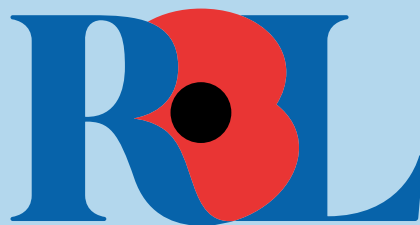


October Special Circular

Annual Conference 2027

Telford International Centre
Telford, Shropshire
7–9 May



ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

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Foreword

Dear Member,

As Chair of the Conference Committee, I am pleased to welcome you to the Annual Conference 2027 October Special Circular.

Looking forward to next year, I would also like to reflect back on May and extend thanks to my predecessor, Helen Owen, who diligently chaired the Conference Committee over the past year, working with committee members and staff to ensure Brighton was a forward-looking and engaging Conference.

As a Trustee, former National Parade Marshal and a member, I know first-hand how pivotal membership is to the RBL. Annual Conference is not only a valuable opportunity for us to come together in our shared purpose; it remains one of the Legion's flagship events. It enables us to showcase the organisation at its best while ensuring members have a direct and meaningful voice in shaping our future direction and strategy.



I encourage you to take the opportunity to attend next year, and if you can't join us in person do consider joining us online. Whether to catch a specific segment or take part throughout the weekend, online attendance is a great opportunity to get involved in a way that works for you. Your contribution at Annual Conference is vital to ensuring the RBL continues to advance in the right direction and delivers the strongest possible support to the Armed Forces community.

For those who attended our last Annual Conference in Telford back in 2011, I am pleased to report that the venue has been completely rebuilt since then. The new Telford International Centre is a modern, accessible, state of the art facility that's more than suitable for our Annual Conference and the needs of members.

I look forward to seeing you all in May for what I am sure will be a gold standard Annual Conference that makes us all proud.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Thornhill'.

John Thornhill MBE
Chair, National Conference Committee

The venue

Telford International Centre, International Way, Telford, Shropshire, TF3 4JH



Next May, Annual Conference 2027 will take place in a hybrid format at the Telford International Centre; a modern, purpose-built venue conveniently situated close to key transport links. Rebuilt since RBL's Annual Conference 2011, the venue suits all our needs, including accessibility. [Click here for a virtual venue tour.](#)

Named after the Scottish civil engineer Thomas Telford, the town is just a short drive away from Ironbridge Gorge — a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a key landmark in the story of the Industrial Revolution — and the Royal Air Force Museum Midlands. The serene RBL National Remembrance Gardens are also within an hour's drive.

To find out more about things to do, head to the [Visit Telford website](#).

Accommodation

There are several hotels within a very short walk of the Telford International Centre, including two on-site hotels, the International Hotel Telford and voco Telford Ironbridge, and the Ramada Telford-Ironbridge hotel just off site. In addition, Telford and the surrounding area boasts numerous places to stay for all budgets and needs. See the [Visit Telford website](#) for more information.

Travel

The venue is easy to access. By car, it's conveniently located near the M54. By train it's just a 15-minute walk or a short taxi ride from Telford Central Station. Bus services also operate frequently between the station and the venue. Find out more about getting there [on the venue's website](#).



Parking

Telford International Centre boasts 1,500 on-site parking spaces for all visitors, including blue badge spaces. Please note, a car parking charge of £10 a day will apply.

Security

In line with new security requirements under Martyn's Law, luggage and large bags **are not permitted** in the venue and should be stored off-site. Whilst personal items such as handbags and small backpacks are permitted, these will be searched upon entry.

Security searches of all individuals entering the venue will take place and these may be more thorough than in previous years. RBL is working to implement appropriate, proportionate measures in line with legislation and health and safety requirements to keep attendees safe and secure.

Accessibility

Accessibility at the venue includes lifts, ramps, accessible toilets and blue badge parking. There will be wheelchair seating and hearing loops in the auditorium. Details on visitor accessibility and medical requirements should be submitted when registering to attend.

What's on?



Main Conference (in person and online)

Join us in person or online to hear keynote addresses, updates on RBL's work with beneficiaries, the Poppy Appeal and membership activities, and take part in the Membership Forum. Branch delegates can vote on motions submitted by their fellow branches.

National Membership Awards Ceremony (in person and online)

Help us to celebrate achievements, comradeship, community support and collaboration. Applaud your fellow members, branches, districts / counties and clubs when they receive their awards. See page 10 and the letter accompanying this circular for further information on each award and how to follow our easy nomination and application process.

Act of Remembrance (in person only)

There will be an act of Remembrance at Annual Conference; further information will be available in the March Special Circular and Delegate Pack.

Entertainment (in person only)

Evening entertainment offers a chance to relax after the business of Conference and to join other attendees in a social setting. Details will be shared in the March Special Circular.

Exhibition (in person only)

Take this opportunity to chat to RBL staff and partners, and to get answers to your questions.

Pick up information from a variety of exhibition stalls and use your membership card for a 15% discount at the Poppy Shop. Once again, attendees will be able to place **click and collect orders** for the full range of Poppy Shop merchandise in advance. Further information will be shared in Central News and the eNewsletter soon.

National and Women's Section Standard Bearers Competitions (in person only)

Attend this annual event where our judges seek out the best Standard Bearers from our regional winners.

Overseas and Women's Section Forums

The Overseas Forum and Women's Section Forum both provide opportunities for members to hear updates specific to them and to ask questions. Please note the Overseas Forum is open to both online and in-person attendees, whilst the Women's Section Forum is in person only.

Nominations to the National Conference Committee

A vacancy for an elected member of the National Conference Committee will become available at the close of Conference. The election for this post will be held during Conference proceedings, with the elected member serving for a term of three years. Each county / district and overseas branch may nominate one current member or life member to join the Committee. Candidates will be subject to an interview and may not hold a position on either the Board of Trustees or the Membership Council. The final list of candidates will be approved by the Board of Trustees before the election at Conference. Further details and a nomination form will be shared with County Chairs in December. See the Standing Orders of Conference for more information about the Committee.

Registration and attending Annual Conference



The registration link will be shared in *Central News*, *eNewsletter* and on [the RBL website](#) during the registration period, which opens 27 January. Registration to attend in person or online will close **12pm midday, 7 April**. Please note, late registrations may not be accepted.

During registration, details will be collected concerning mobility and medical requirements, and expense details for voting delegates attending in person. On completion of registration, you will receive an automatic acknowledgement.

All delegates and visitors must register online. We regret that we cannot accept applications sent by post or email. For queries regarding delegate registration, please contact your Membership Engagement Officer (MEO). For non-delegate registration queries, please contact membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk.

Who can attend?

In-person and online attendance is open to **all members** and their accompanying guests or carers. Voting delegates may attend and vote online. During registration, you will be asked to select your type and mode of attendance.

Online attendance — an opportunity to come together

If you cannot attend in person, online attendance will be available on the Saturday and Sunday of Conference so that members can watch and participate with events taking place in the main auditorium. All online attendees will be able to watch the opening ceremony, speeches, motions, awards and the closing ceremony. Online attendees will be able to watch and ask questions during the membership forum, with delegates also able to speak on and (where applicable) vote on motions. Online attendees will not be able to view the evening entertainment, Women's Section Forum, Standard Bearer competitions and parade.

We encourage online attendees to come together with others in their area who cannot attend in person to watch and enjoy Annual Conference in camaraderie and friendship.

Branch delegates

Your branch can play a key role at Annual Conference, acting as the voice of its members in our decision-making process. **Any branch** can register a branch delegate, propose, second and vote on motions. If you have been nominated as a delegate, you will be able to register yourself once registration opens.

Any member may be nominated as a delegate to represent their branch. Branch delegates may propose, second and speak for or against motions, and vote on their branch's behalf whether they attend online or in person. Please note, branch delegates may not also be county delegates.

County delegates

Each County / District Committee is entitled to send **one delegate** to Annual Conference. This delegate has the right to speak for or against motions but is not entitled to vote.

Standard Bearers

Any County / District / Branch Standard Bearers can attend and should be funded by their respective county / district / branch. Standard Bearers will be required from Saturday morning (07.30am) until the close of Annual Conference on Sunday.



Attendance of children at Annual Conference

In line with the Royal British Legion's commitment to safeguarding and current UK legislation, children under 18 years of age are only permitted to attend the Annual Conference under **exceptional circumstances**.

Written permission must be obtained from the **National Chair** prior to the deadline for Conference registrations. Permission should be requested via membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk.

Children who have been given permission to attend must be accompanied and supervised at all times by the parent or legal guardian, or a responsible adult nominated by the parent or legal guardian.

The Royal British Legion **does not accept responsibility** for the care, supervision, or welfare of children at any of its events. Wherever possible, we encourage children to attend online, rather than in person.

Please note that Youth Standard Bearers who are playing a specific role at Annual Conference, as designated by the National Parade Marshal, are permitted to attend. These young people attend in line with the Membership Youth Policy. Young people who attend with a third-party organisation which is supporting Annual Conference, e.g.: Cadets or RBL Youth Musicians, are also permitted to attend and remain the responsibility of the third-party organisation throughout.

This reflects our duty to protect children from harm and ensure their safety, and is designed to support a safe and secure environment for all attendees. Thank you for your understanding. Please see our [Safeguarding Children and Young People](#) and [Youth Policy on MAP for further information and guidance](#).



Expenses and Jim Prince Fund

Expenses

We provide a contribution to branches towards the **travel cost** for sending a **voting delegate** to Annual Conference. Expenses for visitors, county delegates and other membership attendees are not payable from central funds. Please see the table below as a guide. Travel distances will be calculated on a **straight-line basis** (“as the crow flies”) to ensure consistency for all delegates.

Band	Distance between home address and conference venue	Percentage of travel costs reimbursement	Reimbursement amount
A	0–20 miles	N/A	£0
B	21–90 miles	N/A	£30
C	91–160 miles	N/A	£50
D	161–230 miles	N/A	£70
E	231–300 miles	N/A	£90
F	>300 miles	N/A	£110
G (non-mainland UK, Europe)	N/A	50%	Up to £200
H (non-mainland UK, not Europe)	N/A	50%	Up to £350

Please note, all delegates need to attend every session of Annual Conference on Saturday and Sunday – excluding the evening entertainment, parade and closing ceremony – to be eligible for reimbursement.

Mainland UK branch delegates should claim their expenses **directly from their branch** with no need to supply an expense form to head office. A proportion of the delegate’s travel costs will be automatically reimbursed from central funds directly to the branch up to 12 weeks after Conference.

Non-mainland UK and overseas branch delegates only are required to submit an [expense form](#) directly to memberships@britishlegion.org.uk by email as soon as possible after the event. Please put “Annual Conference expenses” in the subject line of your email to ensure it is identified and dealt with promptly. Further details are available in the expense policy [on MAP](#). Please note submissions using an incorrect expense form may not be accepted.

The Jim Prince Small Branch Fund

For branches who cannot afford to send a delegate to Conference, we encourage online attendance to take part and ensure your branch is represented.

The Jim Prince fund was established to assist in sending a delegate from a small branch to Annual Conference who otherwise could not afford it.

To be eligible, the branch must:

- Have fewer than 100 members.
- Have general funds amounting to less than £1,500.

Branches must formally **apply for the Jim Prince Fund by completing the form** [via this link](#). Applications must be submitted along with the delegate registration for the branch.

Applications must be received **by 12pm midday 7 April 2027**.

Awards



For all awards nominations / applications, please submit the appropriate form accompanying this circular. Nominations for the Sir Clive Johnstone Award should be made using accompanying separate form. Both forms are also [available on MAP](#).

When nominating / applying, please refer to the criteria below. You will be asked to submit a supporting statement and may also submit additional supporting evidence such as photos or articles.

Please use one form per award submission. The deadline is **5pm, Friday 12 February 2027**. The National Membership Awards Committee or relevant judge(s) will consider all applications and determine winners and (when awarded) runners-up.

Winners and runners-up will be invited to receive their award during the National Membership Awards Ceremony at Annual Conference 2027. Each winning formation or member will be presented with a glass plaque engraved with their name to keep. Where applicable, certificates may be awarded to runners up.

In addition to the awards below, counties, districts and branches may submit nominations for other national level awards such as Gold Badges and Life Membership Badges. To find out more about any of these awards including the criteria and application process, please visit [RBL – Awards for Members](#).

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 the RBL within its community, county / district or the wider country.

County committee nominates 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.

County committee nominates 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.

Membership Council Rep nominates 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.

County / district / section nominates branches.

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.

National Branches District nominates branches.

Downing Shield

Awarded to an individual member who is recognised to have played an important part in the delivery of Branch Community Support with a view to greatly improving RBL's support to beneficiaries.

Branch or county / district nominates.

Lewis Shield

Awarded to an RBL member with a disability who has provided substantial inspiration for other RBL members.

Branch nominates with supporting citations from county / district.

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.

Branch or county / district / section nominate.

McCrae Shield

The McCrae Shield is awarded to a compliant overseas branch that is at least three years old which, during the past year, has not only supported its membership and beneficiaries, but also positively promoted the RBL within its district or wider community.

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 the 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.

Sir Clive Johnstone Award

Awarded to individuals, groups, or teams from across RBL (volunteers, members or staff) who seek to create, repair or improve unity across RBL. Nominations should be made using the separate Sir Clive Johnstone Award nomination form. *Individuals, groups or teams are nominated by members, volunteers or staff.*

The National Certificate of Appreciation

The National Certificate of Appreciation is the highest honour. It may be awarded to a member who has made a significant 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'. To apply or nominate someone for this award, please see the information [on the RBL website](#).



Main session and deadlines

Motions to Annual Conference

All motions must be accompanied by a certificate and have the following sections:

- Motion text
- The reason for the motion
- The effect of the motion, if passed
- Main argument in favour of the motion

A dedicated course on writing and submitting a motion to Annual Conference is available on the *Discover* learning platform. Anyone considering a motion is strongly encouraged to [take this course](#). Register an account via the [Discover website](#).

Further motions guidance is available from your Membership Engagement Officer (MEO).

Provisional Agenda

The provisional agenda and motions / motions omissions booklets will be published in March 2027.

Final Agenda

The final agenda will be published in the Delegate Pack, which will include accepted motions and anticipated order of events. A PDF version of the Delegate Pack will be shared with attendees four weeks before Conference.

Item	Deadline date	Deadline time
Certificate for Motions	Friday 12 February 2027	5pm
Nominations for Conference Committee	Friday 12 February 2027	5pm
National Membership Awards (see page 10)	Friday 12 February 2027	5pm
In-person / online attendance registration	Wednesday 7 April 2027	12pm midday
Jim Prince Fund (see page 9)	Wednesday 7 April 2027	12pm midday
Appeals and amendments to motions	Friday 26 March 2027	5pm
Nominations for location for Annual Conference 2031	Friday 26 March 2027	5pm
Motions of Urgency	Friday 30 April 2027	9am

Photography, Video & Audio Recording

Official photographers and our Events team may capture images and audio during the event. We process this data under the lawful basis of legitimate interests to document the event, inform our wider membership, and promote RBL activities through internal and external media. Images may be published on the RBL website or in internal communications such as circulars, newsletters, and *Legion* magazine.

If you prefer not to be photographed or recorded, we recommend attending our events online where available.

If your attendance raises privacy concerns that cannot be reasonably accommodated, you may wish to refrain from participating. For more information on how we handle personal data, including your rights and how to contact us, [please see our Privacy Notice](#).

No photography will be allowed inside the main auditorium and during the Standard Bearers' competitions. Visitors will be able to take photographs elsewhere in the venue. Filming / photography of the parade by use of drones is not permitted.

Standing Orders

Changes to Conference Standing Orders and Motion Process

Following a review, the Board of Trustees has approved a number of changes to the Standing Orders that govern Annual Conference. These are designed to strengthen governance, improve transparency and standardise governance processes across all committees of the Board, creating a more consistent approach to appointments, oversight and decision-making.

Key Changes

Conference Committee Elections

- In addition to the current eligibility criteria for an elected member of Conference Committee, an Interview Panel will assess candidates to ensure they have the skills and standards required for the role. This process now aligns elected members of Conference Committee with Membership Council Representative appointments and other Board-related appointments.
- Recommendations from the Interview Panel will be made to the People, Culture and Governance Committee, with the Board of Trustees approving the final list of candidates eligible to stand for election at Annual Conference. This will provide greater consistency across elected governance roles whilst retaining democratic election through Annual Conference.
- In order to allow sufficient time for the Interview Panel and approvals process, the deadline for nominations for elected members of Conference Committee is now 12 weeks before Annual Conference (changing from 5 weeks).

Changes to Appeals and Amendments

- Deadlines for motions amendments and appeals have been revised to allow more time for proper consideration and governance oversight before Annual Conference.

Trustee Appeal Panel

- A Trustee Appeal Panel has been established to hear second stage appeals relating to motions and amendments. This will comprise three Trustees appointed by the National Chair excluding the National Chair and Chair of Conference Committee.
- This provides an independent route of appeal and additional trustee oversight of Conference business.
- The Trustee Appeal Panel decision will be final.

Motions of Urgency

- The deadline for submitting a Motion of Urgency has been brought forward to allow appropriate review, due diligence and organisational responses.
- Motions of Urgency can no longer be appealed from the floor of Conference. Appeals must now follow the formal appeal process within the published timescales, including consideration by the Trustee Appeal Panel where appropriate.

These changes follow legal review and align Conference processes with good governance practice across the organisation.

Further information, including the revised Standing Orders, FAQs and supporting guidance, is available on the [Annual Conference webpage](#) and [on MAP](#). The [Motions Training course](#) on Discover has been updated to reflect the new arrangements, and we encourage all officials to complete it. Please familiarise yourself with the changes and direct members to the appropriate information or support where needed.

If you have any questions, please contact your local Membership Engagement Officer, Membership Council Representative, or the Governance team at Governance@britishlegion.org.uk.

