

Central News – November 2023

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Important dates	
11 November 2023	Festival of Remembrance & Remembrance Day
12 November 2023	Remembrance Sunday
21 November 2023	Membership Roadshow North
28 November 2023	Membership Roadshow South East
6 December 2023	Membership Roadshow Midlands
12 December 2023	Membership Roadshow Central
10 – 12 May 2024	<u>Annual Conference 2024</u>

Remembrance across RBL

What's on over the Remembrance period?

- [Teaching Remembrance](#) schools can register to attend our Remembrance Live Assembly on 10th November.
- Constituency Garden of Remembrance for MPs at the Houses of Parliament – 6th – 13th November.
- [National Memorial Arboretum Field of Remembrance](#) – 3rd – 27th November, one of seven Fields of Remembrance across the nation.
- National Memorial Arboretum [Armistice Day Service](#) – 11th November closely followed by a [Remembrance Sunday Service](#) – 12th November.
- Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall – 11th November.
- [March Past at the National Service of Remembrance, Cenotaph](#) – 12th November.

Members can access two guides *Connecting with Remembrance* and *Making Remembrance Happen*, from the Members Remembrance Resources page on the [RBL website](#). Should you have any questions about Remembrance, please [get in touch](#).

Celebrities and Remembrance

If you have thoughts, plans or schemes potentially involving celebrities in Remembrance, please contact TGreener@britishlegion.org.uk in the first instance; unless they are an influencer, in which case you can contact HPutnam@britishlegion.org.uk. This enables RBL to avoid duplication, ensure the correct contacts are used and avoids the Legion approaching people we should not.

RBL's position on white poppies

Remembrance commemorates the service and sacrifices of HM Armed Forces and their families. The Legion red poppy is a universal symbol of Remembrance and hope, including hope for a peaceful world. Legion red poppy wreaths are available through the Poppy Appeal for anyone

wishing to take part in an Act of Remembrance. Importantly, funds raised by the red poppy support our Armed Forces, veterans and their families in their time of need.

We understand that some people may wish to lay a white poppy wreath or wear a white poppy at Remembrance. Whilst we have no objection, we would ask that they consider using the red poppy alongside it as an act of respect for the service and sacrifice of Britain's Armed Forces, veterans, and their families, and we encourage those organising Remembrance services to discuss with all groups how best to meet their needs.

Wreath Payments via Branch Accounts

Branches/Counties are reminded that they should not take payments for wreaths via their accounts, including BACS payments. This process is not permitted and does not qualify as a Branch/County fundraising activity. Should you have any queries, please contact your Poppy Appeal Organiser (PAO) in the first instance. If your PAO is not able to answer your questions, they can contact a Poppy Appeal Manager (PAM) for further clarification, including on the process for BACS payments. Wreaths are available to order from PAOs, online at the Poppy Shop or by phone on 0345 845 1945.

Get your hands on some cash!

We are seeking volunteers to help count the collection money from Poppy Appeal. You'll be using counting machines, tracking results, and working with others while you volunteer. Everyone over 16 is welcome to assist – you'll just need to show photo ID. Below are some high need areas – please do share with friends and family:

- Bicester, Oxfordshire: 13-24 November, possibly longer
- Cardiff, Wales: 15-26 November
- Cheltenham, Gloucestershire: 13-17 November
- Hereford, Herefordshire: 16 November
- Leeds, West Yorkshire: 13-24 November
- Lydney, Gloucestershire: 15 November
- Preston, Lancashire: 16 November-6 December
- Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire: 15-30 November
- Wem, Shropshire: 16-30 November
- Worcester, Worcestershire: 14-24 November

To volunteer, contact PoppyAppealVolunteering@britishlegion.org.uk. Is your area not on this list, but you would like to help? Please [get in touch](#) to see how you can assist!

Northern Ireland Troubles Act

The Northern Ireland (NI) Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act became law in Autumn 2023. From May 2024, ongoing criminal investigations, inquests and prosecution decisions relating to cases between 1 January 1966 and 10 April 1998 will cease; any civil claims filed after May 2022 will be barred, and a new independent body, the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR), will be established. Read more about this legislation, its impact and support available [here](#).

RBL attends Party conferences

RBL recently attended the Liberal Democrat, Conservative and Labour Party Conferences to discuss our five priorities, ahead of the next General Election, and to talk to politicians about the wider work RBL does. Read the RBL General Election Manifesto [here](#).

In the coming months, the RBL Campaigns team will be in touch with ways for you to get involved and campaign with them. [Click here](#) to receive regular updates.

Women's Section Chair and Trustee Election 2023

Nominations for the Women's Section Chair and Trustee election close November 3rd 2023. The Women's Section Chair automatically sits on the Board of Trustees, which leads the RBL and is legally responsible and accountable for everything that RBL does.

Do you know someone who might be interested? If so, please ask them to visit our Board of Trustees web page [here](#). Eligible branches can nominate one person and should now have received the election packs. If you have any questions, please contact TrusteeElections@britishlegion.org.uk.

October Specialist Officer Training Day

Haig House was busy on Saturday 7th October with a variety of brilliant officers, new and not-so-new, from up and down the UK. For our Training, Recruitment, Youth Service and Community Support teams, this was a chance to see new faces, share good news/best practice, and – perhaps, most importantly – develop ideas on improvements for the future. Ultimately, it was inspiring to see so much passion shared and knowledge passed on across the Legion. A huge thank you to everyone who attended and who supported the event from near and far. Read the full summary [here](#).

Would any officers near you like to be part of this? We'll be sharing future dates for further events in due course.

Updated Public Liability Certificate

An updated Public Liability Certificate is [available on MAP](#) for 2023 – 2024. As a reminder, branches running events and activities should refer to the [Event Health and Safety Guide](#) and [Events and Activity Guide](#).

October Townhall recording

For updates on projects including Remembrancetide 2023, Korea 70, the Invictus Games, and more, [you can watch the recording here](#). The next Townhall is expected to take place in 2024; details will be shared closer to the time.

Annual Conference 2024 – Delegate Information and Registration

Registration for Annual Conference as a delegate or visitor will be open 8th January 2024 – 28th March 2024 for both in-person and online attendance. Registration will be accepted via a new online registration platform – a link to which will be publicised in Central News and eNews, and will be available on the [RBL Website](#). Members who have any issues registering can contact their MEO for assistance.

Annual Conference awards

The October Circular invited members to submit nominations for the 2024 Annual Conference Membership Awards. Once again, we encourage nominators to concentrate on telling “the story” of the achievements of the individuals and formations they nominate, rather than to overly burden themselves with the figures and statistics. The deadline for nominations is **5pm Friday 16th February**. Nominations can be made using [this entry form](#).

Managing complaints

As part of our ambition to change our ways of working we want to encourage people to raise concerns and provide feedback. And we want to resolve any issues and concerns swiftly before they have cause to become a formal complaint.

We know there will be differences of opinion, and, in many instances, an open and honest conversation is what’s needed to talk through the situation. Our revised approach to managing and investigating complaints will be consistent, regardless of the individual circumstances. When someone does need to raise a formal complaint, our new processes are easier to understand. See our new [complaints process](#).

Evolving our ways of working

We started our journey to evolve how we work together, when we first published our One Legion strategy. We want the RBL to be the best it can be with a more inclusive, innovative, creative and effective environment that allows us to thrive.

The Board of Trustees and Executive Board are committed to investing time and resources that will see us working together to define the ways of working we want to exist across the RBL, so that our organisation can go from strength to strength and can continue to deliver services to support the deserving armed forces community. Read our [statement of commitment](#).
