



Central News – July 2023

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Important dates	
11 July 2023	Membership Townhall
25 July 2023	Festival of Remembrance tickets on sale to members
30 September 2023	Deadline to submit Branch Accounts

Summary of the Membership Council Meeting, 19 May 2023

The Membership Council Meeting covered a range of matters, including a sub-committee and working group proposal, elections, Branch Community Support (BCS), future thinking and more. The meeting also congratulated Bob Howard, who was re-elected for the Gt Manchester and Lancashire Area. To read the full summary, [please find it here on MAP](#). The summary of the June meeting will be shared soon.

Membership Townhall

As was advertised in the Membership e-newsletter the next Membership Townhall will take place on Tuesday 11 July at 7-8pm. The agenda includes progress updates on several projects, including how we are improving the beneficiary journey and the transformation of the care homes. There will also be discussion on improvements in membership, with a particular focus on the training strategy and policy, plus an update from Janet on the Future Thinking work. **Please use this link to gain access on the day.**

National Membership Training

After agreement at Membership Council on the 21 June, all training usually delivered by the national membership training team will be paused between 1 September and 31 December 2023. This is to allow for a full review and refresh of all training courses and materials. If you have any questions, we will be discussing membership training at the next Membership Townhall.

Application Form

We are aware that we currently have several versions of the application form in circulation, which causes disparity in the data we collect and a delay in processing time. We are therefore going to introduce an updated version to improve the process, and which will hopefully present the information required in a clearer format.

We will have hard copies available for you to request shortly and will also make you aware when the form is available to download and print on MAP. This is likely to be in next month's issue of Central News.

This will also mean if you have a copy of the application form available to download on your branch website, we will require you to update to this version.

Once the updated version is in circulation there will then be a window which follows, after which we will not accept any new applications that are submitted on any other older version of the form. We will let you know what this cut off date is once the updated version is ready.

New faces in the Membership Directorate

Since our last Central News, the Membership Directorate team has taken on new colleagues. Juliet has joined as our new Membership Services Manager and Sam has joined as our new Membership Communications Officer. We ask for patience and understanding as new staff settle into their roles and the team, and we look forward to all working together to improve the experience for our members.

Teaching Remembrance

While most of the UK only think of Remembrance during October and November, the RBL has designed and created resources that can be used to teach children about Remembrance any time of year. The resources are free online, are available for use by schools and families, and are also available in Welsh. To access the materials and for more details [please visit the website](#).

Remembering Air Marshal David Walker CB CBE AFC, former National President

It is with great sadness that we share the passing of former National President, Air Marshal David Walker. David had been battling cancer for some time and died on Sunday 18 June.

David joined the RAF in 1978, completing tours in Germany, the US and the UK before becoming the Military Assistant to the Minister of Defence. He was appointed Assistant Chief of the Air Staff in 2003 and became Deputy Commander of the NATO Joint Force Command before retiring from the RAF in 2013. David completed his term as our National President in May 2019.

Our thoughts are with his family and friends at this difficult time.

Credit their Service

RBL have launched our new campaign, [Credit their Service](#). Armed Forces compensation (such as a War Pension) is often considered an income source when national and local benefit rates are calculated, whilst civil compensation is not. As a result, veterans and their families are often receiving less Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support, Discretionary Housing Payments, and Disabled Facilities Grants than they are entitled to.

We need your help to get the word out by asking your MP to Credit their Service [by clicking here](#). Also, if you believe you or somebody you know has been disadvantaged by this problem, get in touch with us through this [short survey](#), or email us at: publicaffairs@britishlegion.org.uk.

Branch Resources

Following feedback from branches that more collateral is needed, we have worked with brand to make available an editable template for both posters and leaflets. These are available to download from the template guide section on the [Members Brand Page](#).

We are aware that there is still a requirement for more resources for recruitment purposes, so this is a priority that we are currently working on with brand. We would hope to have something available for branches to use by in the next couple of months.

NEW: Regional Voice

Welcome to a new section of Central News where we will share stories that celebrate and recognise best practice and effective management in our branches and clubs.

Knowle, West Midlands - There was lots to celebrate in Knowle when their RBL club got a mention in the local news after Kevin Grealish, a RBL member brought his son's medals to the local club. Kevin was extremely proud to share in his son's, Manchester City player, Jack Grealish, recent history making success. The Grealish family have been extremely generous to the club donating lots of Jack's football memorabilia. And while not everyone has a celebrity in the family to help promote RBL, it is lovely to see the local club at the heart of a feel good story connecting the community, football fanatic or not!

Guiseley, South & West Yorkshire - Mrs Elsie Turner of Guiseley Branch was awarded National Life Membership this June. Since 1983, Elsie has held holding numerous roles including Standard Bearer, Branch Secretary and Branch Treasurer. She has also been the Poppy Appeal Organiser for Guiseley since 1983 and, more recently, for two other local areas. Over her time Elsie has raised tens of thousands of pounds for the Poppy Appeal, so it was a very well-deserved award for a person who truly epitomises Service not Self.

Burnham, Buckinghamshire – a very successful evening was had in Burnham at a dinner celebrating local veterans. 50 veterans were in attendance at the Burnham RBL club, including Dick Moon, a 100-year-old Navy Fleet Arm veteran. The evening was also an opportunity to recognise the long standing service of Bob Slater as branch president. For his hard work over the last 29 years he was presented with a silver RBL-crested walk cane.

Amesbury, Wiltshire – last month Amesbury Branch welcomed the Amesbury Girls' Brigade into the Legion family as Affiliate Members, the first youth group to join in over 10 years. Amesbury Chairman, Richard Allen took the opportunity to share with the group some history around the meaning of the poppy and the importance of Remembrance. Many of the Girls Brigade already participate in the Remembrance Sunday Parade, so in affiliating the group, it will create a real sense of belonging and cooperating with the Legion, formalising an already historic and valued relationship, connecting the younger generation to the cause.

We want to hear from all across our membership network these great examples of comradeship and good news stories. So to see your stories highlighted here, remember to send them through to you MEO or MEA.
