



Central News – January 2024

| Title | Page | Summary |
|--|------|--|
| Important dates | 2 | What's coming up |
| January Membership Townhall | 2 | Join us on 23 rd January 7pm-8pm |
| Annual Conference Registration | 2 | Registration opens 8 th January |
| Annual Conference Awards | 2 | Submit your nominations by 16 th February |
| Annual Conference feedback | 3 | How we're incorporating your feedback in 2024 |
| Centenarian Membership | 3 | Update on Motion 2 of Annual Conference 2022 |
| Royal Household update | 4 | National Chair awaiting responses |
| December Membership Council meeting | 4 | A summary of the meeting is now on MAP |
| Spring 2024 County Chairs Seminar | 4 | Registration information has been sent |
| D-Day 80 | 4 | Update and resources available to you |
| 2023 Fields of Remembrance | 5 | A thank you to those who supported |
| Veterans' Commissioner campaign | 5 | Our campaign for an English Veterans' Commissioner |
| BCS Flyer | 5 | A new BCS flyer is available |
| Good Practice | 5 | Branch rebirth in the home of Annual Conference 2024 |

| Important dates | |
|------------------|--|
| 8 January 2024 | Annual Conference registration opens |
| 23 January 2024 | Membership Townhall |
| 2 February 2024 | Certificate for Motions and Nomination for Place of Conference 2028 deadline |
| 16 February 2024 | Annual Conference Awards nominations close |
| 1-2 March 2024 | Spring County Chairs Seminar |
| 28 March 2024 | Closure of Annual Conference registration and Jim Prince Fund applications |
| 4 April 2024 | Appeals and amendments to Motions deadline |
| 10-12 May 2024 | Annual Conference 2024 |

January Membership Townhall

Join us 23rd January 7-8pm for a Membership Townhall. Members may attend on the day [using this link](#). Membership Townhalls are open for all members to hear presentations from RBL and ask questions, so please share this information with other members. View a recording of the last Townhall [on MAP](#).

Annual Conference Registration

Registration to attend Annual Conference 2024 as a delegate or visitor will open 00:01 Monday 8th January and close 23:59 28th March 2024. The link for registration will be available [on MAP](#) and via the [RBL website](#) during the registration period. Please see the [Registration Overview](#) and [Guide for Branch Secretaries](#) on MAP for more information about the process.

To facilitate our online registration process and support our commitment to sustainability by reducing paper waste, we regret we cannot accept applications sent by email or post. Late applications may not be accepted. If you require support with the registration process, please contact your Membership Engagement Officer (MEO).

Annual Conference Awards

The deadline to submit nominations for Annual Conference Awards is next month, Friday 16th February 2024. All nominations/applications must be submitted online [using this link](#).

When nominating/applying, please refer to the criteria in the [October Circular](#). Nominators will be asked to submit a supporting statement of 500 words or more and will have the opportunity to upload additional supporting evidence such as photos or articles.

Annual Conference – you said, we did

Whilst the agenda for Annual Conference 2024 is being finalised, your feedback is at the heart of what lies ahead.

Timely reporting

At Annual Conference 2023, a motion was carried for more timely and rigorous reporting of motions carried, once approved by the Board of Trustees. Beginning in January 2024, the Board of Trustees will provide an annual update on the progress of motions carried at previous Annual Conferences, with the first of which covering conference between 2019-2022. The update for the motions carried in 2023 will be formally reported in January 2024, as well as throughout the year as appropriate.

Sustainability and best practice

We know that sustainability and best practice are both important to the membership. We are pleased to confirm that for Annual Conference 2024 we will offer the Delegate Pack in PDF (digital) format. Printed copies will be available at Conference. For those who require special adjustment such as large-font print, this can be requested at the point of registration.

Catering and entertainment

We have also taken your comments about catering on board. The venue, the ICC in Newport, will be providing a great selection designed to cater to a range of dietary requirements and preferences. Without giving anything away at this stage, we are also anticipating a wonderful evening of entertainment. Details to be confirmed!

Tell a member - information sharing

Please share information about Annual Conference with members who do not have access to *Central News*. Attendance is open to all members, and for those who cannot attend in-person, the business of conference can be watched online, with voting delegates able to cast their branch's vote.

Further information about Annual Conference 2024 is [available on our website](#).

Centenarian Membership

Following on from the carrying of Motion 2 at Annual Conference 2022, we are pleased to announce that over the next few months all our Centenarian members will receive free membership, a letter and certificate to congratulate them on reaching such a great landmark age and thanking them for their dedication to RBL.

Royal Household update

The National President has sent the loyal greeting to the Palace on behalf of RBL. The RBL Private Office is still waiting for the patronage review results from the Royal House and will check in with the Royal House team shortly after Christmas.

December 2023 Membership Council meeting

The briefing from the Chair of the Membership Council, John Boisson, summarising the points of discussion and outcomes of the 8th December Membership Council meeting is now available [on MAP](#).

Spring 2024 County Chairs Seminar

The next County Chairs Seminar will be held 1st – 2nd March 2024 in Birmingham. County Chairs were sent registration information in December, with a registration deadline of 1st February.

Briefing pack: We would like to advise that, due to the time required to create the post-event briefing pack and obtain sign off, it will be sent out to County Chairs by 15th March. Please ensure that your briefings are not scheduled to occur before this date.

County Chairs who have not received their registration information should contact the Membership Services team on membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk.

Commemorating D-Day 80 and Beyond

This year marks the 80th anniversary of several battles that led to the end of the Second World War, including the D-Day landings on 6th June 1944, the Battle of Normandy that followed, and the fierce fighting in the Far East in Kohima and Imphal. Throughout the year, RBL will be marking these anniversaries and paying tribute to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice and lost their lives, as well as thanking surviving veterans.

For resources to help you and your branch take part in planned events, keep an eye out for your copy of *Legion* magazine or, from mid-month, visit: rbl.org.uk/get-involved/remembrance. We will be updating our pages as more plans and details are confirmed.

RBL has undertaken a number of activities throughout 2023, including the refresh of [remembrance resources, which are available on the main website](#). As we look forward to D-Day 80, we are continuing the plans around numerous national and local events commemorating the 80 years since the Normandy landings.

Thank you for your support at our 2023 Fields of Remembrance

Together, our Fields of Remembrance campaign raised just over £1.1million with over 45,000 of our supporters taking part over the Remembrance period, paying tribute to their loved ones. We sincerely thank all those who supported and are happy to share [this thank you video](#) with them.

Campaign to appoint a Veterans' Commissioner for England

At the end of November 2023, RBL launched a campaign calling on the UK Government to appoint a Veterans' Commissioner for England. Veterans' Commissioners in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are already dedicated to assisting and advocating for the veteran community.

More than 1,000 people signed our petition - your support helped us show the UK Government that RBL supporters back our campaign for a Veterans' Commissioner for England. We delivered our petition signatures to the Government before Christmas. We will let you know the outcome of our campaign in due course.

Thank you for all your support in 2023. To hear more about our campaigning work this year, please [click here](#).

Branch Community Support flyer

A new BCS flyer, which was shared in November, is available in both print and digital format on the BCS Portal under *Promotional items*. Please ensure to use the correct version if you are printing or circulating online. We are working with the Poppy Shop to enable branches to order prints; however, in the meantime, please use your preferred printers.

Good Practice

Newport, Wales

The home of Annual Conference 2024 is also home to a branch that has recently been reinvigorated with a sense of purpose and determination, after a new committee came into post! With two simple questions, we asked for some useful tips:

Q: What three things have you done that helped to reinvigorate the branch?

1. Not given up, it's easy to do but if you persevere you will see a benefit eventually!
2. Explore all options. It will seem to some that I've 'kept it in the family' as my sister has agreed to be the treasurer. But after being let down by so many so often, I know we can rely on her and she is qualified to do it.
3. We are thinking of ideas and things to do to attract more people to the branch and looking at some more modern things to do. Gin festivals, afternoon tea, etc. - all ticketed events with a

view to beat perceptions that we're all 'old people' at RBL.

Q: What has been the biggest challenge you've encountered since taking charge of Newport Branch?

The biggest challenge has been communication. For anything to be successful, whether that's in RBL, work, or home life - communication is vital! We are also looking at how we can best communicate with the wider local community. Two of us are looking at completely revamping the Newport Facebook page, we'll look at getting on Instagram too. This will help to advertise who we are and what we do to a wider, more diverse audience, at zero cost.