Poppy Appeal and not the General Fund.

Poppy Appeal merchandise can be used only for raising funds for the charitable objectives of the Royal British Legion via the Poppy Appeal and not for the running costs of the branch. Outside of the Poppy Appeal, branches must make it clear to their donors if they are raising funds for the branch funds and not the Poppy Appeal.

This is important because charities are subject to VAT regulations when they trade. The PAO does not need to be the member of the branch to be appointed for this role.

Please refer to VAT section, under Financial Management.

b. Raising money for other causes

Branches may sometimes join with other charities but it must be made clear to donors who they are giving their money to. When Royal British Legion merchandise is being used, the funds raised are always for the RBL charity.

If branches want to raise money jointly with other charities, this is not permitted during the Poppy Appeal period (14th October to 14th November) and the RBL logo and merchandise must not be used for it.

With any questions, contact your local Community Fundraiser or MEO.

c. Grants

Branches may apply for funding from statutory funding bodies, trusts, and foundations or from Local Government organisations. Bids for grant funding must:

- Be agreed by the Branch Committee at a committee meeting and the decision minuted.
- Be for projects or activities which are within a branch's remit.
- Reflect the purpose and functions of Membership.
- Be ringfenced within the accounts, and the associated expenditure must be accounted for as restricted.

- Only be made where there are insufficient funds within the branch funds, BPT or BFI, the use of such funds would leave the branch with insufficient funds for their normal operation or where branch funds are not permitted to be used for the required purpose.
- Branches must inform their MEO, County Chair, and the Donor Relationship team at Head Office at donorrelationships@britishlegion.org.uk of their proposed bid.

A member of the Donor Relationship team will confirm whether the Royal British Legion already has a relationship with any potential funders and so whether the proposed application can go ahead. This is to protect significant relationships with trusts, where the relationship can be managed without breaking prior agreements (e.g. limited number of applications permitted per year) which the branches may not be privy to.

In addition, where the bid is for a specific purpose, such as being property related, the relevant staff from that department must also be informed.

Branches must not submit any grant applications without prior agreement from the above staff. Doing so could harm the RBL's reputation, interfere with the national fundraising efforts, or even break legal requirements. Fundraising regulations may force a return of grant obtained without prior agreement.

If a bid is successful, the branch should inform the MEO, County Chair, Donor Relationship team and any other departmental staff who were required to approve the bid submission. Depending on the period of the funding, the branch will be required to report to the above staff as the project progresses and must inform them of any issues or concerns with either the use of funds against the project or any failure to achieve the outcomes set by the funder.

Any funds from a successful bid must be placed into the branch bank account and must be kept ringfenced for the specific project for which it was granted.

6. Handling media requests

All local PR work is coordinated by Regional PR Officers. Any members who are contacted by the media for comment or interview should direct the journalist to the RBL Regional Press Officer for the area, the contact numbers for which can be found on the website at www.britishlegion.org.uk/quick-links/press-office-contacts.

The Press Officers will ensure that an appropriate response is provided or will be able to give you a brief and advice on how to respond. The press team will also help if a crisis occurs or if you are simply unsure of how to handle an issue.

7. Protecting people's data

Members' details are held in the central database managed by Royal British Legion staff. Branches and members should report any changes, such as changes of address, here, or by emailing membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk to or via the Membership Self-Service Portal [Log In](#) (britishlegion.org.uk).

It is the responsibility of those who process people's data to do so within reason and within data protection laws. You can read the RBL's privacy policy and promise [here](#).

a. General Data Protection

The Royal British Legion is committed to using good practice in the handling of personal data in order to comply with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The RBL aims to be fair and lawful in the way it uses, processes and stores personal data, and will keep members informed about the purpose for which we collect their data, adhering to individual rights of access to their data and any objections they may have regarding the use of their personal information.

All general RBL policies and procedures relating to data protection can be obtained from the MEO.

Members must inform the MEO or membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk of any data breaches.

b. Data Protection at Membership level

All members, including the Membership Council, County and Branch Officials, who process personal data which includes collecting, accessing and storing, must adhere to the following principles:

Obtaining data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal data obtained on the membership application form should be sent to the relevant office as soon as possible, preferably by recorded delivery. Any copies kept locally must be kept securely and destroyed as soon as the new joiner's membership is confirmed.• Members who collect personal data from others must always clearly explain the purpose for which the information is being collected and how it will be used.
Accessing data	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Membership listings can be accessed online via Microsoft Office 365 (O365) system. Users must not share their login details with others. Only authorised Branch Officers who signed the form can have access to membership listings.• Membership data can also be obtained via email or post from the MEO or the Membership Department staff. Only Branch/County Officers who signed the MS1(A) form and Membership Council members can obtain membership data.

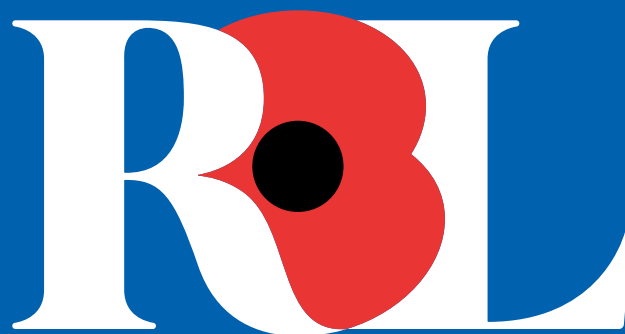
Storing data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal data must be stored securely. • Hard copies must be kept in a safe place e.g. locked room, drawer, cupboard, or box. • Electronic copies must be kept on a device which is password protected (e.g. laptop, memory stick); ideally the folder/file should also be password protected. Members must take care to avoid having the devices lost or stolen. • Where a device, or paper record containing personal data is lost, you must report this as a data security breach to the MEO or Membership Services as soon as possible. • Data should not be kept if it is no longer needed and should be securely disposed of or deleted.
Processing data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members' data must not be used for any other purpose than communicating information relating to RBL. Mailings or information unrelated to RBL activities, in particular third party marketing materials, must not be sent or emailed. • Membership listings or any other materials based on these listings (e.g. address labels) should be used within one week of receipt and then destroyed, as they quickly become out of date. The central database is modified on a daily basis as a result of address changes, lapses, deaths, resignations, changes of membership type and new members. • When emailing more than one person, members' email addresses should not be typed into the 'To' field, but placed in the BCC (Blind Carbon Copy) section.
Retaining data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data must not be retained for longer than necessary. General retention rules can be found in the Members Retention Schedule in paragraph 12 below. If you cease to be a RBL member you must hand over to the branch or Head Office any paper materials containing members' personal data such as lists or labels, and delete any electronic formats of membership data you hold.
Sharing data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members have not given consent for their details to be made available to anyone except RBL authorised staff and Branch Officers. Consequently, a member's personal details (including addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses) must never be shared with the public, other organisations, other members, unauthorised staff or other volunteers, without the member's prior written consent. • All communications relating to RBL business are to be sent from an rbl. community email address by membership formations. Any sent from personal email addresses will be in breach of the data protection policy from 1st April 2024.

c. Members' retention schedule

Description of document	Format	Trigger (time when the retention period specified in the next column starts)	Disposal Action and Retention Period ('delete for paper' means placing in a shredder or a secure disposal bin)
• Communications received and sent by post or email that contain personal data	Paper (P)/ Electronic (E)	• Date received/sent	• Delete after 12 months
• Copies of County or Annual Conference delegate applications	Paper (P)/ Electronic (E)	• Conclusion of Conference	• Delete after three months
• Copies of Youth Affiliation applications	Paper (P)/ Electronic (E)	• Affiliation cancelled/ ended/branch closed/ youth organisation closed	• Delete immediately
• Copies of: - Accounts forms - Bank statements - Authority to disclose information forms	Paper (P)/ Electronic (E)	• Document completion date	• Preferably make an electronic copy (to be deleted after seven years) and destroy paper copy immediately. If not possible keep in a safe place and destroy after seven years
• Copies of expense claim forms/ receipt vouchers/payment vouchers/other financial documents e.g. invoices	Paper (P)/ Electronic (E)	• Payment received by the claimant	• (P) make an electronic copy and destroy paper copy immediately. If not possible keep in a safe place and destroy after seven years • (E) delete after seven years
• Membership complaints	Paper (P)/ Electronic (E)	• Issue resolved (e.g. completion of mediation meeting, Investigation Panel or appeal)	• Delete after three years
• Membership reports and listings with members' details	Paper (P)/ Electronic (E)	• New report/listing obtained	• Delete immediately • (Microsoft Office 365 (O365): we will auto-delete all the reports that are older than 12 months)
• MS1/MS1A		• Completion date	• Delete after five years
• Election documents: candidate CVs, ballot papers	Paper (P)/ Electronic (E)	• Election results obtained	• Delete after 30 days
• County/branch meeting minutes	Paper (P)/ Electronic (E)	• Publication date	• Delete after five years
• Copies of membership application forms	• P/E (scanned)	• P/E: membership confirmed date	• Delete immediately
• Cheques	• Paper	• P: receipt date	• Cheques must be banked weekly. Returned cheques to be destroyed immediately
• Any documents with personal data of cancelled/deceased members	• P/E (scanned)	• Death/cancellation notification	• Remove personal data (email, telephone number, DOB and address) from all documents immediately

Information

This section of the Handbook is designed to give you an understanding of how the Royal British Legion works and is financed.



ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

8. About the RBL

a. How the RBL is financed

All funds held by the RBL (by branches, Counties and centrally) are charitable funds and are the responsibility of the Board of Trustees. The funds must be used only according to instructions and policies from the [Board of Trustees](#). These instructions and policies are always in accordance with the Royal Charter, charity law, financial laws and other regulations concerning use of charitable funds, as well as codes of practice, rules of good practice and other professional compliance advice the RBL receives. The use of charitable funds for purposes other than those laid down by the Board of Trustees is strictly forbidden and may be illegal. The Board of Trustees is responsible for two funds defined in the [Royal Charter](#).

The Benevolent Fund

This contains gifts of money or property from public or private subscription or other sources, and is the charity's main source of income. The Poppy Appeal provides a large part of this income. The Royal Charter requires formations to give active support to the organisation of the Poppy Appeal, which is a year-round activity, and not just confined to Remembrancetide.

The General Fund

This funds the membership organisation. It draws its income mainly from the annual membership fees paid by members and from Gift Aid on those fees. It covers:

- Membership administration, governance, grants, training grants and events grants (the application process for which can be found [here](#)) for Counties.
- Producing RBL magazine
- Membership Support
- Membership Training
- Membership staff costs

Both funds will be examined annually by an independent examiner or a qualified auditor.

b. The RBL's governance

The Board of Trustees is the RBL's governing body. It instructs and advises the Membership Council, Counties and branches. Find out more about how the Board of Trustees works on our website [here](#).

The Membership Council represents the members of the Royal British Legion. Find out more through your local branch. RBL staff implement the policies and procedures agreed by the Board of Trustees and the Membership Council.

9. About formations

a. What formations are and how they are structured

- A formation is a branch, County, District or Section. In this handbook, including in this section, when we talk about Counties, we mean Counties, Districts and Sections.
- Counties, Districts and Sections are administrative regions of the Royal British Royal British Legion. They have different names but the same functions.
- A branch is a group of RBL members, which may be formed based on locality or shared interest. Counties are made up of several branches.
- To become a member of the RBL, a person has to join a branch. Every RBL member is therefore a branch member.
- A member can join up to four branches, so can belong to a maximum of four branches at one time and pays only one membership fee. They will have to pay admin fees for each branch they joined.
- A member who sits on more than one Branch Committee, must be a member of that branch and this does not exceed four branches at any given time.
- An individual, who is a member of multiple branches, is not allowed to be nominated as a Conference delegate by more than one branch.
- No more than two branch representatives, elected or co-opted, will hold positions on Group, District, and County Committees unless approval to waiver this is granted by the Membership Council Representative for the area concerned.
- Where it may cause confusion, branches which share a geographic name with branches in other areas in the UK or Overseas can request permission to include the County or District in their branch name. The MS5D form should be used for this purpose.

Four kinds of branches:

- Branches that cover a defined geographical area. These are the most common kind and each one comes under the responsibility of a County.
- Overseas branches. Read more about these [here](#).
- National branches. These are non-geographical and are often created by special interest Groups. National branches are overseen by the National Branches District.
- Branches of the Women's Section.

A branch must have a Committee of at least seven members, elected and appointed. If a branch isn't able to form a Committee, it can apply to its County for CSB status.

A CSB has no Committee, just two Points of Contact, and no bank account. The County manages its funds.

All branches are part of a County (with some exceptions Overseas and National) and are guided by their Counties. A branch not happy with any decision of its County Committee, may within 28 days raise a complaint to the Membership Council. A copy of the complaint must be sent to the County Committee at the same time.

Branches can form Groups, particularly in large Counties. Groups can help branches to support each other, act as a forum and provide a link between branch and County. More on Groups can be found below in section 22.

Counties and branches each have their own Committee. Counties also have their own Conference.

b. Committees and the roles people can hold

	Branch	County/District
Committee roles	Chair, Vice Chair (Optional), Treasurer (appointed), Secretary, Branch Community Support Committee or Representative, Branch Recruiting Officer (non-compulsory)	Chair, Vice Chair, County Community Support Committee or Representative, County Recruiting Officer, County Training Officer
Committee-appointed roles (but not Committee members)	President (non-compulsory)	President and Treasurer (both compulsory)
Number of additional Committee members allowed	Three to seven	Seven to 15
Quorum	Four	Half the members entitled to attend and to vote

Rules for all Royal British Legion Officers

They must:

- Follow the duties and responsibilities outlined by the Board of Trustees and the Membership Council.
- Adhere to all RBL policies and procedures.
- Ensure the formation complies with charity law.
- Serve the interests of the RBL at all times.
- Undergo appropriate training for their role.
- (For Branch Officers) not serve as officers of an associated club Committee.
- (For Branch Officers) not be a tenant or representative of a tenant of properties held in trust by the branch.
- Any Membership Officer (Branch Chair, County Chair, Membership Council Representative, Board of Trustees member) cannot hold a position of National Parade Marshal, Deputy or Assistant National Parade Marshal whilst in membership office.

Community Support

Branches exist to promote the Royal British Legion's work in their communities and the best way to accomplish this is to register for Branch Community Support (BCS). There are two roles that members can hold that support BCS. At branch level a registered branch should have a BCS Representative who is responsible to the Branch Committee for the community support activities of the branch. They must follow strict confidential working practices and complete appropriate training.

At County level there should be a County Community Support Coordinator who encourages and advises branches on the delivery of BCS. They work closely with the MEO who can provide professional advice and support.

Both roles are required to attend training and have appropriate checks completed. There are opportunities for members to become Telephone Buddies, Case Workers or Visitor Volunteers. Find out more about these roles [here](#).

What happens if a role suddenly becomes vacant?

If this happens to the role of Chair or Vice Chair, the next highest placed candidate in the latest election fills the vacancy. If there is no such person, the Committee should co-opt a temporary replacement for the remainder of the term unless there are more than 15 months until the next election. In this case the Committee must initiate an election within one month and complete it within four months to fill the vacancy.

If a vacancy occurs for any other position, the Committee should co-opt a suitable member of a branch within the County as a temporary replacement until the next annual meeting or special meeting, when a fresh election must be held for the rest of its term. A member elected or appointed in this way may be elected for up to three further terms in the office concerned.

What County Committees do:

- Oversee the activities of the branches in their Counties and establish Groups.
- Recommend to the Membership Council the closures, openings and status changes of branches.
- Oversee BCS.
- Prepare County Plans.
- Authorise any person, whether or not a member of the RBL, to visit any meeting of any branch or Branch Committee in its County at any time on its behalf and to have access to all deeds, documents, books and accounts of this branch.
- Take a branch into administration where necessary, keeping the Membership Council informed at all stages. A branch unable to form a committee or in other ways unable to temporarily function, is supported by the County Committee instead of Branch Committee where all branch affairs including its bank account, are under the control of County until the branch can return to normal.
- In case of a local resolution which identified a need for a member to be suspended or excluded, the County Committee refers this back to the LCC for action.

- Make sure every branch submits copies of its annual branch accounts to Head Office.
- Hold an annual meeting, which may put motions forward to the RBL's Annual Conference.
- Help the [Board of Trustees](#) and the Membership Council to carry out the work of the RBL.
- Help to organise the Poppy Appeal and any other fundraising activities in their Counties.
- Establish sub-Committees.
- Act on resolutions passed at the Annual Meeting of County Conference (or at a Special Meeting of the County Conference), as long as they do not conflict with the Royal Charter or with the Board of Trustees' instructions.
- Encourage payment of membership fees by Direct Debit and encourage members to Gift Aid their subscription where appropriate.

For more about their responsibilities, see the [Royal Charter](#).

The County Committee, in discussion with the Membership Council Representative, should elect to remove a Branch Officer or Committee member from their position, or prevent them from taking a position on a committee, where they have not demonstrated the RBL's values and behaviours, have not followed the rules as laid down in the Royal Charter and the Membership Handbook or have not followed relevant RBL instruction, policy and procedures.

c. By-laws

By-laws lay down how a formation is organised and structured and how it works. They also contain all the terms of reference of County sub-Committees. They are based on the model by-laws. For Counties, any amendments or additions must be approved at a Meeting of County Conference by a two-thirds majority and then approved by the Membership Council.

d. County Plan

Counties must have a three-year plan based on Royal British Legion aims and policies and the County objectives. County Plans are live agenda items which the County Committee reviews at each committee meeting and should also be reviewed annually by the County Committee at their annual meeting.

e. Overseas Districts and branches

There are two kinds of overseas branches: those that operate within an overseas District and those that are stand-alone. Stand-alone branches come under the responsibility of the Membership Council.

Overseas Districts (Germany, Spain North and Spain South) operate in the same way as UK Counties but should be aware that some activities (for example, fundraising and property ownership) will be regulated by local laws. If there is a conflict, then the law of the home

country of the District or branch must prevail. The Royal British Legion's MEO (Overseas) offers support and guidance to all overseas formations.

Overseas Districts have their own supplementary model by-laws. For further information, speak to your MEO.

f. RBL-licensed Clubs

RBL members can join RBL-licensed clubs (referred to here as RBL Clubs). Club membership is additional to branch membership and club members may need to pay an additional club membership fee directly to their club.

RBL Clubs are independent, not-for-profit, registered mutual trading societies, which are not part of the charity. They must apply to the RBL for a licence to use the charity name and logo. They must be run in accordance with the law, the registered club rules and the conditions of the licence under which the club uses the name of the RBL in its title and the RBL logo.

The RBL provides model club rules, approved by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), and on the basis of the agreed rules, the club is correctly registered.

Each club is granted a licence in perpetuity by the RBL, allowing it to use the RBL's name and logo. Failure to comply with the conditions of the licence and rules can result in the withdrawal of the licence. Clubs are required to submit an annual application to obtain or renew their RBL licence, attaching supporting accounts and a recommendation from the Regional Club Relationship Manager to obtain or maintain a licence. The County Committee will have the opportunity to challenge or support the Regional Club Relationship Manager's recommendation.

The issue of a full or conditional licence and the withdrawal of a licence must be approved by the Membership Council. The issue of a full licence needs to be approved for the first time; following the first approval, if there are no recommendations for a licence change or withdrawal, the club will be automatically granted a full licence without the need for further approvals from the Membership Council.

The activities of RBL clubs are supported by the following staff members: Regional Club Relationship Managers and the National Clubs Administration Manager. Staff can provide management advice for clubs, but clubs must make their own decisions when it comes to running the business.

If a club occupies a building in corporate trusteeship, the club is the RBL's tenant. The occupation of the club is regularised through a lease or other tenancy arrangement. Rent is charged to the tenant in accordance with the Charities Act 2011, the Landlord and Tenant Act and Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors standards. For more information about property issues, contact commercialadmin@britishlegion.org.uk or your Regional Property Manager.

Overseas Districts must ensure that branches do not use the Royal British Legion's name or their branch accounts in connection with any bar or club used by the branch. They must also make sure that branches do not use the RBL's name on any financial accounts connected with bars and clubs.

Counties should monitor the activities of clubs to ensure that a club is not in breach of its RBL licence and that it is not bringing the name of the RBL into disrepute. Any issues must be reported to the Regional Club Relationship Manager and the National Clubs Administration Manager. Counties must, however, recognise that clubs are independent trading societies and therefore they cannot interfere with the internal running of a club. Counties must work with the Regional Club Relationship Managers and MEOs to recommend the issue and withdrawal of the RBL licence to and from clubs.

Counties must not provide business advice or guidance to clubs – the first point of call for any business matters are the Regional Club Relationship Managers and National Clubs Administration Manager.

Counties are encouraged to appoint Club Liaison Officers.

It is illegal for branches to subsidise RBL clubs (or any other social purpose) from charitable funds. That means they mustn't pay for things that the club should pay for. They also must not loan money to clubs. To do so would be to use charitable funds wrongly and might lead to the Branch Committee members facing criminal proceedings.

Branches must not collect club rent – the RBL's Commercial Department has a duty to ensure that a proper rent is charged in accordance with charity law and the lease, and that rent is received when due.

Branch Officers must not also serve as club officers and vice versa. Committee members who sit on both branch and club Committees must declare their interest and withdraw from that part of a meeting of the Branch Committee when decisions affecting the relationship between the branch and club are to be made.

g. Premises occupied by branches

Branches that occupy or control properties must make sure that the building is safe. The Branch Chair is responsible for this, although he or she can delegate day-to-day management to another Royal British Legion member.

Everything you need to know on building safety legislation is in the Branch Occupied Premises Statutory Compliance Policy available through the Commercial Team at the Head Office.

10. About formations finances

a. RBL funds – general notes

All money held by branches, Counties and Districts are charitable funds and belong to the RBL. The Board of Trustees is responsible for the management and administration of this money.

The RBL's corporate financial year runs from 1st October to 30th September. The financial year for branches, Counties and Districts runs from 1st July to 30th June. The RBL's accounts are audited annually.

To find more information about funds held by the RBL, please consult the [Royal Charter](#).

b. The General Fund

Membership fees go into the General Fund, an unrestricted fund. General Fund and Gift Aid claimed on those fees and donations also go here. It pays for:

- Membership governance and administration, including Annual Conference.
- Grants to Counties and Districts for administration, training and events.
- Producing RBL magazine.
- Membership support, development and training.
- The costs of staff involved in activities that support the membership.

Branch and County funds

They are unrestricted funds, the day-to-day administration of which has been delegated to Branch and County Committees. These funds must be used to further the Royal British Legion's charitable aims through activities, almonisation of welfare grants or through donations to the Poppy Appeal or other RBL services and activities.

Some branches and Counties also have their own restricted funds. These funds may contain money from Branch Property Trusts, legacies and other donations and can only be spent in accordance with the relevant terms or wishes of the donor.

Branch Crisis Grants

Branches, who are registered and have trained supporters conducting Branch Community Support, can issue a Branch Crisis Grant up to £200 where an immediate response is required out of office hours. This enables branches to respond quickly where support is needed by our beneficiaries who are facing a crisis need for the basics of life, food, shelter etc. The Branch Crisis Process must be adhered to when issuing a grant.

c. The Branch Funds Initiative (BFI)

BFI is a savings scheme administered by Head Office. Funds are pooled and invested on long-term deposits with banks approved by the Finance Committee. This helps branches and Counties to benefit from a higher rate of interest than they would normally achieve independently and keeps their funds secure.

d. RBL Online Accounting Management System (LOMAS)

LOMAS is an electronic accounting system for branches, Counties and Districts maintained by the Finance Department. Its purpose is to provide branches and Counties with a secure online platform for maintaining their accounts and to automate the production of the annual branch return. LOMAS is not an online banking platform.

If your branch is interested in using LOMAS, contact your MEO.

If you need help with LOMAS, email LOMAShelpdesk@britishlegion.org.uk

e. Branch Property Trusts

Some branches are connected to properties that are held on trust.

If you need more information on your Branch's Property Trust please contact the Regional Property Manager.

11. About the Membership Council

a. Aims and how it works

The Membership Council is a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees. It represents the needs of RBL membership. It usually meets six times a year, right after the meetings of the Board of Trustees. The Membership Council Chair can also call a special meeting of the council if needed.

The Membership Council exists to:

- Help with membership policy matters at the request of the Board of Trustees or RBL directors.
- Manage and administer Counties.
- Manage and administer branches that do not belong to a County.
- Approve the formation, amalgamation and closure of Counties, branches.
- Approve County model by-laws, County by-laws and branch model by-laws.
- Approve, amend and withdraw RBL club licences.
- Monitor the General Fund Budget and make recommendations on income and expenditure.
- Make recommendations for the improvement of membership administration and systems to make sure that members' needs are being met.

It helps to develop the RBL's strategic membership plan and oversees:

- The Membership complaints procedure.
- Membership Training
- The Ceremonial Handbook.
- The RBL's Youth policy.
- The RBL's Bands policy.
- The RBL's Cups and Shields Guidelines.

Details of these can be found on Microsoft Office 365 (O365) or through your MEO.

The Membership Council is made up of the following:

- Two members of the Board of Trustees appointed by the RBL's National Chair.
- These two members are the Chair and Vice Chair of the Membership Council.
- 19 members, including one from each electoral region and one from Overseas, the Women's Section and National Branches.

Geographical Electoral Regions:

- Cornwall/Devon
- Somerset/Wiltshire
- Dorset/Hampshire/Isle of Wight
- London (Greater London)
- South-East (Kent, Surrey and Sussex)
- East Anglia/Essex (Cambridgeshire, Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk)
- South-East Midlands (Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire)
- South-West Midlands (Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire)
- West Midlands (Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Birmingham)
- East Midlands (Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire)
- Wales (Gwent, North Wales, South-East Wales, South West Wales)
- Yorkshire (North and East Yorkshire, South and West Yorkshire)
- Merseyside/Cheshire (Cheshire, West Lancashire)
- Manchester/Lancashire (Greater Manchester, Lancashire)
- Northern (Cumbria, Isle of Man, Northumbria)
- Ireland (Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland)

At meetings, there needs to be at least one trustee member and seven elected members present for the meeting to be quorate. In addition, the RBL's Executive Director of Membership should be present and heads of department and managers from the RBL's membership division if they are needed. Other members of RBL staff may be invited to help with specific agenda items. The RBL's Director of Operations may have a standing agenda item so that they can brief the Membership Council and feedback on matters relating to the RBL's operation.

The Chair of the Membership Council chairs the meetings. Therefore, they need the skill and experience to guide the council, including good knowledge of the RBL's activities. Anything they say in this role should reflect RBL views and policy. In the absence of the Chair, meetings are Chaired by the Vice Chair of the Membership Council.

The meeting participants work through the agenda. Reports that have been produced for the Membership Council to consider (including sub-committee work) are circulated at 14 days ahead of the meeting to Membership Council members by email.

The Membership Council provides the Board of Trustees with minutes of meetings and detailed reports on specific proposals where needed. Members of the Membership Council can see meeting agendas, briefing papers and decision minutes on the RBL intranet. Confidential items are published in the secure area.

The Membership Council can also advise the Conference Committee on motions for Annual Conference.

Members of the Membership Council represent the views of themselves and their regions. However, once a majority decision is taken by the Membership Council, it must be honoured by all members. The Chair can ask a Membership Council member to relinquish their position if there is a conflict with the RBL's values and aims, they do not accept a majority decision or if they have been absent for three consecutive meetings in a year.

12. What Membership Council members do

Membership Council members always act in the best interests of the Royal British Legion. They must not gain financial or other benefit from membership of the Council. Council members take decisions together and are collectively responsible for their implementation. They delegate responsibility for the day-to-day running of the membership to the Membership Department.

They ensure that the Membership Organisation acts within the terms of the Royal Charter. They are also responsible for organising briefings in their electoral regions.

Membership Council members undergo training when they take up their role. They are paid reasonable expenses. They should attend Annual Conference and can attend County Committee meetings in their electoral region without invitation. They should attend the annual general meetings of Counties in their electoral region.

Membership Council members must not be Chair or Vice Chair of Counties or branches, or voting members of County or Branch Committees. They can only take the role of a President. Any conflict of interest must be declared.

13. Membership Council Working Groups

Ceremonial Working Group

This group maintains the Ceremonial Handbook, which can be found on Microsoft Office 365 (O365) or through your MEO, and considers all matters to do with ceremony. It meets at least three times a year and the agenda is circulated at least one week before each meeting. The Chair of this group presents the minutes to the Membership Council.

The members are:

- Three members of the Membership Council, one of whom is appointed as the Chair by the Membership Council Chair.
- The National Parade Marshal (or an assistant if they cannot attend).
- The Women's Section National Parade Marshal (or an assistant if they cannot attend).

The Membership Governance Coordinator coordinates the meetings of the Ceremonial Working Group. Three members of this group must be at a meeting for it to be quorate. Votes are taken by a show of hands.

Membership Awards Working Group

This group decides on the application criteria and the Annual Membership Awards. It meets twice a year and the agenda is circulated at least one week before each meeting. The Chair of this group presents the minutes to the Membership Council.

The members are:

- Four members of the Membership Council. One is appointed as the Chair by the Chair of the Membership Council.
- The Secretary, who is a member of the Membership Directorate.

Members serve for three years and can serve multiple terms. Three members of this group must be at a meeting for it to be quorate. Votes are taken by a show of hands.

RBL Complaints Committee

This group deals with membership complaints and reports to the Membership Council. It is briefed on all formal complaints and discusses them at meetings, where it decides whether to investigate. The Chair of the group can consult members of Royal British Legion staff if they need to.

If the group decides that there needs to be a formal investigation, the group Chair sets up an investigation panel. This panel consists of three or five members and has its own Chair, appointed by the Complaints Committee Chair.

If there is a complaint against a member of the Board of Trustees or a member of the Membership Council, the Complaints Committee Chair will refer that case to the RBL's Governance Committee.

The Complaints Committee may suspend a member or volunteer from any County, Branch, Committee or sub-Committee for up to 90 days before a formal investigation. The Complaints Committee may revoke or extend the suspension if needed.

The members are:

- Five members of the Membership Council, one of whom is appointed as Chair by the Membership Council Chair.

Members serve for three years and can serve multiple terms. The Members of RBL staff can be invited to meetings to help with specific agenda items. The RBL's Membership Liaison Officer is the secretary and is required to attend all complaints committee meetings. The secretary convenes meetings, issues an agenda and briefing papers before meetings, and issues minutes to Complaints Committee members and other relevant people. Four members must be at a meeting for it to be quorate. If the Complaints Committee Chair is absent, another member of the Complaints Committee can take their place. Votes are carried out by a show of hands. If there is disagreement, the Chair decides.

Appeals

The Complaints Committee Chair considers appeals against decisions by investigation panels initially. An Appeal Committee consists of the Complaints Committee Chair, plus the two trustees who sit on the Membership Council. If the Appeal Committee decides that there are procedural errors, new evidence to support the appeal or valid grounds for an appeal to be heard, the appeal goes ahead, overseen by an Appeal Panel. If the Appeal Committee decides against an appeal, the Complaints Committee Chair will tell the person in question. The Appeal Panel consists of three or five members of the Membership Council.

14. Annual Conference

The Royal British Legion holds an Annual Conference, as required by the Royal Charter. It is held over two days normally on the weekend before the spring bank holiday. Its location is decided at Annual Conference four years earlier. Conference is set by the Standing Orders of Conference (a copy of which is available from the local MEO).

Annual Conference comprises:

- Reports and accounts for the past year.
- The RBL Director General's address.
- Review of the corporate plan.
- Motions, including the proposal of amendments to the Royal Charter and the membership rules.
- Nominations for membership of the Conference Committee.
- All decisions at Annual Conference are taken in the form of voting by branch delegates.

The Conference Committee

The Board of Trustees appoints a Conference Committee to oversee the preparation of the Annual Conference and its agenda. This committee consists of:

- One member of the Board of Trustees nominated by the National Chair.
- Two members of the Membership Council nominated by the Membership Council Chair.
- Three members or life members elected by Annual Conference.
- Members of the Board of Trustees, Membership Council and staff members may attend and can speak at Annual Conference. However, they may not vote or attend as the delegate of any branch or County Conference.

The RBL President presides at the opening of Annual Conference. The conference is chaired by the RBL Chair (or in the Chair's absence by the RBL Vice Chair). Read the Standing Orders, available through Microsoft Office 365 (O365) or your MEO, to find out how Annual Conference works.

15. County Conference

Every conference agenda should include, as a minimum:

- Reports (including the Chair's report and welfare report).
- Accounts for the past year.
- The corporate address (to be given by the allocated speaker).
- Motions, including the proposal of amendments to the Royal Charter and the membership rules.
- Review of the County Plan.
- Nominations for membership of the Conference Committee.

Counties and Districts may choose to also have a guest speaker who presents to the conference on an item of interest, for example, a local charity or a beneficiary. The guest speaker is separate from the corporate speaker and should not be a Trustee.

County Conference organisation

The County/District Conference Committee are responsible for the planning and delivery of the conference and should use the 'Standing Orders for Annual Conference and TOR for the Conference Committee', making adjustments where appropriate to allow for where the County Conference differs from the Annual Conference. This Standing Order is available on the Membership Administration Portal (MAP).

16. Awards

The Royal British Legion recognises outstanding contributions or achievements that go well beyond what might normally be expected of a RBL officer or member.

National Awards

To be considered for a national award, a person must have already been awarded a County or Branch Certificate of Appreciation. National awards are decided by the National Chair.

- The National Certificate of Appreciation is the highest honour. It may be awarded to a member who has made a conspicuous contribution to the RBL for at least 12 years. Certificates are presented at Annual Conference and are accompanied by a lapel badge inscribed 'For Merit'.
- Life Membership is awarded to a member who has given at least 10 years' meritorious and conspicuous service to the objectives of the RBL as defined by the Royal Charter. This member usually holds the RBL Gold Badge. The recipient remains a member without having to pay a membership fee for the rest of their life. When Life Membership is approved, a certificate is sent to the member, together with a Life Membership card and badge.
- The Gold Badge may be awarded to a member who has given at least eight years' meritorious and conspicuous service to the objectives of the RBL as defined by the Royal Charter. Following the National Chair's approval, the branch or County proposing the award must meet the cost of the badge. When the recipient passes away, the badge becomes the property of the next of kin, who may retain it or return it to the branch.
- Application forms for national awards can be obtained from the MEOs or from Microsoft Office 365 (O365). Applications must:
 - Demonstrate the individual's service to the RBL.
 - Be signed by the Chair of the nominee's branch, Group or County. If the Chair is the nominee, the application must be signed by the President. Where two or more offices are combined, it may be necessary to involve the Treasurer.
 - Be recommended by the County Committee.

It is advisable not to tell the nominee about recommendations to avoid disappointment if the application isn't successful.

Every member, excluding Youth Members, Life Members and members awarded a National Certificate of Appreciation, must pay an annual membership fee to the RBL.

County award

A County Certificate of Appreciation may be awarded to a member who has made a conspicuous contribution to the County.

Branch Award

A Branch Certificate of Appreciation may be awarded to a member who has made a conspicuous contribution to the branch or RBL in general.

King's Birthday and New Year Honours

RBL members may be recommended for inclusion in the King's Birthday and New Year Honours List. Recommendations are normally for the Order of the British Empire – Officer of the Order (OBE), Member of the Order (MBE) or British Empire Medal (BEM). The RBL has its own Honours Group who oversee the nominations process; the Honours Group is chaired by the National President.

The member being nominated should have given exceptional and outstanding service to the RBL. Citations must be submitted on the dedicated Cabinet Office Citation form which contains a record of offices/roles held and dates, and demonstrates the distinctive nature of the nominee's work. References should be made to service in HM Forces and any voluntary work with other organisations and in the local community.

The RBL has guidance on the Honour process, which along with the form can be requested via your MEO or the Director General's Office. Please note only the Cabinet Office citation form will be considered, no additional information such as supporting letters will be reviewed as part of the citation. All citations should have the 'nominated by' completed in case any queries arise.

The timetable for nominations is set by the Cabinet Office and therefore subject to change.

The Director General's Office will email County Chairs and MEOs with the timetable with an expected return date of end of January for New Year Honours and end of August for the King's Birthday Honours. Please send these to:

Executive Assistant to the Director General, The Royal British Legion, 199 Borough High Street, London SE1 1AA or email your County Chair or MEO for forwarding to the Director General's office.

Due to the complicated process around Honours, it is better to avoid telling the nominee that they have been nominated to avoid disappointment if the recommendation is not successful.

Annual Membership Awards

These awards are all presented at Annual Conference:

Award	Criteria	Nominator
Haig Cup	Awarded to a branch (with more than 50 members) that can demonstrate compliancy and which, during the past year, has not only supported its membership and beneficiaries, but also positively promoted RBL within its community, County/District or the wider country. Winners receive a scroll of award and a star to add to their branch Standard.	County Committees nominate branches.
Lister Cup	Awarded to a branch (with up to and including 50 members) that can demonstrate compliancy and which, during the past year, has not only supported its membership and beneficiaries, but also positively promoted the RBL within its County/District or the wider community. Winners receive a star for their branch Standard.	County Committees nominate branches.
Maurice Challenge Cup	Awarded to the County/District/Section that can demonstrate compliancy and which, during the past year, has not only supported its membership and beneficiaries, but also positively promoted the RBL within its community. Winners receive a scroll of award.	MC Reps nominate Counties.
Jellicoe Cup	Awarded to a branch in recognition of its sterling efforts, enthusiasm and determination to further the aims of the RBL by increasing the visibility of the services and actively supporting our beneficiaries under the Branch Community Support scheme. All nominated branches must be at least three years old. Winners receive a scroll of award.	Branches are nominated by County/District/Section.
Churchill Shield	Awarded to a national branch that can demonstrate compliancy and which, during the past year, has not only supported its membership and beneficiaries, but also positively promoted the RBL within its district or the wider community. All nominated branches must be at least three years old.	Branches are nominated by the National Branches District.
Downing Shield	Awarded to an individual member who is recognised to have played an important part in the delivery of BCS with a view to greatly improving RBL's support to beneficiaries.	Nominations should be sent from branch or County/District.
Lewis Shield	Awarded to an RBL member with a disability who has provided substantial inspiration for other RBL members.	Individuals are nominated by their branch, with the County/District/Section also providing a citation in support of the application.
Knox Shield	Awarded to an organisation or group for its commitment and willingness to work collaboratively with our local membership*, greatly increasing awareness of our services provided under BCS. <i>*Either County Community Support Committee (or Rep) or Branch Community Support Committee (or Rep).</i>	Nominations should be sent from branch or County/District/Section.

McCrae Shield	The McCrae Shield is awarded to an overseas branch that can demonstrate compliancy and which, during the past year, has not only supported its membership and beneficiaries, but also positively promoted RBL within its district or wider community. All nominated branches must be at least three years old.	Nominations are made by the relevant district, MC Rep for Overseas or MEO.
Ian Hamilton Cup	Awarded to a club for making significant efforts in furthering the charitable objectives of RBL, showing good and effective general management and/or significantly developing the club. Please note, only clubs that have a full licence can be nominated.	Clubs are to be put forward by their County/District. More than one club per County may be nominated.
Membership Training Award	Awarded to an individual who has shown excellence in their capacity to deliver learning that makes a real difference to members.	Individuals are nominated by County/District Chairs.

How to apply: Nominations for the above awards should be submitted by the listed nominator for each award in the table provided. Details of how to formally submit a nomination to the Annual Membership Awards Working Group for consideration are shared alongside the deadline(s) each year as part of the Annual Conference October Special Circular, available on MAP.

Annual Membership Awards – Poppy Appeal

The following awards are awarded based on the previous year’s Poppy Appeal fundraising. The awards are presented to winners at Annual Conference.

Award	Criteria	Nominator
Noel Rogers Trophy	Awarded to the officially recognised RBL overseas branch/club which donated the greatest sum to the Poppy Appeal.	No application required.
Bucher Trophy for Clubs	Awarded to a club, licensed by RBL, for raising annually the largest donation amount per club member for the most recent Poppy Appeal, to include funds raised from 1st February to 31st January.	No application required.
Poppy Appeal Trophy	Awarded to the County that has raised the highest Poppy Appeal donation result per capita, based on population.	No application required.
Hughes Trophy	Awarded to a County for the highest percentage increase in donations for the Poppy Appeal per capita, based on population.	No application required.

How to apply: No applications are required. Winners are calculated by RBL’s central office based on the available data from the previous year’s Poppy Appeal.

17. Youth Members

The Royal British Legion is committed to helping young people understand the issues of Remembrance, conflict and the importance of peace.

County Youth Officers are appointed to develop relationships with young people, schools and cadets in the County.

Branches may affiliate with any local youth organisation, such as St John Ambulance, The Scout Association, Girlguiding, The Boys' Brigade or youth clubs. The purpose is to promote mutual support and encouragement to each other's aims and objectives in the local community.

In addition, the RBL welcomes members from the age of 12 up to the age of 18. Young people can join as [Youth Members](#) free of charge. All they have to do is fill out an application form.

You can read our Safeguarding Policy on Microsoft Office 365 (O365) or request it from your MEO.

18. RBL-licensed Bands

Music is a fundamental part of Royal British Legion life and its bands offer unique opportunities to musicians.

RBL-licensed bands are allowed to use the RBL's name and logo. Find out more [here](#).

19. Photography and Social Media

RBL uses social media to drive year-round awareness of our services and support, demonstrate our impact through positive storytelling content, and engage with our community.

Whether you run a social media account on behalf of your branch or County, or use social media in a personal capacity, this code of conduct exists to help you use social media effectively and responsibly, in a way that supports RBL and protects its reputation.

This code of conduct must be followed when using social media on behalf of your branch and in a personal capacity, including commenting on a post, sharing content (posts, updates, photos, videos or links), using it as a messaging tool, or simply maintaining a profile on any social media site. Even content shared in private messages or closed groups can become public so please think before you post. The caveat 'all views my own' is not sufficient. Please refer to the ten guiding principles (page 5) and RBL's values (page 6) when conducting yourself online.

Code of conduct

To avoid bringing your branch or RBL into disrepute, you must not share content or comments on social media that may cause offence to another member, employee, volunteer, partner organisation, MP or member of the public.

RBL is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive organisation, and we often share content on our national social media channels that reflects the diversity of the Armed Forces community and of wider society. You must not share personal opinions or public posts, private messages or post comments that are offensive or degrading (including sexist, racist or homophobic language).

You must not share content that implies you are a spokesperson for RBL or associated charities or partner organisations.

If you have a complaint about your branch, another member, or RBL, you must raise this directly with your Branch Official or RBL MEO (see page 28 for more information). Do not air this on social media as this will simply draw unwanted attention to the issue rather than help resolve it.

Unless you're running an account for your branch or County, you must not use the Royal British Legion, RBL or any derivative as part of your username for any social media channel. You must not use the RBL logo or Membership emblem, or any modification of these logos, as your profile picture.

You must not share information deemed confidential or meant for RBL members only. In accordance with GDPR you must not share personal information about another individual.

Using social media to intimidate, bully or harass another individual through public or privately shared posts or comments will not be tolerated.

You must not speculate or comment on political affairs; as RBL must always remain politically neutral.

Dealing with issues

Things can escalate quickly on social media. If you spot a potential issue or anything that could pose a reputational risk (e.g. other staff, volunteers, individual members or supporters publicly discussing matters such as other members, volunteers, RBL services or events, or using discriminatory or offensive language) please flag this immediately to your MEO.

Inappropriate behaviour

Inappropriate behaviour involving social media sites or digital communications platforms, inside or outside the workplace, will normally be dealt with under our internal performance procedures and serious cases could be viewed as gross misconduct. We may also ask people to remove internet postings that are considered a breach of this Social Media Framework. If you're ever in doubt about what's considered acceptable, please contact a Branch Official, MEO or RBL's social media team before publishing. Unacceptable behaviour on social media could result in a complaint being made to the LCC.

Photography

In order to ensure that RBL has lawful basis in collecting personal data under data protection laws you should always consider getting consent from the relevant person. If you organise an event or activity where you are taking photographs or making visual recordings of a person, you should make it a priority of getting consent from the person before going ahead. If the person is under the age of 18 sufficient consent must be obtained from their legal guardian. In events or activities where consents are not normally sought, you may display a suitable notice. For more information or guidance on this area, please contact membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk.

20. Branch Role Descriptions

Branch President

The Branch President is an optional non-elected role, usually occupied by someone of important standing in the community.

The President is appointed by the Branch Committee for a tenure of up to three years, which can be repeated. They may advise the Committee but do not have a vote. Their role is only representative and advisory.

Terms of Reference

The President may attend and speak at the meetings of the Branch Committee but must not propose, second or vote.

1. Has both a representational and encouraging role and be able to counsel the Chair and Officers as and when necessary, in the execution of their duties.
2. When offering advice/feedback to the Branch Committee, the President should be clear, constructive, and encouraging.
3. Attend meetings and assist the Branch Committee at branch events as required.
4. Represent the RBL in the local community and as such must be conversant with the services the organisation offers.
5. Preside at the opening of the branch AGM and give the presidential address.
6. Present branch awards.
7. Develop a good working relationship with the County President.
8. The President cannot attend County Conference as a delegate.
9. If required by the Branch Committee, discuss suitable successors for the role of Branch President with them and having arrived at a consensus, negotiate discreetly and confidentially with the chosen person, to establish a willingness to serve and accept the role and the duties it involves.

Branch Chair

To be eligible for the role of Branch Chair an individual must be aged 18 or above, be a member or Life Member of the branch. They must not have an unspent conviction, have been disqualified as a company director or a trustee, or be undischarged bankrupt.

The Branch Chair is the most senior elected Officer on the Branch Committee. They are expected to show strong leadership, management, and diplomacy skills to ensure that a close bond and good relationship is maintained between the Branch Committee, the branch members, and the County.

Terms of References

1. The Branch Chair is accountable for all branch activities and must delegate activities in a manner that will ensure duties are performed effectively and in accordance with RBL policies and procedures.
2. As the senior Branch Officer, the Chair should have good basic I.T. skills and be able to access the MAP on Microsoft Office 365 (O365), use email and be familiar with social media platforms that the branch and County use.
3. Chair and manage meetings effectively ensuring that they are planned accordingly with an agenda and run to time, avoiding the imposition of personal ideas on the meeting but encouraging participation from members.
4. The Chair should be an effective leader, able to drive and implement decisions taken by the Committee, assist in the resolution of issues between members and direct activities to support the aims of the RBL.
5. The Chair is usually elected for a three-year term and their tenure can be repeated. Should the Chair step down for any reason and there is no Vice Chair, a suitable candidate from the branch can be co-opted to become the Chair until the next Annual General Meeting, when a fresh election for the role is held.
6. The Chair is accountable to the Membership Council and ultimately the Board of Trustees, through the County Committee for the smooth daily running of the branch. However, they must be prepared to represent the views and concerns of the branch through the County Chair and Committee. To this end, Chair must have extensive knowledge of all issues affecting the branch.
7. The Chair must be conversant and compliant with the current Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook, policies, and procedures, which are all located in the resource area on Microsoft Office 365 (O365) and must be prepared to advise the Branch Committee accordingly.
8. The Chair must ensure that proper handovers take place between newly elected Branch Officers, elected Committee Members, and their predecessors. This includes access to Microsoft Office 365 (O365) (through the MEO) and that all minute books, correspondence, RBL publications, branch papers and keys are handed over.
9. The Chair must ensure the Treasurer has a correct audit/examination undertaken, that it is agreed by both the outgoing and incoming Officers and that both are satisfied with the security of cash and cheque books. In addition, and along with the Treasurer, the Chair must reconcile the branch accounts with the branch bank statement at least quarterly. This action must be noted in the minutes at the earliest opportunity.

10. The Chair must set an example as an active member of the RBL and be available for advising both the Committee and branch members when necessary.
11. The Chair must ensure that sub-Committees, individual Officers, and members for specialist functions are appointed where necessary. Those individuals concerned must be made aware of the policies and procedure linked to the role such as data protection and safeguarding adults and children.
12. The Chair must ensure that all Branch Committee members and branch members are aware of and adhere to the RBL vision, values, and code of behaviour for working together.
13. The Chair has a responsibility to ensure that any training/development need or organisational training requirement is discussed with the County Training Officer and that individuals are able to access the required training. In the absence of a County Training Officer, the MEO is to be consulted.
14. The Chair is responsible for ensuring that all new branch members are welcomed and receive an induction to the RBL and maintain regular communications with their branch membership.
15. The Chair has a responsibility to maintain a good working relationship with the MEO and should always seek their advice when necessary.

Branch Committee Member

To be elected to the Branch Committee, those members standing for election must be members of voting branches and must be aged 18 or above. They must not have an unspent conviction, have been disqualified as a company director or a trustee, or be undischarged bankrupt.

A Branch Committee Member occupies a key place in the management of the branch. They must follow in every respect the duties and responsibilities as required by the Board of Trustees and Charity Law.

As an elected Member of the Branch Committee, they must be ever vigilant that they serve the interests of the Charity at all times.

Terms of Reference

1. Should possess good basic I.T. skills, use email and be familiar with social media platforms that the RBL, County and branch may use.
2. Must be conversant and compliant with the current Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook and policies and procedures, which are all located in the MAP on Microsoft Office 365 (O365).
3. Aid the Branch Committee, County Committee, Membership Council and Board of Trustees to carry out the work of the RBL and in particular actively promote the aims and objects at local level.

4. Must adhere to and actively promote the RBL vision, values, and code of behaviour for working together.
5. Attend Branch Committee meetings, General meetings and the branch AGM.
6. Attend any training required as directed by the Branch Chair or identified through organisational need in accordance with RBL policy.
7. Assist with the Poppy Appeal and other benevolent fundraising activities within the branch.
8. Provide the County Committee, the Membership Council or the Board of Trustees with any information they may require in the interests of the RBL.
9. Assist the Branch Chair in appointing any necessary sub-Committees.
10. Assist with the formation, and implementation of the three-year branch plan and associated fiscal arrangements.

Branch Membership Secretary

The Branch Membership Secretary is a post held by an appointed member of the Branch Committee. The Branch Membership Secretary is accountable to the Branch Chair and Committee for the daily administration of the branch membership.

This role may be combined as a complementary role with for example, Branch Secretary or Branch Treasurer.

Terms of Reference

Encourage all potential new members to join electronically or by telephone. However, as a last resort, paper application forms can be completed. Once checked, the completed form is to be kept securely under cover, so it cannot be seen by others, all monies are to be passed to the Branch Treasurer and the form and branch cheque are to be posted, by recorded delivery, to the RBL Membership Payments and Application Team in Northampton.

1. Where an annual branch subscription fee is agreed ensure that the Branch Rates Letter is completed and returned in accordance with RBL procedures.
2. Ensure that when handling, processing, or storing personal information GDPR requirements are strictly adhered to. This is achieved by following the RBL's Data Protection policy and procedures as laid down in Membership Handbook, para 7b. This information must be given to those branch members involved in recruiting.
3. Attend training as directed by the Branch Chair and/or stated in RBL policies and procedures.
4. Should possess good basic I.T. skills and be able to access the MAP and Microsoft 365 and use email.

Branch Secretary

The Branch Secretary, assisted by access to Microsoft Office 365 (O365) and the MAP, acts as a focal point for branch administration, including the distribution of correspondence (ideally electronically), agendas and meeting minutes. They also safeguard vital branch documents such as legal deeds.

In the absence of a Branch Membership Secretary, The Branch Secretary should additionally carry out the duties pertaining to this role as outlined in the relevant Terms of Reference. If the Branch Secretary is carrying out both roles, their responsibility also includes being the first point of contact for any data protection queries before escalation to the MEO.

Terms of References

1. The Branch Secretary is responsible to the Branch Chair and Committee for the efficient management of the branch administration.
2. Organise and set up branch General and Committee meetings to take place on a regular basis.
3. Regularly liaise with the County Committee to provide updates on information such as replacement Officers.
4. Act as point of contact for receipt of correspondence issued by the County Committee, staff, the Membership Council and Board of Trustees, and to ensure all correspondence received is communicated to the Branch Committee for appropriate action without delay.
5. Handle all vital documents pertaining to the branch and, in the absence of a Membership Secretary, control all aspects of Membership.
6. Liaise with the Branch Chair in the preparation of the agendas for all branch meetings, ensuring that all the Branch Committee members are provided with the relevant details within a reasonable timescale in advance of these meetings.
7. Attend and record minutes of all General and Committee Meetings and safeguard all papers and documents under lock and key.
8. Use Microsoft Office 365 (O365) to access all published handbooks, publications and guides for reference.
9. Register the branch for BCS as required by the Branch Committee.
10. Ensure all returns are fully completed, signed, dated and submitted within the determined timescale.
11. Attend training as directed by the Branch Chair and/or RBL policies and Procedures.

Branch Recruiting Advisor

The Branch Recruiting Advisor plays a key role in both branch and County recruitment. At branch level, they actively seek opportunities to promote the Royal British Legion and recruit new members. At County level, they provide support to the County Recruiting Officer at County events and work with other branches that may be experiencing difficulty with recruitment and could be under a threat of closure. This role is ideally suited to branch members with a background in sales, marketing and/or recruitment who enjoy meeting new people.

Terms of Reference

1. Branch Recruiting Advisors must be aware of and actively promote the RBL's vision, values and code of behaviour for working together.
2. Must attend a Recruiting Advisor course to provide them with the skills and knowledge for their role.
3. Must possess good basic I.T. skills and be able to assist potential members to join the RBL online.
4. Must be conversant and compliant with the current Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook and policies and procedures which are all located in the MAP on Microsoft Office 365 (O365). If these systems cannot be accessed, electronic copies of the relevant documents can be obtained from the Branch Secretary or MEO.

Branch Treasurer

The role of a Branch Treasurer is to administer the financial management of the branch, ensuring that the Chair and Committee are always aware of the financial state of the branch.

The Branch Treasurer is a post held by an appointed member of the Branch Committee. They are responsible for running income and expenditure accounts. At branch level, the use of the RBL On-line Membership Accounting System (LOMAS) or other approved Excel accounting template is optional but recommended. There is also LOMAS training available for Branch Treasurers.

Branch Treasurers look after all financial matters and must submit audited annual accounts by 30th September following the end of the field financial year on 30th June.

Terms of Reference

The Branch Treasurer must be conversant with the relevant provisions pertaining to all financial matters as prescribed in the Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook and other relevant policies and procedures, and must be prepared to advise the Branch Committee, accordingly, seeking advice from the County Treasurer, as required.

1. The Branch Treasurer must always bring to the attention of the Chair and Committee the financial implications of any decision they are considering.
2. The Branch Treasurer must report the branch income, expenditure, and cash balances to the Branch Committee at least quarterly. The report must be accompanied by a quarterly bank reconciliation, which reconciles the cash book balance with the amount

on the bank statement. They should present the accounts in a clear and intelligible way at meetings including at the AGM, bearing in mind that many members may not be familiar with accounting procedures and should answer any questions in an open manner and in a way that will be understood by a lay person.

3. Undertake or attend the RBL Branch Treasurers' training and/or LOMAS training within timescales stated in the training guidance, and any refresher training in accordance with RBL policy.
4. Be responsible to the Branch Chair and Committee for all the financial affairs of the branch, including the annual accounts and the branch bank account.
5. Control all monetary transactions, ensuring that they meet with guidelines contained within the 'Use of Funds Policy' and record these in the branch receipt and payment ledger. All receipts and supporting documents are to be held by the Treasurer on behalf of the Branch Committee. See below for further advice on storing information.
6. The Branch Treasurer is also responsible for maintaining records of branch transactions, either electronically (in Excel or LOMAS) or hard copy (in a ledger book or similar). These transactions should be summarised by income and expenditure type in order to produce a quarterly report for the Branch Committee. The report should explain any large or unusual transactions or instances where income or expenditure differ significantly from what was planned. The report must be accompanied by a quarterly bank reconciliation, which reconciles the cash book balance with the amount on the bank statement.
7. When keeping records electronically, Branch Treasurers are advised to keep regular backups, using the Microsoft Office 365 (O365) auto-save function, to ensure that records are not lost. In addition, the Branch Treasurer is responsible for safeguarding the branch cheque book, paying-in book and bank statements, as per the Membership Handbook.
8. The Treasurer is to ensure that the branch accounts are examined/audited within the required time scale and are required to submit the branch account return with supporting documentation to the MEO. Branch Treasurers should always refer to the 'Guide to Completing the Year End Branch Return' issued annually by the Finance Department before completing their return. They should contact their MEO if they have any queries.
9. The Treasurer is to ensure that all cheques for payment are made out correctly and clearly show the registered Charity number and branch title. All cheques must be signed by at least two of the authorised signatories, one of whom is to be the Treasurer, that they are clearly endorsed 'A/C Payee only'. No signatory is to sign a blank cheque. Authorised signatories should not be family members or cohabitants.
10. The Treasurer can request the Branch Committee to authorise the limit the Treasurer may expend on a single item without prior reference to the Committee. This authority should be reviewed annually. The request and action taken must appear in the minutes of the meeting at each review.
11. The Treasurer is to ensure that all expenditure, other than petty cash, is by cheque. However, if the RBL's Finance Department has approved electronic banking by Lloyds bank appropriate procedures are to be observed.

12. The Treasurer is to report the details of all proposed expenditure to the Branch Committee at their regular meetings for their approval. All such reports are to be shown in the minutes of the meeting.
13. The use of petty cash must be Authorised by the Branch Committee and operated as an impress system. The petty cash book is to be checked monthly by the Treasurer and at least one other Branch Officer and must be countersigned by these individuals as being correct. The petty cash limit should be no more than £50.
14. Should include knowledge of the MAP and Microsoft 365 for storing financial documentation including accounts and sending emails.
15. The Branch Treasurer should be conversant with the MAP and Microsoft 365 (including membership listings)

Branch Parade Marshal

A qualified Branch Parade Marshal should be actively involved in the planning and organisation of all branch ceremonial events.

They are to be fully conversant with the RBL's Ceremonial Handbook, bearing in mind that when appearing before the public that the prestige of the RBL is in their keeping.

Those involved in all ceremonial procedures must always strive to ensure continuity and uniformity in that their dress, turnout and bearing are of the highest order.

A qualified Branch Parade Marshal is subject to the RBL's screening programme detailed within the RBL's Safeguarding Policy. All screening and mandatory online training must be completed prior to commencing duties.

Terms of Reference

1. A Branch Parade Marshal must be aware of and actively promote the RBL vision, values and code of behaviour for working together.
2. Must have attended and passed the Parade Marshal course and where appropriate subsequent requalification courses every three years.
3. To be fully acquainted with the Ceremonial Handbook, and to give appropriate guidance on ceremonial matters to the Branch Committee.
4. To assist the County Parade Marshal at ceremonial events or training when requested.
5. To assist the National Parade Marshal when requested.
6. To liaise with the County Ceremonial and Parade Marshals in neighbouring Counties and to share best practice.

The Branch Standard Bearer

The Branch Standard Bearer is specially appointed by the Branch Committee.

Whilst undertaking Standard Bearer duties and taking part in competitions, the RBL makes every effort to ensure participants' safety. As with any physical activity, all Standard Bearers are required to acknowledge that there may be a risk to one's health and that a minimum level of fitness is required. Should there be any changes to their physical health which would impact their ability to carry out their role safely, the Standard Bearer should make this known to their Branch Officers and the County Parade Marshal as soon as possible.

The Branch Standard Bearer must be fully conversant with the RBL's Ceremonial Handbook, bearing in mind that when appearing before the public that the prestige of the RBL is in their keeping. Those involved in all ceremonial procedures must always strive to ensure continuity and uniformity in that their dress, turnout, and bearing are of the highest order.

Terms of Reference

1. The Branch Standard Bearer must be aware of and actively promote the RBL vision, values and code of behaviour for working together.
2. Must complete MS1B.
3. Must be given authority by the Branch Committee to parade the branch Standard. This authority must be recorded in the Branch Committee meeting minutes. In cases of emergency or at short notice, the Branch Chair alone may grant permission, but that delegated authority must be reflected in the minutes at the next Branch Committee/ General Meeting.
4. Must liaise with the County Parade Marshal concerning ceremonial duties and obligations.
5. Provide assistance to the County Parade Marshal as required.

21. County Role Descriptions

County President

The County President is an appointment of the County Committee who serves in three-year terms for an unlimited amount of time as decided by the Committee. The County President although an Officer, is not a member of the County Committee.

The County President has both a representational and advisory function. The President should have the ability to open doors, establish useful contacts and bring influence to bear in the local community. They should always promote the Royal British Legion's charitable aims, vision and values. Therefore, they should be a distinguished person in public life, the local community, or the RBL and be able to counsel the Chair and Officers as necessary in the execution of their duties.

The President has a non-executive role, without a vote, as they are not a member of the County Committee, but they should attend and speak at meetings of the County Conference and Committee.

Terms of Reference

1. The President must give clear, constructive and comprehensive advice/guidance to the County Committee when required.
2. Chair the meetings of the County Conference during the election of Officers and give an address at meetings of the County Conference.
3. Be responsible for ensuring that any action taken against the County Chair is in accordance with the RBL Complaints Procedures, where appropriate.
4. Take part in consultations on all recommendations to the National President for National Honours.
5. Assist the County Committee with hosting County dignitaries at County events.
6. Act as County representative, if required to present County and or branch awards.

County Chair

The County Chair is the most senior elected Officer of the County Committee and is elected by postal ballot to chair the County Committee for a tenure of three years.

The County Chair is expected to show strong leadership, management, and diplomatic skills by ensuring that a close bond and liaison is maintained between the branch membership and County Committee along with building and maintaining a good working relationship with RBL staff. They should abide by decisions made by the Membership Council and Board of Trustees but also be prepared to voice the views and concerns of the Membership within their County through the Membership Council Representative.

The County Chair plays a key role in the public relations of the RBL and, as such they should be capable of representing the RBL at all levels within the County.

Terms of Reference

The County Chair is responsible for directing all County activities.

1. The County Chair must ensure that all County Committee members and branches are aware of, and adhere to the RBL vision, values and code of behaviour for working together.
2. The County Chair should possess good basic I.T. skills and be able to access the MAP in Microsoft Office 365 (O365), use email and be familiar with social media platforms that the RBL, County and branches may use.
3. The County Chair must be conversant and compliant with the current Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook and policies and procedures, which are all located in the MAP on Microsoft Office 365 (O365).
4. Ensure that all positions on County Committee are filled and Role Descriptions and Terms of Reference (TORs) are issued. Any training requirement is to be discussed and arranged through the County Training Officer and/or the MEO.
5. Ensure that all members of the County Committee are aware of their responsibilities as outlined within the current Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook and all other relevant policies and procedures.
6. Ensure that those who hold specialist appointments that are subject to the RBL's screening programme detailed within the RBL's Safeguarding Policy are aware of the tasks that must be undertaken prior to taking up their duties.
7. The County Chair must build and maintain a strong relationship with the MEO to ensure effective administration of the County.
8. With the assistance of the County Committee, develop and implement the County three-year plan.
9. Work closely with the County Treasurer ensuring that the budget is in place to implement all planned activities.
10. Brief Committee members on on-going issues at County and National level and ensure that branches are kept informed where appropriate.
11. Be responsible for chairing the Annual Meeting of the County Conference, where they must exercise their authority and leadership on Conference matters. The County Chair must be strict in their interpretation of the Royal Charter and County by-laws whilst taking into account the views of the delegates.
12. In order to establish good communication links with the membership, visit all formations within the County, for example as a guest speaker, to settle disputes or as a social visit to maintain contact.

13. Work closely with the MEO and the Membership Council representative, giving them their full support, whilst ensuring their actions have the support of the County Committee.
14. Support or reject applications for RBL Awards for Meritorious Service.
15. Consult with the County President concerning all recommendations to the National President for National Honours.
16. Make recommendations for RBL Club licence issue or withdrawal or issue of a conditional licence following consultation with the Regional Clubs Relationship Manager and County Committee.
17. With the support of the County Committee recommend additions to by-laws for the governance of the County in accordance with the terms of the current Royal Charter and Membership Handbook
18. Appoint and sit on any necessary sub-Committees.
19. Encourage the membership to be active in the Poppy Appeal, assist with benevolent work and develop an engaged Membership.

County Vice Chair

The County Vice Chair is elected by postal ballot for a tenure of three years. The role of a County Vice Chair is to aid the County Chair in managing the County.

The County Vice Chair is expected to show strong leadership, management and diplomatic skills especially when deputising for the County Chair. The County Vice Chair must be prepared to advise the County Committee, accordingly, as directed by the County Chair.

Terms of Reference

The County Vice Chair is to deputise for the County Chair in their absence at all County meetings.

1. The County Vice Chair should possess good basic I.T. skills and be able to access the MAP in Microsoft Office 365 (O365), use email and be familiar with social media platforms that the RBL, County and branches may use.
2. The County Vice Chair must be conversant and compliant with the current Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook and policies and procedures, which are all located in the MAP on Microsoft Office 365 (O365).
3. Attend all County meetings so that they can be conversant with on-going issues and changes taking place within the RBL, in particular at County level.
4. The County Vice Chair must assist the County Chair with ensuring that all County Committee members and branches are aware of and adhere to the RBL vision, values and code of behaviour for working together.
5. Fully support the work of the MEO and the Membership Council representative.

6. Participate in discussions with the County Chair on important issues, give their opinion honestly, but having given it, defer to the Chair's judgement. Abide by the Chair's decisions.
7. Expect to be given specific tasks by the Chair, such as the organisation of a County event or chairing of a sub-Committee.
8. Any training requirement is to be discussed with the County Chair and arranged through the County Training Officer and/or the MEO.
9. The County Vice Chair must possess good basic I.T. skills and be able to access the MAP in Microsoft Office 365 (O365), use email and be familiar with social media platforms that the RBL, County and branches use.

County Committee Member

To be elected to the County Committee, those Members standing for election must be members of voting branches and must be aged 18 or above. They must not have an unspent conviction, have been disqualified as a company director or a trustee, or be undischarged bankrupt.

Each County Committee Member occupies a key place in the management of the County, this is in addition to any specialist role they may hold. In conjunction with all other Members of the Committee, they have a collective responsibility to the RBL for the smooth running of the County.

A Committee Member should assist in the supervision of the branches within the County which are responsible for giving active support to the organisation, the Poppy Appeal and Community Support.

Terms of Reference

1. Should possess good basic I.T. skills, use email and be familiar with social media platforms that the RBL, County and branch may use.
2. Must be conversant and compliant with the current Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook and policies and procedures, which are all located in the MAP on Microsoft Office 365 (O365).
3. Aid the County Committee, Membership Council and Board of Trustees to carry out the work of the RBL and actively promote the aims and objects at local level.
4. Must adhere to and actively promote the RBL vision, values, and code of behaviour for working together.
5. Attend all County Committee meetings and the Annual Meeting of County Conference.
6. Attend any training required as directed by the County Chair or identified through organisational need in accordance with RBL policy.
8. Assist with the Poppy Appeal and other legitimate fundraising activities within the County.

9. Assist the County Chair with defining and allocating the geographical area for which each of its branches is responsible and ensuring that the whole area of the County is covered.
10. Assist the MEO in all aspects of their work.
11. Assist with the formation, submission and implementation of the three-year County Plan and associated fiscal arrangements.
12. Provide the Membership Council and Board of Trustees with any information they may require in the interests of the RBL.
13. Provide input and support to the County Chair concerning specialist appointments and the appointment of sub-Committees where appropriate.

Volunteer County Secretary

County/District committees must appoint a secretary at the first Committee meeting following the Annual General Meeting (County/District Conference) for a tenure of one to three years.

The secretary acts as a focal point for County/District administration, including organising meetings and the distribution of correspondence (ideally electronically), agendas and meeting minutes. They also retain and safeguard vital County/District documents using the MAP and assist the County/District Chair and the MEO in ensuring the effective administration of their area.

Terms of Reference

The Volunteer County Secretary is responsible to the County/District Chair and Committee for the efficient management of administration.

1. Should possess good basic I.T. skills, use email and be familiar with social media platforms that the RBL, County and branch may use.
2. Must be conversant with the current Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook and policies and procedures. The County/District Secretary must demonstrate the RBL vision, values and code of behaviour.
3. Must ensure that all documentation is kept safely and securely on RBL platforms and in the rbl.community email account.
4. Should discuss and arrange any training requirement through the County/District Training Officer and/or the MEO. The secretary is expected to undertake any mandatory training including Data Protection and Cyber Security.
5. Is responsible, in discussion with the County/District Chair, for arranging committee meetings, compiling and distributing all necessary paperwork, including agendas and reports, and for producing and sending out the minutes of the meetings within a reasonable timescale.
6. Distribute any correspondence from the County/District Committee to branches.

7. When complaints require local resolution, the Secretary is requested to attend the meeting and act as a notetaker. Caveat: if there is any conflict of interest caused by the Secretary being present at the resolution meeting the MEO should be contacted for advice.
8. Supports the MEO in the election process for County/District Chair and Vice Chair.
9. Support the MEO in the collation of key documents from branches such as MS1s.
10. Support the County/District Committee where increased administrative support is required, including during an area wide audit.

County Recruiting Officer

The County Recruiting Officer is the main point of contact for advice on and the delivery of Recruitment and Retention campaigns at the County level, ideally suited to someone with a background in recruitment, sales and/or marketing.

The County Recruiting Officer is to advise the County Committee on the recruiting structure in the County, planned recruiting activities and the results of such activities. Where there is more than one County Recruiting Office in the County, the most experienced becomes the Principal County Recruiting officer, this role can be rotated amongst the Recruiting Officers.

Terms of Reference

1. The County Recruiting Officer should possess good basic I.T. skills, use email and be familiar with social media platforms that the RBL, County and branch may use.
2. The County Recruiting officer must be conversant and compliant with the current Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook and policies and procedures, which are all located in the MAP (Resource Area), on Microsoft Office 365 (O365).
3. The County Recruiting Officer must be aware of and actively promote the RBL vision, values and code of behaviour for working together.
4. Successfully complete the County Recruiting Officer course and any other training and development required to meet organisational needs.
5. Provide input to the County Plan regarding membership recruitment and retention targets in line with County objectives.
6. Prepare an annual recruiting and events budget for approval by the County Committee.
7. Identify best practice used by branches within the County and submit recommendations to the Membership Development Team.
8. Identify individuals from branches within the County who have the potential to become Recruiting Advisors.
9. Organise and deliver Recruiting Advisor training within the County with supporting training resources from the Membership Training Team and County Training Officer.

10. Ensure that appropriately trained Recruiting Advisors are available to assist at County and local recruiting events.
11. Identify branches at risk of closure due to low membership and make recommendations for the continuation of the branch.
12. Monitor trends in County recruitment and retention in collaboration with the MEO and make recommendations to rectify negative trends.
13. Provide recommendations to branches on methods to improve their retention and induction practices.
14. Advise branches on what publicity material is available and how it may be obtained.

County Treasurer

The County Committee must appoint a County Treasurer. The appointment takes place at the first Committee meeting following the Annual Meeting of County Conference with a tenure of one year.

County Treasurers must be financially aware and have attended a Branch Treasurer's course or received similar formal financial training within the timescale set by the RBL. They are non-elected members and have no vote on the County Committee.

The role of a County Treasurer is to administer the financial management of the County and any agreed County Supported Branches.

Terms of Reference

1. The County Treasurer should be able to access the MAP and Microsoft 365 and use email. They must be I.T. literate to enable them to use LOMAS or approved Excel spreadsheet to administer the County accounts and ensure that all expenditure is properly authorised where accounting is done digitally.
2. The Treasurer must and without delay receive and bank all monies received on behalf of the County Committee or Conference.
3. The County Treasurer is to attend all County meetings to report on the activities and status of the County accounts including any County Supported Branches. They are to prepare and present a written financial report and be available to answer questions.
4. The County Treasurer must be aware and support the RBL vision, values, and code of behaviour for working together.
5. Prepare the accounts of the County and any County Supported Branches for audit or independent examination, ensuring that a copy is forwarded to Head Office within three months of the close of the Field Financial Year.
6. Present the accounts to the Annual Meeting of the County Conference.
7. With the assistance of the County Chair, and budget holders, prepare the County budget. In doing so the Treasurer must ensure that they anticipate all expenditure needs in a

realistic manner. The Treasurer must be aware of all planned activities and their financial implications.

8. The County Treasurer shall prepare all cheques drawn on the County accounts. All cheques must bear the required number of signatures as authorised by the County Committee. The Treasurer must be one of the signatories to the bank account. No signatory is to sign a blank cheque.
9. The County Treasurer must attend training courses, as required, to ensure that any training/development needs or organisational requirements are met to ensure they remain aware of changes being made to RBL policy and procedures.
10. Act as an advisor to all Branch Treasurers and check branch accounts in conjunction with the MEO.
11. In liaison with the County Training Officer, assist with any local Branch Treasurers' training as required.

County Parade Marshal

The County Parade Marshal/Ceremonial Officer is appointed by the County Chair and Committee to be actively involved in the planning and organisation of all County Events which include a ceremonial element.

They are to be fully conversant with the RBL's Ceremonial Handbook, bearing in mind that when appearing before the public the prestige of the RBL is in their keeping. Those involved in all ceremonial procedures must always strive to ensure continuity and uniformity in that their dress, turnout and bearing are of the highest order.

The role of County Parade Marshal is subject to the RBL's screening programme detailed within the RBL's Safeguarding Policy. All screenings and mandatory online training must be completed prior to commencing duties. The County Parade Marshal is an appointment that is reviewed annually.

Terms of Reference

1. The County Parade Marshal/Ceremonial Officer must be aware of and actively promote the RBL vision, values and code of behaviour for working together.
2. The County Parade Marshal must attend and pass a Parade Marshal course.
3. To be fully acquainted with the Ceremonial Handbook, and to give appropriate guidance on ceremonial matters where necessary to branches.
4. To be actively involved in the planning, organising and attending all County Events which include ceremonial duties.
5. To encourage within the County, interest in learning, practicing and upgrading Standard Bearing Drills and Ceremonial Procedures.
6. To organise training courses for novices and experienced Standard Bearers/Marshals.

7. To prepare and submit a Ceremonial budget which includes costs for training to the County Committee for approval and to monitor the budget throughout the year.
8. To organise specialist training courses for Judges in Standard Bearers' Competitions.
9. To contribute to the planning and organisation of the County Standard Bearers' Competition.
10. To encourage all branches and their County to follow the procedures outlined in the Ceremonial Handbook for the induction of newly-elected officers.
11. To prepare periodic progress reports as necessary for the County Committee.
12. To assist the National Parade Marshal, as requested, in all matters affecting Ceremonial, Parades, Services and Competitions.
13. To liaise with the County Ceremonial and Parade Marshals in neighbouring Counties and to share best practice.

County Training Officer

The County Training Officer is usually appointed from within the elected members of the County Committee. However, where there is no suitable candidate, the County Committee can appoint a County Training Officer from within the membership.

The role tends to fall to someone who has experience in training delivery or has a genuine interest in learning and development and is prepared to deliver a local training schedule and collate registration for nationally-led training courses.

Terms of Reference

1. The County Training Officer must possess good basic I.T. skills and be able to access the MAP in Microsoft Office 365 (O365), use email and be familiar with social media platforms that the RBL, County and branches use.
2. Deliver local virtual and classroom-based training to branches within the County.
3. The County Training Officer must be conversant and compliant with the current Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook and policies and procedures, which are all located in the MAP (Resource Area), on Microsoft Office 365 (O365).
4. The County Training Officer must be aware and actively support the RBL vision, values, and code of behaviour for working together.
5. Attend training courses, as required, to ensure that any training/development needs, or organisational requirements are met.
6. Identify the training needs of members and evaluate the level of training required, escalating to the National Membership Training team where appropriate and to liaise with the MEO to identify, from the MS1, new Committee members who will require training for their role.

7. To recruit and supervise a team of Assistant County Trainers involved in the delivery of short courses and workshops across the County.
8. To prepare and monitor an annual training budget for approval by the County Chair and Committee, liaising with the County Treasurer to ensure it is incorporated into the annual County budget.
9. To prepare a County training and development plan for approval to the County Chair and Committee.
10. To maintain accurate records of County course attendance and report course titles and attendance figures to Membership Training.
11. To maintain the County training resources.
12. To collate requests for training and submit formal training bids to Membership Training where appropriate.
13. To collaborate with specialist post holders concerning any training assistance required.
14. Identify and maintain a register of suitable training venues within the County.

County Youth Officer

The County Youth Officer is appointed from within the members of the County Committee.

Where there is no suitable candidate, the County Committee can appoint a County Youth Officer from within the Membership. The role suits someone who has experience of working with young people.

The role is subject to the RBL's screening programme detailed within the RBL's Safeguarding Policy. All screening and mandatory online training must be completed prior to commencing duties.

Terms of Reference

1. The County Youth officer must have IT skills and be able to access the MAP on Microsoft Office 365 (O365), use email and be familiar with the use of social media platforms.
2. They must be familiar with the current Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook and policies and procedures concerning Youth and Safeguarding. These documents are all located in the MAP (Resource Area) on Microsoft Office 365 (O365).
3. They must be aware and actively support the RBL vision, values and principles for working together.
4. They will be responsible for development of a County Youth Plan which, with approval, will become part of the County plan. County Youth Officer must provide a written report for County Committee meetings on the progress of the plan and related youth engagement activities.

5. Other duties of the CYO:

- Create/maintain a communications plan for internal and external stakeholders including direct and indirect affiliations within the County, working in conjunction with the Membership Governance Co-ordinator to ensure good news stories can be escalated and effectively distributed.
- Create/maintain a register of all affiliated schools, youth organisations and band formations within the County.
- Encourage branches to affiliate with youth groups and schools within the County and to assist in planning activities for a meaningful affiliation. Those activities may include fundraising or awareness events, joint Remembrance and the promotion of Standard Bearing skills.
- Support and advise branches that have Affiliated Youth Groups and assist with planned branch events/activities with them.
- Provide quarterly updates concerning the County Youth Affiliation register and Youth Group engagement to the Membership Governance Coordinator.
- Where there is a Youth Band in the County, the County Youth Officer should maintain regular contact with the Band Master, offering support/assistance as required.
- Provide support to the MEO in solving queries concerning individual Youth Membership and the difference between that membership and the Affiliation Scheme.
- Assist the County Committee with the organisation of a Youth Standard Bearer Competition.
- Contact and network with youth organisations where appropriate (including Local Authority Youth Services) to encourage affiliations with local branches or direct affiliation to the County.
- Invite (with agreement from the County Committee) Youth Leaders to committee meetings, especially when discussing holding joint activities or to maintain good working relationships.

County Poppy Appeal Co-Ordinator

The County Poppy Appeal Co-Ordinator is usually appointed from the elected members of the County Committee. Where there is no suitable candidate, the appointment can be filled by a member from one of the County's voting branches.

Terms of Reference

1. The Poppy Appeal Co-Ordinator must be aware of and actively promote the RBL vision, values and code of behaviour for working together.
2. Under the guidance of the Community Fundraiser, assist with the training of Poppy Appeal Organisers within the County as required.

3. Assist the Poppy Appeal Organisers within the County to ensure the annual Poppy Appeal achieves the maximum income possible.
4. In liaison with the Community Fundraiser, the County Chair and Committee, encourage and assist in promoting and implementing all year round fundraising opportunities for the Poppy Appeal.
5. The Treasurer is to report the details of all proposed expenditure to the Branch Committee at their regular meetings for their approval. All such reports are to be shown in the minutes of the meeting.

County Standard Bearer

The County Standard Bearer is normally the winner of the County Standard Bearer competition and is appointed to the position for the year.

Whilst undertaking Standard Bearer duties and taking part in competitions, the Royal British RBL makes every effort to ensure participants' safety. As with any physical activity, all Standard Bearers are required to acknowledge that there may be a risk to one's health and that a minimum level of fitness is required.

Should there be any changes to their physical health which would impact their ability to carry out their role safely, the Standard Bearer should make this known to the County Parade Marshal as soon as possible.

The County Standard Bearer must be fully conversant with the RBL's Ceremonial Handbook, bearing in mind that when appearing before the public that the prestige of the RBL is in their keeping. Those involved in all ceremonial procedures must always strive to ensure continuity and uniformity in that their dress, turnout, and bearing are of the highest order.

Terms of Reference

1. The County Standard Bearer must be aware of and actively promote the RBL vision, values and code of behaviour for working together.
2. Must complete MS1B.
3. Should be given authority by the County Committee to parade the County Standard. This authority must be recorded in the County Committee meeting minutes and a County Officer must be present when the County/District Standard is paraded. In cases of emergency or at short notice, the County Chair alone may grant permission, but that delegated authority must be reflected in the minutes at the next Committee Meeting.
4. Must always liaise with the County Parade Marshal concerning ceremonial duties and obligations.
5. Provide assistance to the County Parade Marshal as required.

Independent Examiner (IE)

The role of the Independent Examiner is to independently examine the branch's books, records, and annual accounts maintained by the branch or County/District Officers and express an opinion on them annually. The Independent Examiner is more commonly referred to as an IE.

The branch or County is to approve the appointment of an IE annually.

An IE, who is not a qualified accountant, must attend RBL training and successfully pass the examination. Only then will the IE be declared qualified by the RBL. The qualification will be valid for a period of three years, after which requalification training must be attended, and examination passed.

Where the IE is not a CCAB qualified accountant, they are limited to examining branches with gross income of up to £30,000 only.

Terms of Reference

1. A related party cannot be appointed as an IE. The definition of a related party is:
 - a. A major donor to, or beneficiary of the branch or County/District; or
 - b. The child, parent, grandchild, grandparent, sibling, spouse, civil partner, business partner or employee or a Branch Officer or Committee member or of someone who is a major donor to or beneficiary of the branch.
2. The IE should obtain an understanding of the RBL's constitution, branch organisation, branch accounting systems, the size and complexity of the branch and the nature of its income, expenditure, assets and liabilities. The IE should review the accounting records and be satisfied that they are adequate for the size and complexity of the branch. Detailed checks should then be conducted. Upon completion of the examination, the IE will sign their report and note any matters to be brought to the attention of the Board of Trustees.
3. The IE must keep a record of the work undertaken with schedules of any relevant information extracted and explanations obtained from the Branch Officers which have been used to support the IE's opinion of the accounts. The IE should retain one copy of the final accounts after signature.
4. IE must refer to the 'Guide for Auditors and Independent Examiners' issued annually by the Finance Department before completing their examination.

Count Community Support Coordinator/Committee (CCSC)

Each County should have in place a CCSC or a Committee.

The purpose of the Coordinator/Committee is to support the County Committee and branches to promote BCS and encourage participation. They will also be the connection between the County and the BCS Team and will work together with them to promote good practice and support branches on their BCS journey.

Terms of Reference

The role of the CCSC is to:

1. Monitor Branch Community Support activity throughout the County, identifying where new BCS Representative appointments have been made at branch level.
2. Organise BCS Awareness Presentations as required for County Committee members; new CCSC committee members; BCS Reps and Branch Committees.
3. Encourage the attendance of BCS Reps and volunteers at relevant BCS Training.
4. Be part of a team within the County, to include County Training Officer and the MEO alongside County Community Support Coordinators, to deliver BCS training.
5. Provide a point of contact to branches for advice and guidance.
6. Encourage branches to participate in Branch Community Support by:
 - Encouraging best practice in accordance with the BCS Handbook and supporting documents.
 - Supporting the BCS Team in encouraging branches to submit quarterly reports on the BCS System.
7. Utilise the County Management section of the BCS Reporting System to advise on the management of reports and branch records.
8. Supporting the County Committee and/or BCS Team at BCS events.
9. Compile quarterly reports detailing BCS activities within the County and presenting at County Committee meetings.
10. Identify and share good news stories with the BCS Team bcs@britishlegion.org.uk
11. Support and guidance will be provided by the BCS Team and MEO.

Note: CCSCs do not necessarily have to be Members of The Royal British Legion and can include persons with appropriate experience and qualifications subject to approval by the County Committee.

22. Groups

Counties can use a Group system if they wish. All Counties need an efficient method of two-way communication with their branches. The Group system, used correctly, can be a valuable, vital, administrative and management tool for any County Committee. Group meetings, held at regular intervals, provide a local point of contact and advice, mutual support and assistance. County Officers can make good use of Group meetings to discuss policy matters and plan forthcoming events where Group/branch support would be advantageous.

Optimum Group Size

Counties wishing to adopt, and use, the Group system should look carefully at the size and shape of the County area when it is deciding the Group areas and in which Group to place a branch. Equally, it is important to determine the optimum Group size to provide an efficient and effective structure. Too large a Group can be cumbersome to organise, too small a Group can have little effect to which there is no advantage. The ideal size is therefore thought to be between seven and ten branches for a large, widely dispersed County, and between five and seven for a smaller County.

Group Naming

Groups are to be named to identify them. It can be by known and accepted regional terms, by town name, by district name or by reference to the area through points of the compass.

Model Group Rules

The Membership Handbook provides guidance for the management, responsibilities and work of the Group. The County Committee is charged with defining their responsibilities. Counties should provide a set of model rules for Groups which are to be endorsed by the County Committee. Where the model rules are to be modified for local use, again, they are to be endorsed by the County Committee before they are taken into use.

Group Members on the County Committee

The workload of County Committee members can be demanding. These members must be individuals who are able and willing to give their time freely throughout the year. A heavy and demanding workload can lead to a paucity of Committee members, which may require some committees to co-opt individuals to vacancies. Having to co-opt individuals can have an adverse effect on the committee, reducing the number of elected Committee members and therefore can affect the numbers required for a quorum. This in turn can restrict the committee from carrying out its business on behalf of the County membership.

County Committees should consider using one or two members from each Group to populate their County Committee. This spreads the County Committee members across the entire County area giving representation to all branches and ensures that the County remains quorate.

Communication between County, Group and branches.

Communication is the key to County, Group and branch harmony. The County, its Groups and branches must embrace technology and remain current.

Counties, Groups and branches should use a calendar for planning events/activities. This requires effective and consistent co-ordination with the full co-operation of all concerned. This will reduce conflicts with shared dates for some smaller events and may ensure that larger County events can be supported by the Groups and branches.

Compliance

Group officers will be elected by the branches they represent at the Group Annual General Meeting. See County Model Rules for Group Officers.

Group Finances and Accounts

There is no requirement for a Group to hold a BFI Account and this fund, if held, should be closed immediately and the income disposed of within the current rules.

If a Group needs to hold a group bank account a justification case should be put forward to the County Committee and the Group must comply with the guidance given. The Group bank account must not exceed £250, unless authorisation is given by the County Committee, and the Group must submit its account for audit annually within the given timeframes. A failure to comply may result in the County withdrawing its permission for the Group to hold an account and the account will be closed.

The principal expenditure will be on travel expenses of Committee members (those named on the Group MS1) and on administrative expenses incurred by the Group Secretary. It may also be necessary to provide for the hire of a hall for meetings (if branches within the Group are unable to provide premises). On this basis there is no need to build up a reserve for financial contingencies.

A Group Committee does not qualify for financial support from membership fees and there can be no official RBL source of funding for Groups. All Group funding must be raised from within the Group. Groups may raise subscriptions from their branches and hold Group fundraising activities to provide funds to finance their activities. Branch subscriptions to the Group should be at a fixed rate per branch to be decided at the Group AGM and made annually. The money obtained constitutes charitable funds and must be treated as such.

Formation of Groups

Each County Committee may divide its area into geographical divisions to be known as Groups (a number of branches that the Committee thinks appropriate for administrative purposes). As communication is the main priority, the Group structure should be based on the geographical proximity of branches. Groups are to conduct their business using the same policies and procedures as those for branches contained within the Membership Handbook, with the following exceptions:

Groups can operate in one of two ways:

1. A Group of branches operating with Group Officers. They hold meetings with Branch Representatives at regular intervals. A Group Representative is appointed to represent the Group and its branches at County Committee meetings where they are appointed to the County Committee.
2. A Group of branches operating without Group Officers. They do not hold meetings. Each branch is contacted as required by a County Committee member who is nominated by the County Committee to look after each Group of branches.

If a County operates either Group system, every branch within the County must be allocated to a Group, without exception, the Group name should easily identify the Group and its area.

Groups operating with Group Officers are to submit a MS1 containing the contact details of the Chair, Secretary and if applicable the Group Treasurer, Standard Bearer and Group Representative.

Each branch within the Group may send a representative to Group Meetings to discuss and vote on issues and whilst any branch member can attend Group Meetings only one representative from each branch can vote.

23. Forms and documents

The following forms and documents are contained in this Handbook. For any other forms, check Microsoft Office 365 (O365) or request them from your MEO.

MS1 Branch Information (New)	96
MS1 for County Supported Branches (New)	105
MS1A County Information (New)	108
MS1B Standard Bearer Disclaimer (New)	116
MS5A Branch Closure	117
MS5B Change of Branch Status from Sub-Branch	119
MS5C Branch Amalgamation.	121
MS5D Change of Branch Name	123
MS9 Branch Formation.	124
Ballot Paper for the Election of the County Chair	125
Volunteer Expense Claim Form	126
County Model By-Laws	128
Overseas District Model By-Laws	129
SOP 163 Appendix A Application Form: Request a payment from a Branch Legacy Trust.	130
SOP 163 Appendix B Application Form: Appeal a Legacy Trust Account decision.	132
County Plan Template	133
Draft County Model Rules.	141
Branch Nomination for County Chair	142

MS1 BRANCH INFORMATION

FOR THE YEAR COMMENCING 1ST OCTOBER 20



All sections of this form must be completed IN CAPITALS at or after the branch Annual General Meeting.

Completed forms must be sent to the Membership Engagement Officer by 31st December (hard copy by post–recorded delivery, or scanned copy by email). One copy must be retained by the branch for their records.

SECTION 1 – BRANCH INFORMATION

BRANCH NAME:		BR CODE:	BR
WEBSITE ADDRESS:			
MEETING PLACE:			
MEETING DETAILS:	Monthly/Bi-monthly/Quarterly/Other (please specify):		

SECTION 2 – BRANCH ACCOUNTS AND ELECTIONS CONTACT DETAILS

Please confirm below the branch contact that the information for the completion of branch Accounts and the information for National and MC Elections should be sent to. In the first instance, this should be the Treasurer and Chair respectively and should be the rbl.community email address.

If the email box is left blank, paper copies will be sent to the nominated contact.

Branch Accounts email address contact:	
Branch Election Information email address contact:	

SECTION 3 – BRANCH OFFICERS AND APPOINTMENTS

BRANCH OFFICERS

Please note that the following positions must be fulfilled – Chair, Treasurer, Secretary (except for a Vice Chair who is not a compulsory Officer) – and one person cannot hold more than one of the Branch Officer positions. Close family members must not hold positions in which they approve each other’s expenses or oversee and check on the work of another.

By completing the form below, I confirm that I am eligible for election to the Branch Committee and I have been duly elected. I acknowledge my responsibility as Branch Officer/Committee Member and agree to follow in every respect the duties and responsibilities as contained in the Royal Charter and the Membership Handbook and as required by the Board of Trustees, and the Membership Council. I will be vigilant to serve the interests of the Royal British Legion at all times. I will adhere to the data protection rules outlined in GDPR.

The contact details you have provided on the form will be used for communications between Branch Officer/Committee Members, and for communications from RBL staff relevant to your role via the rbl.community email addresses. These contact details may be shared with individuals within RBL who need to contact you in relation to branch matters. We would like to ensure that your contact details are accurate and up-to-date and would ask that you inform your Membership Engagement Officer (MEO) if there are any changes.

As your role is one on which the reputation of the RBL will rest or you may be managing RBL finances, all roles are required to read the MS1 Self Declaration document and must sign below to say that they confirm that the statements are correct and also that you consent to a DBS check being carried out if the RBL requests it.

BRANCH CHAIR			
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER			
NAME			
ADDRESS			
TELEPHONE			
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)			
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)			
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO
BRANCH VICE-CHAIR (OPTIONAL)			
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER			
NAME			
ADDRESS			
TELEPHONE			
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)			
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)			
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO

BRANCH SECRETARY			
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER			
NAME			
ADDRESS			
TELEPHONE			
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)			
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)			
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO
BRANCH TREASURER (APPOINTED, NOT ELECTED)			
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER			
NAME			
ADDRESS			
TELEPHONE			
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)			
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)			
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO

BRANCH PRESIDENT (OPTIONAL)			
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER			
NAME			
ADDRESS			
TELEPHONE			
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)			
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)			
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO
BRANCH MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY			
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER			
NAME			
ADDRESS			
TELEPHONE			
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)			
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)			
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO

BRANCH COMMUNITY SUPPORT (BCS) REPRESENTATIVE
(if branch delivers the Branch Community Support)

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER	
NAME	
ADDRESS	
TELEPHONE	
EMAIL (Personal)	
EMAIL (RBL.Community)	

By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
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By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
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Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO	
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BRANCH COMMITTEE MEMBER

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER	
NAME	

By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
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By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
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Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO	
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BRANCH COMMITTEE MEMBER			
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER			
NAME			
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO
BRANCH COMMITTEE MEMBER			
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER			
NAME			
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO
BRANCH COMMITTEE MEMBER			
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER			
NAME			
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO

PLEASE PRINT DUPLICATES OF THIS SHEET IF REQUIRED.

BRANCH BCS SUPPORTER			
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER			
EMAIL ADDRESS			
NAME			
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO
BRANCH BCS SUPPORTER			
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER			
EMAIL ADDRESS			
NAME			
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO

PLEASE PRINT DUPLICATES OF THIS SHEET IF REQUIRED.

BRANCH BCS SUPPORTER			
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER			
EMAIL ADDRESS			
NAME			
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO
BRANCH BCS SUPPORTER			
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER			
EMAIL ADDRESS			
NAME			
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO

MID YEAR AMENDMENT (ONLY PRINT IF RQD.)**SECTION 3 – BRANCH OFFICERS AND APPOINTMENTS****BRANCH OFFICERS**

Please note that the following positions must be fulfilled – Chair, Treasurer, Secretary (except for a Vice Chair who is not a compulsory Officer) – and one person cannot hold more than one of the Branch Officer positions. Close family members must not hold positions in which they approve each other’s expenses or oversee and check on the work of another.

SECTION 4 – DECLARATION OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

This section must be fully completed and signed by all Branch Officers/Committee Members/Appointments. The minimum number of Committee members is three, and the maximum is seven.

Where an Officer/Committee Member/Appointment is elected/appointed during the year the declaration must be read and agreed by them. This action must be minuted at their first meeting.

By completing the form below, I confirm that I am eligible for election to the Branch Committee and I have been duly elected. I acknowledge my responsibility as Branch Officer/Committee Member and agree to follow in every respect the duties and responsibilities as contained in the Royal Charter and the Membership Handbook and as required by the Board of Trustees, and the Membership Council. I will be vigilant to serve the interests of the Royal British Legion at all times. I will adhere to the data protection rules outlined in GDPR.

The contact details you have provided on the form will be used for communications between Branch Officer/Committee Members, and for communications from RBL staff relevant to your role. These contact details may be shared with individuals within RBL who need to contact you in relation to branch matters. We would like to ensure that your contact details are accurate and up-to-date and would ask that you inform your Membership Engagement Officer (MEO) if there are any changes.

As your role is one on which the reputation of the RBL will rest or you may be managing RBL finances, all roles are required to read the MS1 Self Declaration document and must sign below to say that they confirm that the statements are correct and also that you consent to a DBS check being carried out if the RBL requests it.

POSITION	
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER	
NAME	
ADDRESS	
TELEPHONE	
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)	
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)	

By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
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By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
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Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO	
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PLEASE PRINT DUPLICATES OF THIS SHEET IF REQUIRED.

MS1 FOR COUNTY SUPPORTED BRANCHES

FOR THE YEAR COMMENCING 1st OCTOBER 20

All sections of this form must be completed IN CAPITALS at or after the branch Annual General Meeting. Completed forms must be sent to the Membership Engagement Officer (MEO) by 31st December (hard copy by post-recorded delivery, or scanned copy by email). One copy must be retained by the branch for their records.

SECTION 1 – BRANCH INFORMATION

BRANCH NAME:		BR CODE:	BR
WEBSITE ADDRESS:			
MEETING PLACE:			
MEETING DETAILS:	Monthly/Bi-monthly/Quarterly/Other (please specify):		

SECTION 2 – ELECTIONS CONTACT

Please confirm below the contact email address that ballot forms and election packs for National Elections should be sent to. If left blank, paper copies will be sent.

Election Information:	NAME:		ROLE:
	CONTACT EMAIL:		

SECTION 3 – DECLARATION OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

This section must be fully completed and signed by all Branch Points of Contact and Appointments. Where a Point of Contact/Appointment is elected/appointed during the year the declaration must be read and agreed by them. This action must be minuted at their first meeting.

By completing the form below, I confirm that I have been duly elected or appointed. I acknowledge my responsibility as Branch Point of Contact or in my Branch Appointment and agree to follow in every respect the duties and responsibilities as contained in the Royal Charter and the Membership Handbook and as required by the Board of Trustees, and the Membership Council. I will be vigilant to serve the interests of the Royal British Legion at all times. I will adhere to the data protection rules outlined in GDPR.

The contact details you have provided on the form will be used for communications between Branch Points of Contact or those holding Branch Appointment, and for communications from RBL staff relevant to your role. These contact details may be shared with individuals within RBL who need to contact you in relation to branch matters. We would like to ensure that your contact details are accurate and up-to-date and would ask that you inform your Membership Support Officer if there are any changes.

As your role is one on which the reputation of the RBL will rest or you may be managing RBL finances, all roles are required to read the MS1 Self Disclosure document and must sign below to say that they confirm that the statements are correct and also that you consent to a DBS check being carried out if the RBL requests it.

SECTION 4 – BRANCH POINTS OF CONTACT**POINT OF CONTACT 1**

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

NAME

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE

EMAIL (*Personal*)EMAIL (*RBL.Community*)

By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.

Name:**Signature:****Date:**

By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.

Name:**Signature:****Date:**

Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.

YES**NO****POINT OF CONTACT 2**

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

NAME

ADDRESS

TELEPHONE

EMAIL (*Personal*)EMAIL (*RBL.Community*)

By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.

Name:**Signature:****Date:**

By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.

Name:**Signature:****Date:**

Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.

YES**NO**

**BRANCH COMMUNITY SUPPORT (BCS) REPRESENTATIVE
(if branch delivers the Branch Community Support)**

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER	
NAME	
ADDRESS	
TELEPHONE	
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)	
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)	

By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
--------------	-------------------	--------------

By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
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Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO	
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MS1A COUNTY INFORMATION

FOR THE YEAR COMMENCING



Please complete this form **IN CAPITALS** and return to the **Membership Engagement Officer** (MEO). All sections of this form must be completed. Section 1 of this form must be completed by the County/District Secretary after the Annual Meeting of the County/District Conference.

SECTION 1 – COUNTY/DISTRICT INFORMATION

COUNTY/DISTRICT:		COUNTY/ DISTRICT CODE:	CN
WEBSITE ADDRESS:			
MEETING PLACE:			
MEETING DETAILS:	Monthly/Bi-monthly/Quarterly/Other (please specify):		

SECTION 2 – DECLARATION OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

This section must be fully completed and signed by all Officers/Committee Members/Appointments.

Where an Officer/Committee Member/Appointment is elected/appointed during the year the declaration must be read and agreed by them. This action must be minuted at their first meeting.

By signing below I acknowledge my responsibility as County or District Officer/Committee Member and agree to follow in every respect the duties and responsibilities as contained in the Royal Charter and the Membership Handbook and as required by the Board of Trustees, the Membership Council and the Charity Act. I will be vigilant to serve the interests of the Royal British Legion at all times. I will adhere to the data protection rules outlined in GDPR policy.

The contact details you have provided on the form will be used for communications between County/District Officers and Committee Members, and for communications from RBL staff relevant to your role via the rbl.community email addresses. These contact details may be shared with individuals within RBL, including members, who need to contact you in relation to membership matters. We would like to ensure that your contact details are accurate and up-to-date and would ask that you inform your MEO if there are any changes.

As your role is one on which the reputation of the RBL will rest or you may be managing RBL finances, all roles are required to read the MS1 Self Declaration document and must sign below to say that they confirm that the statements are correct and also that you consent to a DBS check being carried out if the RBL requests it.

SECTION 3 – COUNTY/DISTRICT COMMITTEE OFFICERS AND APPOINTMENTS

PRESIDENT

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER	
NAME	
TELEPHONE	
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)	
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)	

By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO; which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
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By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.				
Name:		Signature:		Date:
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the County website so members of the public can contact you about membership matters.			YES	NO
CHAIR				
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER				
NAME				
TELEPHONE				
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)				
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)				
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO; which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.				
Name:		Signature:		Date:
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.				
Name:		Signature:		Date:
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the County website so members of the public can contact you about membership matters.			YES	NO
VICE CHAIR				
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER				
NAME				
TELEPHONE				
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)				
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)				
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO; which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.				
Name:		Signature:		Date:
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.				
Name:		Signature:		Date:
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the County website so members of the public can contact you about membership matters.			YES	NO

SECRETARY				
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER				
NAME				
TELEPHONE				
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)				
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)				
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO; which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.				
Name:	Signature:	Date:		
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.				
Name:	Signature:	Date:		
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the County website so members of the public can contact you about membership matters.	YES		NO	
TREASURER				
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER				
NAME				
TELEPHONE				
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)				
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)				
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO; which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.				
Name:	Signature:	Date:		
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.				
Name:	Signature:	Date:		
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the County website so members of the public can contact you about membership matters.	YES		NO	

TRAINING OFFICER				
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER				
NAME				
TELEPHONE				
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)				
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)				
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO; which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.				
Name:	Signature:	Date:		
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.				
Name:	Signature:	Date:		
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the County website so members of the public can contact you about membership matters.	YES		NO	
YOUTH OFFICER				
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER				
NAME				
TELEPHONE				
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)				
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)				
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO; which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.				
Name:	Signature:	Date:		
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.				
Name:	Signature:	Date:		
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the County website so members of the public can contact you about membership matters.	YES		NO	

RECRUITING OFFICER				
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER				
NAME				
TELEPHONE				
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)				
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)				
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO; which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.				
Name:	Signature:	Date:		
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.				
Name:	Signature:	Date:		
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the County website so members of the public can contact you about membership matters.	YES		NO	
PARADE MARSHAL				
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER				
NAME				
TELEPHONE				
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)				
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)				
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO; which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.				
Name:	Signature:	Date:		
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.				
Name:	Signature:	Date:		
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the County website so members of the public can contact you about membership matters.	YES		NO	

COMMUNITY SUPPORT COORDINATOR (CCSC)				
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER				
NAME				
TELEPHONE				
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)				
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)				
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO; which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.				
Name:	Signature:	Date:		
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.				
Name:	Signature:	Date:		
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the County website so members of the public can contact you about membership matters.	YES		NO	
COMMITTEE MEMBER				
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER				
NAME				
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO; which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.				
Name:	Signature:	Date:		
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.				
Name:	Signature:	Date:		
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the County website so members of the public can contact you about membership matters.	YES		NO	

COMMITTEE MEMBER			
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER			
NAME			
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO; which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the County website so members of the public can contact you about membership matters.	YES		NO
COMMITTEE MEMBER			
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER			
NAME			
By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO; which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.			
Name:	Signature:	Date:	
Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the County website so members of the public can contact you about membership matters.	YES		NO

PLEASE PRINT DUPLICATES OF THIS SHEET IF REQUIRED.

SECTION 4 – DECLARATION OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

This section must be fully completed and signed by all Officers/Committee Members/Appointments.

Where an Officer/Committee Member/Appointment is elected/appointed during the year the declaration must be read and agreed by them. This action must be minuted at their first meeting.

By signing below I acknowledge my responsibility as County or District Officer/Committee Member and agree to follow in every respect the duties and responsibilities as contained in the Royal Charter and the Membership Handbook and as required by the Board of Trustees, the Membership Council and the Charity Act. I will be vigilant to serve the interests of the Royal British Legion at all times. I will adhere to the data protection rules outlined in GDPR policy.

The contact details you have provided on the form will be used for communications between County/District Officers and Committee Members, and for communications from RBL staff relevant to your role. These contact details may be shared with individuals within RBL, including members, who need to contact you in relation to membership matters. We would like to ensure that your contact details are accurate and up to date and would ask that you inform your Membership Engagement Officer (MEO) if there are any changes.

As your role is one on which the reputation of the RBL will rest or you may be managing RBL finances, all roles are required to read the MS1 Self Declaration document and must sign below to say that they confirm that the statements are correct and also that you consent to a DBS check being carried out if the RBL requests it.

POSITION	
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER	
NAME	
TELEPHONE	
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)	
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)	

By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO; which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
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By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
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Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the County website so members of the public can contact you about membership matters.	YES		NO	
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PLEASE PRINT DUPLICATES OF THIS SHEET IF REQUIRED.

MS1B STANDARD BEARER DISCLAIMER

FOR THE YEAR COMMENCING



SECTION 5 – STANDARD BEARER/DEPUTY STANDARD BEARER PHYSICAL FITNESS CONFIRMATION

This section must be signed by the appointed Standard Bearer and Deputy Standard Bearers. During competitions and Remembrance events the Royal British Legion will make every effort to ensure their safety, however, as with any physical activity, there are health risks and a minimum level of physical fitness is required.

I confirm that:

1. In accordance with Chapter 6 of the Ceremonial Handbook, I have read and understood the responsibilities and risks associated with Standard Bearing, including but not limited to:
 - Standard bearing is a physical activity and so I must ensure I am both physically fit and strong enough to carry a Standard in all reasonable weather conditions.
 - As a Standard Bearer I will be expected to be able to carry a Standard which is 8ft long and up to 3.5kg in weight (in wet or windy weather conditions Standards may become heavier and difficult to hold upright)
 - Some actions such as Dips may put a strain on the back and shoulders
 - Competitions and Remembrance events may prove demanding and stressful for some.
2. If I am in receipt of any disability related allowance or benefit, I will inform the appropriate authorities of my intention to undertake the role of Standard Bearer/Deputy Standard Bearer as this may affect my eligibility status.
3. To my knowledge, I have no physical conditions or disability that could potentially put me or others at harm whilst performing my duties as a Standard Bearer/Deputy Standard Bearer. If I have, or suspect I have, a health problem which means I may not be able to fulfil all duties required of the role safely, I undertake to inform the appropriate Ceremonial Officer in charge of the competition/Remembrance event.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
--------------	-------------------	--------------

STANDARD BEARER

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER		
NAME		
ADDRESS		
TELEPHONE		
EMAIL (<i>Personal</i>)		
EMAIL (<i>RBL.Community</i>)		

By signing below, I confirm that: the statements in the MS1 Self Declaration to be true and, where a statement is not true, I have made a disclosure(s) to the Safeguarding Team via my MEO which has been accepted by the RBL and does not prevent me from carrying out this role; and that I will inform RBL of any changes in my circumstances which would affect the veracity of this declaration.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
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By signing below, I give my consent to RBL to conduct a Criminal Record check if so required.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
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Are you happy for your telephone number to be published on the branch website so members of the public can contact you about branch matters.	YES		NO	
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MS5A BRANCH CLOSURE

To: The Membership Council via the Membership Governance Coordinator		DATE:			
COUNTY/DISTRICT/SECTION:					
1.	At a meeting of the County/District/Section Committee on				
	it was agreed to recommend: Closure of branch:				
	BRANCH CODE:	BR			
2.	The County Committee has explored other options but there is no prospect of maintaining this branch at its present status.				
	a. explored the option of CSB	YES		NO	
	b. explored the option of AMALGAMATION	YES		NO	
3.	The County Recruiting Officer (CRO) attempted to revive the branch	YES		NO	
4.	The branch Minutes are attached to confirm the branch's wish to proceed with closure	YES		NO	
5.	The reasons for closure are:				
6.	Number of members in branch:				
7.	Arrangements have been made for remaining branch members to transfer to:				
	BRANCH CODE:	BR			
8.	The branch has a RBL Club relationship.		YES		NO
	The Club will now be affiliated to the branch:				
	BRANCH CODE: <i>(for administration purposes)</i>	BR			
9.	Branch is not subject to any investigation:				
10.	Following confirmation of branch closure by the Membership Council, the branch Standard should be:				
	a. Laid up in accordance with current procedure in the Ceremonial Handbook OR	YES		NO	
	b. Passed to the County/District Committee for use by the County/District Parade Marshal for safekeeping or training	YES		NO	

11.	The following arrangements have been made for the continuation of the Poppy Appeal:			
12.	FINANCE	ASSET TOTAL:		
	Assets have been transferred to:			
	Head Office:	YES		NO
	County:	YES		NO
	Poppy Appeal:			
	Not Transferred/Other (please provide reason and last known location as well as any evidence of chasing the remaining funds):			
	Restricted/Ring-fenced Funds (Please detail below):			
	Is there a Branch Property Trust?	YES		NO
	Bank Statements Attached	YES		NO
Point of contact relating to Finance during closure (only):				
13.	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: (please note: this section should be used for any narrative to add to the previous page such as: why CSB or AMALGAMATION option wasn't suitable, if funds are still remaining, were all the letters sent to officers and banks).			
	a. MEO notified audit team of closure	YES		NO

	Signature:	Name:
COUNTY CHAIR		
MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT OFFICER		
MEMBERSHIP COUNCIL REP		
COUNTY CHAIR		
ENGAGEMENT OFFICER		

MS5B CHANGE OF BRANCH STATUS FROM SUB-BRANCH



To: The Membership Council Secretary		DATE:	
COUNTY:			
RETURN TO FULL BRANCH STATUS or BECOMING A CSB from a SUB-BRANCH			
1.	At a meeting of the County Committee on		DATE:
	it was agreed to recommend that <i>(delete as applicable)</i> :		
	a.	Branch	BRANCH CODE: BR
	a sub-branch of:		
		Branch	BRANCH CODE: BR
return to full branch status.			
b.	Branch	BRANCH CODE: BR	
a sub-branch of:			
	Branch	BRANCH CODE: BR	
becomes a County Supported Branch.			
2.	The County Committee has examined the circumstances of the branch and has decided that the branch is capable of taking on the responsibilities of a Full or County Supported Branch. BRANCH NAME:		
3.	BRANCH ADMIN FEE:		
4.	Number of members in branch <i>(If the branch has less than 15 members, please state the current viability of the branch)</i> :		
5.	Responsibility for service and welfare work will be with:		
6.	Responsibility for Poppy Appeal will be with:		
7.	FINANCE		ASSET TOTAL:
	Restricted/Ring-fenced Funds <i>(please detail below)</i> :		
	Assets have been transferred to:		
	Parent branch		Branch Property Trust
	Not Transferred/Other: <i>(please provide reason and last known location)</i>		

	New Bank account <i>(if returning to full status)</i>	YES		NO	
	Bank Statements Attached	YES		NO	

	Signature:	Name:
COUNTY CHAIR		
MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT OFFICER		

MS5C BRANCH AMALGAMATION



To: The Membership Council Secretary		DATE:	
COUNTY:			
AMALGAMATION			
1.	At a meeting of the County Committee on	DATE:	
	it was agreed to recommend the Amalgamation of:		
	Branch	BRANCH CODE:	BR
	with:		
	Branch	BRANCH CODE:	BR
2.	The County Committee has explored other options but there is no prospect of maintaining this branch at its present status.		
3.	The County Recruiting Officer (CRO) attempted to revive the branch.	YES	NO
4.	The branch Minutes are attached to confirm the branch(es) wish to proceed.	YES	NO
5.	The County has received a request for the name change of the Amalgamated branch.	YES	NO
	The Amalgamated branch will be called:		
6.	The reasons for Amalgamation is:		
7.	Number of members in branch now (<i>members/Life members</i>):		
8.	The branch has a RBL Club relationship:	YES	NO
	The Club will now be affiliated to this branch for administration purposes:		
9.	The branch Standard is to be laid up in:		
10.	The following arrangements have been made for the continuation of the Poppy Appeal:		

	FINANCE		ASSET TOTAL:			
	Restricted/Ring-fenced Funds <i>(please detail below)</i> :					
	Assets have been transferred to:					
	Head Office			Amalgamated branch		
	Poppy Appeal			Branch Property Trust		
	Not Transferred/Other <i>(please provide reason and last known location)</i>					
Bank Statements Attached			YES		NO	
11.	Additional Comments:					

	Signature:	Name:
COUNTY CHAIR		
MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT OFFICER		

MS5D CHANGE OF BRANCH NAME



To: The Membership Council Secretary		DATE:	
COUNTY:			
BRANCH NAME CHANGE			
1.	At a meeting of the County Committee on	DATE:	
	it was agreed to recommend the		
	Branch	BRANCH CODE:	BR
	is renamed to:		
			Branch
2.	The branch Minutes are attached to confirm the branch wishes to proceed	YES	NO
3.	Additional comments:		

	Signature:	Name:
COUNTY CHAIR		
MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT OFFICER		

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION FORMATION OF A BRANCH

We request that the following branch be registered with The Royal British Legion:

BRANCH CODE: <i>(to be allocated by Head Office)</i>	BR
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At a meeting of members of The Royal British Legion held at:

DAY:

MONTH:

YEAR:

the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLVED

“That this meeting hereby accepts the Objects of the Royal Charter of The Royal British Legion and formally establishes a branch. The branch will adhere to the Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook and all policies and procedures relevant to the formation.”

Minutes of the Meeting are attached

BRANCH OFFICERS WERE ELECTED AS FOLLOWS:

CHAIR

VICE CHAIR *(Optional)*

TREASURER

SECRETARY

HEADQUARTERS OF BRANCH

ADDRESS *(for correspondence)*

PHONE NUMBER

EMAIL

SECRETARY

Signature:

Name:

Note: the completed form should be sent to the MEO.

BALLOT PAPER ELECTION OF THE COUNTY CHAIR



Candidates are listed in alphabetical order.
 Please mark a cross against the name of your branch's preferred candidate.
 Should more than one candidate have a mark against their name, the ballot paper will not be included in the ballot and will be considered a spoilt paper.

Candidate's Name:	Preference (X)

BRANCH NAME:	
---------------------	--

CHAIR	Signature*:	Date:
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**Where the branch's Chair is standing, the Vice Chair, or in their absence, a Committee member, will sign.*

The Completed Ballot Paper must reach:

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ELECTIONS BY THE FOR CHAIR OF THE COUNTY COMMITTEE

Within the timescale, the Branch Secretary must place the ballot paper and candidates CVs before the meeting of the branch.

The branch meeting will decide on its preference and mark the ballot paper with a cross against the name of the preferred candidate. Should more than one candidate have a mark against their name, the ballot paper will not be included in the ballot but will be considered a spoilt paper.

The Branch Secretary will record the decisions in the minutes of the meeting.

The Branch Chair will sign the completed ballot paper and place and seal it in the appropriate envelope provided. The sealed flap of the envelope is to be signed by two Branch Officers.

The envelope is then to be placed in the pre-addressed envelope provided by Head Office. Ballots should be sent to Haig House. Ballots must be received by 5pm on the second Monday in December.

The Area Manager will appoint two disinterested individuals to act as Scrutineers for the vote count.

To be elected as the new County Chair a candidate must have received a simple majority of the votes cast.

VOLUNTEER EXPENSE CLAIM FORM



Please complete all sections fully, legibly and accurately, attaching receipts where relevant. See overleaf for explanatory notes. We aim to pay your expense claim within 4-6 weeks of receipt; payment may be delayed if there is missing or incomplete information. **You do not need to provide bank details if already on our system.**

NAME:		PAO REF./VOLUNTEER NO. <i>(if applicable)</i>	
ROLE:			
ADDRESS <i>(incl. postcode)</i> :			
EMAIL <i>(for remittance advice)</i>			
PHONE NUMBER			
BANK ACCOUNT NAME			
SORT CODE:		ACCOUNT NO:	
COURSE DETAILS			
COURSE TITLE			
COURSE LOCATION			
COURSE DATE			
	DETAILS OF EXPENDITURE (See examples overleaf. Include CMS Case ref no. where relevant but do NOT include beneficiary personal details)		
DATE		AMOUNT	
TOTAL	<i>Total Note: for additional claims please attach a separate sheet</i>		

I understand that the information I have provided will be used only for the purpose of reimbursing out-of-pocket expenses, in accordance with RBL policy and procedures.

I certify that the above details are true and accurate and that I incurred the expenses wholly, necessarily and exclusively whilst engaged on official RBL business. Where claiming mileage for use of my vehicle, I confirm that I have a valid driver's licence, road tax, MOT and insurance which covers business use.

CLAIMANT	Signature:	Date:
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MEMBERSHIP DEPT USE: I confirm that I have checked this claim for accuracy in accordance with the RBL expenses policy and that all relevant receipts are attached.

APPROVED BY:

Name:	Signature:	Date:
--------------	-------------------	--------------

Position:

UNIT CODE:	4271-D010-	ACTIVITY CODE:	422000 Volunteer Expenses
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Please return to: Membership Training, The Royal British Legion, Haig House, 199 Borough High Street, London, SE1 1AA

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

This form applies to all unpaid volunteers, including members carrying out activities on the RBL's behalf. Please see the table below for guidance on what can be claimed. Expenses will only be reimbursed if they comply with the principles and procedure set out below.

Travel – Public Transport	We will only reimburse 2nd class rail travel Taxis are only reimbursed in certain circumstances (for reasons of personal safety, needing to carry heavy items, where public transport is more expensive or not available or where you have a registered disability).		
Travel – Driving <i>(Please specify number of miles in Details of Expenditure)</i>	Cars	45p per mile for first 10,000 miles, 25p thereafter	
	Motorcycle	24p per mile	
	Bicycle	20p per mile	
	Car parking fees/tolls	As charged	
Accommodation	Hotel accommodation is booked centrally. Your course joining instructions include information about accommodation if the course is residential and provide a contact for booking requests if you feel overnight accommodation is required. Please give as much notice as possible, but even on the day of requirement a booking is possible, should an emergency occur. Accordingly accommodation costs will not be repaid if incurred outside these instructions.		
Subsistence (meals)	Breakfast <i>(if leaving before 6.30am or not provided by hotel)</i>	Up to £8	
	Lunch	Up to £10	
	Evening meal <i>(when working after 8pm)</i>	Up to £18	
	Evening meal <i>(when taken in hotel and not included in accommodation price)</i>	Up to £28	

Notes:

1. Attach all original itemised receipts. Where this isn't possible, please provide an explanation.
2. Expense claims must be submitted within three months from the date when the expenditure was incurred, unless there are exceptional circumstances, e.g. illness.
3. There is the option to waive your claim or claim less than the maximum rates above. This would be appreciated.
4. Both the claimant and authoriser must ensure that claims comply with the RBL's policy, SOP42 'Staff, Volunteers and Trustees' Expenses.

COUNTY MODEL BY-LAWS



	COUNTY BY-LAWS
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As authorised by the Membership Council

APPROVED

CHAIR OF THE MEMBERSHIP COUNCIL	Signature:	Date:
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The following County by-laws are supplementary to The Royal Charter of Incorporation and Schedules of The Royal British Legion hereafter known as “the Royal Charter” and procedures as laid-down in the Membership Handbook. They shall be binding on all Groups and branches within the RBL County of:

After being passed by a two-thirds majority of those delegates present and qualified to vote on the appropriate motion at the previous Annual Meeting of the County Conference, all alterations and amendments to these by-laws shall be submitted to, and approved by the Membership Council on behalf of the Board of Trustees, before they may be implemented.

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1. | County name and number: |
| 2. | County meeting place, frequency and timings of meetings: |
| 3. | County Committee appointments: |
| 4. | County sub-Committees and their Terms of Reference: |
| 5. | Groups within the County <i>(only to be included by Counties which have a Group structure)</i> : |

To assist the County Committee in the management of the County, and in compliance with the Royal Charter, branches are placed into the following Groups for administrative purposes:

Group List branches:
Group List branches:
Group List branches:
Group List branches:
Group List branches:

	DISTRICT BY-LAWS	
As authorised by the Membership Council		
APPROVED		
CHAIR OF THE MEMBERSHIP COUNCIL	Signature:	Date:
The following Overseas District by-laws are supplementary to The Royal Charter of Incorporation and Schedules of The Royal British Legion hereafter known as “the Royal Charter” and procedures as laid-down in the Membership Handbook. They shall be binding on all Groups and branches within the RBL Overseas District of:		
After being passed by a two-thirds majority of those delegates present and qualified to vote on the appropriate motion at the previous Annual Meeting of the Overseas District Conference, all alterations and amendments to these by-laws shall be submitted to, and approved by the Membership Council on behalf of the Board of Trustees, before they may be implemented.		
1.	District name and number:	
2.	District meeting place, frequency and timings of meetings:	
3.	District Committee by function and appointments:	
4.	District sub-Committees and their Terms of Reference:	
5.	Groups within the District (<i>only to be included by Overseas Districts which have a Group structure</i>):	
To assist the District Committee in the management of the District, and in compliance with the Royal Charter, branches are placed into the following Groups for administrative purposes:		
Group List branches:		
Group List branches:		
Group List branches:		
Group List branches:		
Group List branches:		

SOP 163 APPENDIX A APPLICATION FORM

REQUEST A PAYMENT FROM A BRANCH LEGACY TRUST			
TRUST DETAILS			
1.	NAME OF TRUST		
2.	TRUST CODE	<i>(if known i.e. LXXX)</i>	
3.	Branch/County/District Details <i>(include BR code if applicable):</i>		BR
4.	Amount requested		£
5.	Purpose of request:		
6.	Charitable Object to be met and why this is an effective use of charitable funds:		
7.	Confirmation of who will benefit <i>(Beneficiaries/Members/Public or other):</i>		
8.	Where should funds be paid to <i>(please tick)</i>	Branch BFI	
		Branch Bank Account	
		County/District Bank Account	
		Account Name	
		Account Number	
		Sort Code	

9.	Application details:		
10.	Application completed by		
	Position		
	Signature:		Date:
COUNTY CHAIR CONFIRMATION			
NAME OF COUNTY CHAIR:			
Comments on application:			
Signature:			Date:
HEAD OFFICE PROCESSING			
Confirmation Objective will be met			
Decision			
Name of deciding officer			
Position			
Signature:			Date:
Following Approval the Branch Account team will process payment which will be approved by the Chief Finance Officer or Director of Finance in line with SOP 146: Financial Delegations of Authority.			

SOP 163 APPENDIX B APPLICATION FORM



APPEAL A LEGACY TRUST ACCOUNT DECISION

1.	NAME OF TRUST		
	TRUST CODE		
2.	Branch Details (<i>include BR code</i>):		BR
3.	Amount requested	£	
4.	Purpose of original request:		
5.	Date of original request submission:		

APPEAL DETAILS

6.	Appeal Reason/Response to original decision:		
7.	APPEAL COMPLETED BY		
	POSITION		
	Signature:		Date:

HEAD OFFICE PROCESSING

Appeal Decision by Director			
NAME OF DECIDING OFFICER			
POSITION			
Signature:		Date:	

Following Approval the Branch Account team will process payment which will be approved by the Chief Finance Officer or Director of Finance in line with SOP 146: Financial Delegations of Authority.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In this box describe what the County has achieved in the past year and how you now need to amend the Plan to take your County forward whilst fitting in with the policies and procedures and the general direction of the Royal British Legion. Describe any major changes that took place and how they have impacted on your delivery.

2.i WELFARE

In this box describe how your County will deliver welfare in the next three years and how this fits in with national initiatives.

OBJECTIVE	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBILITY	KPIs (Key Performance Indicators)	BUDGET ESTIMATE
WHAT do you want to achieve?	WHEN do you want to achieve this?	WHO is going to achieve this?	HOW will you measure whether you have achieved the objective?	HOW MUCH will it cost you to achieve this? Cost impact: positive or negative?

2.ii FUNDRAISING

In this box describe the work that your County undertakes to increase fundraising support and income.

OBJECTIVE	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBILITY	KPIs (Key Performance Indicators)	BUDGET ESTIMATE
WHAT do you want to achieve?	WHEN do you want to achieve this?	WHO is going to achieve this?	HOW will you measure whether you have achieved the objective?	HOW MUCH will it cost you to achieve this?
				Cost impact: positive or negative?

2.iii REMEMBRANCE

In this box describe which Remembrance and Ceremonial events you organise throughout the year and what you hope to achieve with this.

OBJECTIVE	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBILITY	KPIs (<i>Key Performance Indicators</i>)	BUDGET ESTIMATE
WHAT do you want to achieve?	WHEN do you want to achieve this?	WHO is going to achieve this?	HOW will you measure whether you have achieved the objective?	HOW MUCH will it cost you to achieve this? Cost impact: positive or negative?

2.iv MEMBERSHIP, RECRUITMENT AND EVENTS

In this box describe how you want to develop membership in your County and what events you will need to organise to achieve this. Keep in mind National policies on Direct Debit subscriptions, Gift Aid, etc.

OBJECTIVE	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBILITY	KPIs (<i>Key Performance Indicators</i>)	BUDGET ESTIMATE
WHAT do you want to achieve?	WHEN do you want to achieve this?	WHO is going to achieve this?	HOW will you measure whether you have achieved the objective?	HOW MUCH will it cost you to achieve this? Cost impact: positive or negative?

SCHEDULED YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

OBJECTIVE	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBILITY	KPIs (Key Performance Indicators)	BUDGET ESTIMATE
WHAT do you want to achieve?	WHEN do you want to achieve this?	WHO is going to achieve this?	HOW will you measure whether you have achieved the objective?	HOW MUCH will it cost you to achieve this? Cost impact: positive or negative?

2.v TRAINING

In this box describe what training you want to organise for your County and Branch Officers, Committee members and branch members.

OBJECTIVE	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBILITY	KPIs (Key Performance Indicators)	BUDGET ESTIMATE
WHAT do you want to achieve?	WHEN do you want to achieve this?	WHO is going to achieve this?	HOW will you measure whether you have achieved the objective?	HOW MUCH will it cost you to achieve this?
				Cost impact: positive or negative?

2.vi ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

In this box, describe which administrative changes you wish to make, in addition to maintaining established key returns and reports. Keep in mind National initiatives like the Branch Funds Initiative.

OBJECTIVE	TARGET DATE	RESPONSIBILITY	KPIs (<i>Key Performance Indicators</i>)	BUDGET ESTIMATE
WHAT do you want to achieve?	WHEN do you want to achieve this?	WHO is going to achieve this?	HOW will you measure whether you have achieved the objective?	HOW MUCH will it cost you to achieve this? Cost impact: positive or negative?

DRAFT COUNTY MODEL RULES

FOR GROUP OFFICERS, REPRESENTATIVES AND MEMBERS

Each branch in the Group (list branches by name) is entitled to send as many members as they wish to Group meetings.

Each branch is to provide an official Branch Representative, authorised to take appropriate decisions, within the remit of the Group, on behalf of the branch; otherwise the representative is to refer to their own Branch Committee all matters requiring consultation. The Branch Representative elected to the Group Committee is to provide information and reports required by the Group.

It is for each branch to determine how their representative is provided (by election/voting, nomination by Branch Committee) and to determine who is eligible to be nominated (Branch Officer, Branch Committee member or branch member).

Only the nominated Branch Representatives are authorised to vote at Group meetings, irrespective of the number or standing of any other branch member(s) present at the time. Only one voting member per branch is permitted. Normally a Branch Representative is brought onto the Group Committee at the Group AGM. It is recognised that branches need continuity of representation and change may be necessary outside the normal routine. The branch is to notify the Group Chair when there is a change to the nominated representative.

There are to be two Group Officers, the Chair, and the Secretary. If the Group is to hold an Account then a Treasurer must be appointed. If the Group has a Standard then a Group Standard Bearer is required. The Group is entitled to appoint and send Group Representative(s) to the County Committee in accordance with the County direction in force at the time. The Group Representative(s) will be nominated and named at the Annual Meeting of County Conference and considered elected to the County Committee. Should it be necessary to change Group Representatives between the Annual Meetings of County Conference, the Group will inform the County Chair/MSO of the change. The new Group Representative will be formally co-opted at the next available County Committee meeting and have voting rights from that point forward.

The Group Chair is to run all Group meetings. The Group will elect its Group Representative to take their place on the County Committee. The Representative can be any branch member from within the Group. The Group Representative must be willing to take full part in County Committee business; to positively participate in discussion and activity; and to be a member of County sub-Committees as appointed. If the County rules in force at the time allow more than one Group representative, the additional Representative(s) is/are to be elected by the Group at its AGM. If a Group is permitted more than one Representative under the County rules in force at the time and cannot, or does not wish to, provide more than one Group representative to the County Committee then that Group will so inform the County Chair/MSO prior to the Annual Meeting of County Conference. The Group Representative position released by a Group will be filled at the Annual Meeting of County Conference by electing, from the floor at the conference, an individual member who is formally proposed and seconded to the vacant position. Anyone so elected is not required to represent the Group whose position they fill. Once elected, the individual will hold the position for the period of election, after which the Group may choose to fill it themselves or continue to release the position.

If it is necessary for the Group Committee to vote on any proposal then this will follow the voting rules laid down within the Membership Handbook (MH). As there are no specific rules for Group voting, the Group will follow the rules for branch voting as the Group is made up of elected branch members.

The Group Representative(s) to the County Committee is/are to provide a written record of action or major information points to branch Representatives of the Group following the County Committee meeting. This is to be concise, distributed as soon as possible after the meeting but not more than 14 calendar days, and is not to be seen to replicate or replace the County's official record of the meeting. It is for Branch Representatives to distribute the notes within their branches according to their Branch Committee requirements.

The responsibilities of the Group Officers are to be found in the MH. There is no County requirement for a Group to have a Group President. The role of the Group is communication.

Management of Group Finances is covered in the MH. There is no requirement for a Group to hold a Branch Funds Initiative (BFI) Account but some Groups may need to hold an Account, to cover administration costs, which is limited to £250 and they will be required to submit an annual account for audit. The County Committee are responsible for authorising a Group to hold an Account. The expenditure is limited to those items allowed under the current RBL regulations. Income can be raised in the form of branch subscriptions. Groups should consider raising branch subscriptions that enable the Group to conduct its business.

This should meet the requirements of the MH by ensuring the Group raises its funds at a fixed rate and manages its business without generating any excessive funds. A Group may fundraise for a specific purpose and accept donations.

It is for branches to correctly record their subscriptions to the Group in their financial records. These are normally in the form of expenses only.

The Secretary is to record and distribute action points made at Group meetings.

Branches are to provide concise written notes on points that they wish raised at the next County Committee meeting to ensure accuracy of their intent. The Group Representative(s) will then have all points to take forward to the next County meeting.

The Group Secretary is to issue an agenda no less than seven calendar days prior to a previously arranged Group meeting. Any branch wishing to add an agenda point must do so through their elected representative to the Group Secretary prior to the issue of the agenda.

The Group meeting agenda will follow a set format, as will the Group AGM.

A quorum will consist of (group to insert number) Branch Representatives.

Group Officers and Representatives shall be elected for a (two or three year appointment – Group is to decide, but a one year appointment is not recommended), which is to coincide with the County Committee calendar. For continuity, Group Officer and Representative appointments should be staggered so that the Chair and Secretary and any other Group Representative to the County Committee do not change in the same year.

A voting system of a simple majority of those present and authorised to vote will be used.

Group Representatives may become full members of the County Committee at the Annual Meeting of County Conference if the County so decides.

The Group meets at the same intervals as the County Committee meeting (currently quarterly). The Group meets in advance of the County meeting in order that Branch Representatives can provide the Group with a report on activities over the past period, a forward plan of activities for the next 12 months (where known), and raise in writing any issues that the Group needs to bring to County attention.

These rules can be changed at any Group meeting by a simple majority of those authorised to vote, provided that the proposed change is submitted in writing to the Secretary in good time for the Secretary to distribute the proposed changes one month (31 calendar days) prior to the next Group meeting. This is to ensure that each branch has a chance to review the proposed changes at a regular branch meeting prior to the next Group meeting. Guidance is to be sought from the County Committee to ensure that there are no breaches of County rules/regulations and the County Committee agree to the proposed changes.

	Signature:	Date:
CHAIR		
SECRETARY		

BRANCH NOMINATION FOR COUNTY CHAIR



To:	[Membership Engagement Officer]
We certify that:	
was nominated for the election of:	COUNTY/DISTRICT

FOR COMPLETION BY THE NOMINEE *(Please use tick box as appropriate)*

- I do not have any unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception
- I am not an undischarged bankrupt
- I have not been disqualified as a company director under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986
- I have not been removed from trusteeship of charity by a Court of Law or the Charity Commission
- There are no medical reasons preventing me from fulfilling the duties of County/District Chair

	I accept the above Nomination and certify that all the above statements are true.
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Signature of Nominee:	Date:
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MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:	
--------------------	--

FOR COMPLETION BY THE BRANCH *(Please use tick box as appropriate)*

	A CV and a passport-sized photograph of the nominee are enclosed.
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	Evidence of current membership has been seen and verified.
--	--

	Branch Accounts and MS1 have been submitted.
--	--

	Signature:	Date:
CHAIR		
SECRETARY		

CONTACT DETAILS FOR BRANCH CORRESPONDENCE

NAME:	
EMAIL:	
PHONE NUMBER:	
ADDRESS:	

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date of Receipt:	Signature of MSO:
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Comments:



ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

Registered address: Royal British Legion, Haig House, 199 Borough High Street, London SE1 1AA

020 3207 2253 | [rbl.org.uk](https://www.rbl.org.uk)

Registered charity number: 219279