



CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION NEWSLETTER

Summer / Autumn 2026 Edition

Message from R G H Herriot OBE DL Colonel (Retd) Cambridgeshire County President

Dear Members, Volunteers, Supporters, and Friends,

It has been a privilege to have been appointed President of Cambridgeshire RBL some 8 years ago. In my time I have seen the County go from strength to strength, and I know from briefings with the National President we are punching well above our weight. Our contribution to the National Poppy appeal sits above many of the larger Counties and for that you are all to be congratulated. I now see the branches working closely together which will ultimately make us even stronger. Our work in supporting veterans is as important today as it ever was.

***We will support our Armed Forces
community and ensure that their unique
contribution is not forgotten***

Peter Digby – Cambridgeshire County Chairman

Welcome to the first edition of our County Newsletter.

It is a pleasure to introduce this new County RBL newsletter, which has been created to help keep all of our branches informed about what is happening across the county and nationally, along with sharing important updates, and strengthen the links between us all.

In this first edition, you'll have the opportunity to meet some of the County Team and learn more about the people who are here to support you. We are all committed to working alongside every branch and ensuring that help, support and guidance are always available whenever needed.

One of the greatest challenges we are currently facing in Branches and as an organisation, is the recruitment and retention of members. The future strength of the Royal British Legion depends on attracting new

UP AND COMING EVENTS

This year's Poppy Appeal launches on Thursday 22nd October this year, and the manned collections in the supermarkets will finish on Saturday 7th November ready for Remembrance Sunday 8th November. We are recruiting now for help and support in the supermarkets, garden centres and all manned collection points in Cambridgeshire for this year's Poppy Appeal. There's still time to register your interest in being a Poppy Appeal Organiser, please contact williams@britishlegion.org.uk for more information. LW



volunteers while supporting and retaining those who already give so much of their time. Together, we can build a stronger organisation for the future. The County is here to support and enhance this ethos alongside and with our Branches.

Good communication is essential to achieving this. It must be a two-way process between our Branches and the County Committee, to then unilaterally feed up to Headquarters and Hague House when and if we need to.

By sharing your successes, challenges, ideas and concerns, we can better understand how to support you and ensure that every Branch has the assistance it needs.

Finally, the County Committee is always looking for enthusiastic branch members to become involved at County level. We meet every two months at the King Edward Centre in Chatteris, and everyone is welcome to attend and play a part in shaping the future and active part of our County.

If you would like to make a difference and support the work of the Royal British Legion beyond your own branch, we would be delighted to hear from you.

As many of our branches begin preparations for this year's Poppy Appeal, I would like to thank you in advance for your dedication and commitment. The Poppy Appeal is at the heart of what we do, and it will feature prominently in our next edition as we celebrate the incredible work carried out by our volunteers across the County.

Thank you for everything you do in support of the Royal British Legion. I hope you enjoy reading this first newsletter, and I look forward to working with you all in the months ahead.

Highlights

Successful Community Fundraising Events

As of 27th July 2026 The amount we have raised for the Poppy Appeal 2025 for Cambridgeshire is a massive **£ 761, 485.55**, thank you everyone for your help and support with the Poppy Appeal. LW

County Mentoring Scheme

County is introducing a 'light touch' mentoring scheme. It provides the opportunity for an exchange of skills and experience between County and branches. It offers support to branches through one-to-one mentoring, especially to those in newly appointed roles.

The scheme is aimed at the following RBL voluntary roles: -

- **Chair**
- **Secretary**
- **Treasurer**
- **Membership and Recruiting**
- **Poppy Appeal**

Mentoring

The scheme isn't intended to replace the specific training offered by County, or centrally by RBL. Its aim is to enhance lessons learned from previous training, from experience in the role, or as an aid to those taking up a new role. It's an external resource for branches to use on an ad hoc basis.

Mentoring is already a feature of voluntary life in RBL, both at branch and County level. In acknowledging this, the scheme is intended to increase and encourage that activity. Particularly in those areas needing further embellishment of skills, experience and lessons learned.

Mentoring is not coaching. In the latter, conversations are used to identify goals and enable ways forward. Coaching assumes regular conversations and exchanges over a continuing period of time. In its purest form, coaching is non-directive.

In mentoring, the conversation is directive. It's an ask of one person to another.

For example:

It can be across a set of questions that are specific.

2. It can relate to a broad situation requiring various solutions and outcomes.
3. It can be the resolution of a single problem, or issue.

In essence, it's the transfer of knowhow, experience and practice from one person to another.

'Light touch' defines the parameters and informality of the scheme. Also, it's a confidential arrangement (unless agreed otherwise), between mentor and mentee. Mentors will be drawn from the County committee and from elsewhere in the County.

The scheme starts as a trial scheme.

If you are interested, please contact the County Vice Chairman, Neil Grimston by email @ cambridgeshire.vicechair@rbl.community

Supporting Veterans and Families

Our welfare teams continue to support veterans and families facing financial hardship, loneliness, housing concerns, and wellbeing challenges.



Thanks to the dedication of volunteers and caseworkers, many individuals across the county have received practical assistance and emotional support when they needed it most.

If you know someone who may benefit from support, please encourage them to reach out through their local branch or the Royal British Legion support services.



Volunteer Spotlight

Roger Herriot OBE DL Colonel (Retd)

Roger completed his service as Commandant (Colonel) of Cambridgeshire ACF, a role he held from 2008 until December 2012. He spent a total of 46 years in Military uniform/service from the age of 13 to 61, serving in the Regular Army from 1970 to 1976, the Territorial Army for nine years and both Suffolk and Cambridgeshire ACF.

Roger Says:

How is a boy from the ancient city of Armagh currently the County President of Cambridgeshire RBL, a question I often ask myself. Having served with 2nd Battalion The Ulster Defence Regiment for 5 continuous years, I left Northern Ireland on a temporary secondment and 50 years later I am still here!

Whilst working in Industry I served as an Officer with 6(V) Bn Royal Anglian and later as Commandant of Cambridgeshire Army Cadet Force.

Somewhere along the way (too far back to remember) I joined the RBL, only involved at Remembrance time. Having been invited to a County Conference I subsequently found myself being voted in as County President of which I am very honoured.

As a Deputy to the Lord Lieutenant, I have worked closely to ensure the Legion is represented and have been delighted by the support received from the Lord Lieutenant.

Retired with 4 children and 6 grandchildren I can confirm that I am as busy as ever and not sure how I ever had time to work. I will of course continue to support the Legion in any way I can.

More from our wonderful Volunteers

Armed Forces week was amazing! Well done to RBL branches in Ely, March and Wisbech for organising many manned collections during the week, raising over **£ 3,500** for the Armed Forces Community. A special thank you to all branches that organised Armed Forces Events Throughout Armed Forces Week. It was a fantastic week.

The Poppy Appeal seminar, held at the end of June at The Beeches, in Isleham, was a great success, and volunteers attended to hear about what's



new and updates for this year's Poppy Appeal. Save the date **Saturday 6th March 2027** for the Cambridgeshire Poppy Appeal Thank You Event this time in Cambridge, more details to follow soon....

At the Beginning of July, Wisbech RBL branch held a wonderful Thank you event at Octavia Hill House celebrating Poppy Appeal volunteers sharing 260 years of volunteering for the Poppy Appeal. LW

Youth and Community Engagement.

Ramsey & District Royal British Legion Welcomes RAF and Army Cadets.



Earlier this year, the Ramsey & District Royal British Legion marked a meaningful milestone as the local RAF and Army Cadet units formally affiliated with the branch. The partnership brings together generations of service and strengthens ties between the

legion's community and the young people training for future service.



The affiliation ceremony was held at the cadet headquarters in Bury, Ramsey, attended by Branch Chairman Pete Brindley, cadets, and their

officers.

Representatives from both the 1247 (Ramsey) Squadron Air Training Corps and the Ramsey Detachment of the Army Cadet Force signed formal agreements confirming their link to the Royal British Legion.



Ramsey Branch Chairman said, "We are delighted to welcome our cadets into our extended family. The values they uphold – loyalty, courage, respect, and service – are the very foundations on which our organisation was built. This affiliation ensures the traditions of remembrance and service are passed on and gives our young people a permanent home within our community."



Standard Bearer News

Standard Bearer School Dates 2026/27

The Standard Bearer Schools will take place at Cottenham Village College (High St, Cottenham, Cambridge CB24 8UA) on the following dates. The 2-hour session is split into two, tea and cake at NAAFI break (£1), and SBs are encouraged to attend one or both Sessions. Casual Dress for training. Under new rules from National RBL, ALL SBs MUST complete at least one Training Session per year. Any SB who is unable to attend the SB School are requested to contact the CPM to organize alternative arrangements, so you are not unduly disadvantaged.



Dates:

12th Sept 2026 1400-1600 in Sports Hall

26th Sept 2026 0930-1700 in Sports Hall – Youth Training and Competition

3rd Oct 2026 1400-1600 in Sports Hall

10th Oct 2026 1000-1600 County Competition in Main Hall



28th Nov 2026 1300-1500 Sports Hall

16th Jan 2027 1300-1500 Sports Hall

6th Feb 2027 1300-1500 Sports Hall

6th Mar 2027 1400-1600 Sports Hall

10th Apr 2027 1400-1600 Sports Hall

12th Jun 2027 1400-1600 Sports Hall

10th Jul 2027 1400-1600 Sports Hall

TBC August Ramsey 40s practice 1200-1400

TBC August Ramsey 40s Parade at 1130/ Sunset Ceremony at 1530



“I am hoping that a branch can assist me to organize a SB School at another location in the County and will advise soonest.

All Ceremonial queries, Standard Bearer or Parade Marshall questions should be addressed to the CPM.

Anyone who is interested in being a future Parade Marshal should also contact the CPM. It should be noted a new course for Branch Parade Marshals (Role, I believe, is Branch Ceremonial Officer) is due to hit the streets soon, I will be conducting training once received and will let all Branches know in due course”.

David Martin

RBL Affiliated Youth Groups Standard Bearer Training and Competition

The County Youth Officer has arranged to hold a Standard Bearers Training and Competition for all the Branches Affiliated Youth Groups. It will be the ideal time for them to receive some Standard Bearer training prior to Remembrance Sunday.

We need your support to ensure that all your Affiliated Youth Groups are informed of this event and are encouraged to complete the attached form and enter the event along with any Youth Standard Bearers your Branch may have.

The Training and Competition will take place on **Saturday 26th September 2026** and all details are in the accompanying letter at the end of this Newsheet.

Branch Community Support

Cambridgeshire Community Support Co-ordinator – it would be good to see other branches in the County becoming trained and taking part in the BCS Scheme. The training sessions are online and are not too arduous, but it is important that you complete all modules before going out into the community and visiting beneficiaries.

To celebrate Armed Forces Week I visited Barley Manor Care Home, the residents were interested in hearing about the work the RBL does with our veterans, their partners and dependants. We shared memories of the two World Wars. At the beginning of September Barley Manor are launching a Veteran Friendly cafe.



Membership Engagement Officer (MEO)

Adam Sisman MEO for Royal British Legion Cambridgeshire.

My role is about supporting our members, branches, and county committee to ensure they have the guidance, information, and practical support they need to deliver the aims and objectives of The Royal British Legion.

One of the most important parts of my role is building strong relationships with branches across the area.

As MEO I am the point of contact, providing support through regular communication, visits, meetings, and engagement with the **46** branches we have across the county. My role is not to tell branches how to operate, but to work alongside them, offering advice, guidance, and support when needed.

A key focus of the role is engagement. We want members to feel connected to the Legion, informed about what is happening, and aware of the opportunities available to them.

Another area of responsibility is supporting branches with events and activities. Whether that is a commemorative event, a community activity, or a membership event, I can provide guidance to ensure that activities are organised in line with Legion policies, health and safety requirements, and the Membership Handbook. The aim is to help branches deliver successful events while ensuring they remain compliant with Legion procedures. Please reach out

ASisman@britishlegion.org.uk



Membership and Branch News

We encourage all members to stay connected with their local branches and attend meetings and events where possible.

New members are always welcome, and we encourage anyone interested in supporting the Armed Forces community to get involved.

Branches are reminded to share updates, event details, and photographs for inclusion in future newsletters

Cambridgeshire County Royal British Legion:

- Become a member
- Volunteer at local events
- Support the Poppy Appeal
- Attend community fundraising activities
- Help raise awareness of welfare support services
- Encourage younger generations to get involved



New Teaching Remembrance resources are here.

The Royal British Legion are launching **Early Years Foundation** Stage resources this year and bringing new teaching resources for all stages to provide a better teaching experience for our teachers.

Discover New 2026 Remembrance Resources:

Remembrance with young people. With a focus on modern service and quick, easy to use activities, they are a great way to connect 5–14-year-olds with who, how and why we remember.

[Find resources for 5–7-year-olds here](#)

[Find resources for 7–11-year-olds here](#)

[Find resources for 11–14-year-olds here](#)



Contact Information

For further information about county activities, volunteering opportunities, or support services, please contact your local branch or visit the Royal British Legion website.

Find a Branch in Cambridgeshire – Just scan the QR code



Cambridgeshire Royal British Legion

Affiliated Youth Groups Standard Bearer Training and Competition



We would like to offer all our Affiliated Youth Groups a chance to take part in some Standard Bearing training prior to Remembrance Sunday this year. We will be holding an opportunity for them to do this on **Saturday 26th September 2026**.

Venue: Sports Hall, Cottenham Village College, High Street, Cottenham, CB24 8UA

Dress: Uniform as appropriate to your organisation

Lunch: All personnel should bring a packed lunch with them. (Tea, coffee, squash and water will be available.

Parking: Please Park at the front of the College, then walking, follow the roadway round to left in front of the building; the sports hall is at the bottom on the right.

Programme:
0930-1000 Arrive
1000-1300 Training and practice
1300-1330 Lunch
1330-1500 Competition

We would like to invite at least 2 members from all our Affiliated Groups, if the Group has its own Standard please bring it with you, there will be some RBL Standards for you to use if not. (Please note: the RBL Standards may be heavier than your own). Following the training period in the morning the 2 members from each of the Groups that in the view of the RBL trainers have reach the highest level among their Group will be invited to take part in the competition to find the County Affiliated Youth Standard Bearer.

Important: all competitors taking part in the Competition after lunch must be Under 18 years of age as at 1 November 2026.

Please return the form below to the County Youth Officer
Cambridgeshire.CYO@RBL.Community

By the **14th September** at the very latest

Colin Elsdon
County RBL Youth Officer

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Youth Group:

Number of members attending:

Will they bring their own Standard:

Yes

No

Any special needs:

Cambridgeshire

