



## Central News – October 2023

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Important dates	
17 October 2023	Membership Townhall
11 November 2023	Festival of Remembrance & Remembrance Day
12 November 2023	Remembrance Sunday
10 – 12 May 2024	Annual Conference 2024

### A message from the National Chair

It is about this time that we normally start the 2023/24 Membership Council (MC) Election process and begin communicating with branches. This year however there will be a delay as we are keen to spend more time ensuring we have the right structure in place and are giving MC the appropriate support to ensure we set our MC Representatives up for success. This will be discussed with MC at their meeting on 18 October and we will provide a further update later this month.

If you could kindly share this statement with your branches.

Yours sincerely

Jason, National Chair

### Membership Townhall

As you may have seen in the Membership eNews, the next Membership Townhall will take place on 17th October at 6.30pm via Microsoft Teams. Hosted by Jason Coward, Executive Directors will provide updates on the Etherton report, Remembrancetide 2023, Korea 70 and more. A recording will be available afterwards on MAP. [Please use this link to gain access on the day.](#)

### September 2023 County Chairs Seminar

Last month, the County Chairs Seminar in Birmingham was a great success. Filled with many interesting presentations, great feedback and discussions, it was also a fantastic networking opportunity. To everyone who attended, we would like to thank you for your time and hope you found it thought provoking and informative. A briefing pack was sent out at the end of September; please get in touch if you have not received it, or if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing you at the next County Chairs Seminar, March 1st – 2nd 2024.

### September 2023 Membership Management Handbook (MMH)

Please find the latest version of the Membership Management Handbook (MMH) [on MAP](#). Changes include some minor amendments to improve consistency throughout, references to the Queen changed to reference HRH King Charles III as well as changes to the MS1 forms. A full list of changes

in this edition of the MMH can be found [here](#). Standalone copies of these updated forms have been uploaded to the [Membership Forms folder](#) on MAP.

## Self-declarations

It is branch AGM period, so we know that some of you will be standing for key roles. If you are standing for a role in your Branch or County, you will be asked to declare any convictions or circumstances that may prevent your election. This self-declaration is made on the MS1 for members and is completed by all RBL volunteers to protect RBL's members, beneficiaries, staff and volunteers, and to protect both our financial position and reputation. If you have something you feel you should declare, please discuss this with your MEO prior to standing for a role.

## Poppy Appeal Infringement

Every year, criminals and counterfeiters make money by exploiting the two- and four-petal poppies, selling items under the guise that they are supporting the Poppy Appeal and Scottish Poppy Appeal. Members of the public who buy these fake products unknowingly part with their money, believing they are helping our family of charities. In 2022, RBL's legal team successfully reported and removed a total of 407 product listings with a potential sale value of over £200k from the online retail platforms Amazon, Etsy and eBay.

The RBL Legal team will again be seeking out infringing products and acting to have them removed from sale. Branches and Counties are reminded that only products that have been provided by the RBL Poppy Shop are to be sold; and none bearing the RBL brand, or brand-related images are to be produced without the authorisation of the RBL Brand team. If you come across any infringing products online or on social media, please do not hesitate to send the link to [membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk).

## RBL welcomes ASDA as supermarket banking partner

We're thrilled to announce a significant development in Corporate Partnerships for this year's Poppy Appeal. ASDA is joining forces with Sainsbury's, Tesco, and Morrisons as a supermarket banking partner. This exciting addition means that all cash collections will be counted and banked by these supermarket partners, and the donations will be allocated to the relevant PAO district.

This partnership is a game-changer, making the collection process safer and more efficient for our volunteer collectors. With the support of these banking supermarkets, we can streamline the cash-handling process, reducing the time spent on counting and banking donations. Your efforts as volunteer collectors will be even more impactful, thanks to this collaborative initiative.

## Volunteer recruitment materials

Sent alongside this newsletter is a PDF and PNG (image) copy of a volunteer recruitment poster for opportunities across RBL. Should you wish, you can share this on your branch social media channels or via email with your members or wider community. If you'd like to request some hard copies of the poster or of our new A5 volunteer flyer, you can contact [volunteersupport@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:volunteersupport@britishlegion.org.uk) with the number needed, the mailing address, and the name of your MEO. This would be a huge boost to support the work we are all doing to forward RBL's mission. Any assistance is greatly appreciated!

## RBL launches General Election Manifesto

We are proud to launch the RBL and Poppyscotland 2024 [General Election Manifesto](#). The Manifesto presents a series of practical ideas that will significantly improve the lives of the Armed Forces community as they face increased living costs and difficulties accessing public services. It has been put together through a robust consultation with beneficiaries, partners in the Armed Forces community, our members, volunteers and staff. We look forward to working with the next UK government to deliver them.

Our priorities for the next government:

- Keep the Covenant promise: Extend the Covenant Duty to UK and devolved governments, covering all policy areas.
- Ask the question: Ensure public bodies identify veterans when delivering services to provide tailored support and better understand the needs of the community.
- Credit their Service: Exempt military compensation from welfare benefit means tests.
- Improve services for families: Introduce a national protocol for consistent access to public services for military families and increase SEND support funding for service children.
- Stop the Service charge: Remove barriers for families of non-UK Service personnel to settle in the UK, waiving fees for Leave to Remain and the Minimum Income Requirement.

## Deadlines to submit Motions for Annual Conference

The debate of and voting on of Motions to Annual Conference is a major part of the Annual Conference programme and enables our members to take an active role in the future direction of RBL. Key to the motions process are the deadline dates, which apply to each stage of the submission process. The deadlines for Conference 2024 are:

1. The Branch AGM – The Motion must be debated and agreed at a full Branch Meeting (normally the Branch AGM) before the end of November.
2. The County/District Committee – the Motion must be submitted to your County/District Committee by the end of the last week in November, or not less than 8 weeks before your

County/District Conference.

3. Successful Motions must be submitted to Annual Conference Committee by 5pm on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2024 (13 weeks before Annual conference 2024). No Motions can be submitted after this deadline.

### Annual Conference Resolutions update 2019 – 2022

A document detailing updates on Motions passed at Conference between 2019 – 2022 is currently in progress. This will contain an update for each motion for which updated information has not already been shared. This document is expected to be published early in the New Year.

### Questions and enquires via Viva Engage (formerly Yammer)

We are pleased that so many branch and county officers make use of Viva Engage to share knowledge, good practice and good news stories. However, if you have direct queries for RBL, please email these to [membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk) so that they can be properly recorded and dealt with by the correct team in a timely manner.

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