1. **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

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| |  | | --- | | This plan describes the proposed work of Oxfordshire County of The Royal British Legion for 2024 - 2027 in order to support the County, County Branches’ and the Oxfordshire County Committee. The County ethos remains focused on the act of remembrance, benevolence, and practical support in the community, encouraging a spirit of friendship, welfare and comradeship, support to the serving military community, veterans and their families, and fund raising in accordance with Legion Policy and guidelines.  For Oxfordshire County, the primary drivers and focus aims to encourage the RBL Community in the act of remembrance throughout the year, not only in November and to deliver direct, practical support to the RBL Community and other Oxfordshire Community groups.  Additional initiatives and goals may be added to this plan throughout the plans term.  Oxfordshire County Branches should create Branch Plans in conjunction with the Oxfordshire County Royal British Legion Plan. All plans should be refreshed prior to ranch AGM’s and reviewed/updated at least quarterly and provided to Oxfordshire County Committee for ratification and comment prior to their Annual Conference (usually February each year)  Where outside limitations have impacted scheduled and planned activities, both County and Branch this should be noted in the “remarks” column so that plans can be carried forward as applicable.  Oxfordshire County and County Branches have achieved much since their formation. There is a realistic level of awareness of both Oxfordshire RBL County and Branches in the eyes of the general public due to successful events and Poppy Appeals. There is also, large observance of Remembrance within the community. | |

1. **OBJECTIVES**
   1. **Branch Community Support.**
   2. **Fundraising**
   3. **Remembrance and Ceremonial.**
   4. **Membership, Recruiting and Events.**
   5. **Scheduled Youth Activities and Engagement with Youth Organisation**
   6. **Training.**
   7. **Administration and Finance.**

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| **2.1 Branch Community Support**  The County has undertaken to embrace BCS with some training of “Supporters” having been undertaken. Activity has mainly been telephone Buddying with a minimal home visits. Representation at memorial and commemorative events has been a core activity along with awareness events. |

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| **Objective** | **Target Date / review** | **Responsibility** | **Key Performance Indicators** | **Cost/ Budget** | **RAG** | **Remarks / Evidence** |
| 1. To consider all welfare related advice, guidelines and information from HQ and Region - should any be forthcoming! | Ongoing | BCS Rep  Secretary  Committee | Minutes of meetings | Nil | Green  (Ongoing)  All county advice and guidance passed on as required | Secretary/BCS Rep to disseminate all advice |
| 1. Safeguarding. All Officers responsible for knowing their role. Training to be undertaken when possible | Sep 2024  (Review) | All | Minutes of meetings  Training Records | Training Expenses | Amber | Safeguarding and role documents given to all committee. |
| 1. Wider engagement with neighbouring Branches | Sep 2024  (Review) | Chair and wider Committee | Support, liaise and cross pollinate ideas with other local branches to identify “best practice” and new ideas |  | **Amber** | Attendance at other Branch meetings/ events |

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| **2.2 FUNDRAISING**  The Oxfordshire County of the Royal British Legions intent is to conduct appropriate and focused fundraising for both the Poppy Appeal and Branch throughout the year. Fundraising is affected by the number of military charities and also the national economic situation. |

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| **Objective** | **Target Date / review** | **Responsibility** | **Key Performance Indicators** | **Cost/ Budget** | **RAG** | **Remarks / Evidence** |
| 1. To maintain and increase, the amount historically raised through the Poppy Appeal. | Oct 2024 | Chair, PAO and Committee | An annual increase in the amount raised for the Poppy Appeal and the incorporation of “all year round” collecting | Nil | **Green**  **(Ongoing)** | PAO to lead with event planning supported by all the branch members. |
| 1. To maximise support for the Poppy Appeal by providing a supportive and organised environment for volunteers. | Mar to October 2024 | PAO, Committee, members | Members contributing ideas.  Certificates of Appreciation.  Awards/ thank you evening |  | **Green** | PAO to lead with aid from Secretary and supporters |
| 1. To increase the number of Poppy Appeal Volunteers | Oct 2024  Ongoing | PAO  Committee Members | PAO’s records  Contact with other voluntary organisations | Costs of Press release | **Green**  **(Ongoing)** | Publicity in local press  Contact with cadet units |
| 1. To Organise a ***minimum*** of 2 public fundraising events per year (local restrictions permitting) | October 2024 | All | Increase in County fund raising in order to fund County requirements and to enable a donation to be made to the Oxfordshire Welfare Fund ensuring the RBL ethos and standards met | Nil | **Green**  (**Ongoing,**) | Planned events (dates TBC): |

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| **2.3 REMEMBRANCE AND CEREMONIAL**  The Royal British Legion is the nation’s Custodian of Remembrance, with local authorities having the responsibility for the National Day of Remembrance. Our County has historically played a key role in supporting Oxfordshire in this, with long standing procedures and regular planning meetings. Our members are expected to observe the two-minute silence on Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday. Our Poppy Appeal links Remembrance with benevolence. Our County Standard has been, and is, carried by our County Standard Bearer and is present at all events possible. The Legion expects all Standards to be carried respectfully and correctly. |

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| **Objective** | **Target Date / review** | **Responsibility** | **Key Performance Indicators** | **Cost/ Budget** | **RAG** | **Remarks / Evidence** |
| 1. To continue to train County Standard Bearers. | Ongoing | County Parade Marshal | Minutes of meeting | Travel expenses | **Green** |  |
| 1. To encourage Branch and Standard participation in events**.** | Ongoing | Committee, Members and  County Parade Marshal. | Recorded in Minutes | Possible travel expenses | **Green** | County Standard Bearer take part in all events permissible and coordinate Branch Standard Bearers to attend |
| 1. To attend where possible, commemorative events organised by Oxfordshire County and National RBL. | Ongoing | Ceremonial Team  Committee Members  Secretary | Record in Minutes | Travel expenses | **Green** | AFD and other events attended |
| 1. Ceremonial Team to plan and deliver support to the Act of Remembrance in Oxfordshire in November, and further acts of Remembrance throughout the year | May/November 2024 | Ceremonial Team  Committee Members  Secretary | Delivery of efficient and safe acts of remembrance throughout the year and **not only** in November |  | **Green**  **(Ongoing)** | Events to be recorded in Minutes, sent to local press. |
| 1. Ceremonial Team to attract younger members through Standard Bearer Training and Youth Standard Bearer Competitions | Ongoing | Ceremonial Team  Committee Members  Secretary | Develop a youth Standard Bearer recruitment and training programme |  |  | Events to be recorded in Minutes, sent to local press. |

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| **2.4****MEMBERSHIP, RECRUITING AND EVENTS**  The Oxfordshire County Royal British Legion intent is to continue to recruit, retain and encourage wider membership of the RBL across all Branches in the County. Members are generally lost to the increasing effects of age or, inevitably, to death and, latterly non-renewal. Ideally, we need to recruit more active participating members than those lost. All new members need to be encouraged to pay through Direct Debit, and to Gift Aid. We need to attract younger members, especially those who may eventually wish to play an active role in the management of the Branches and at County level. |

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| **Objective** | **Target Date / review** | **Responsibility** | **Key Performance Indicators** | **Cost/ Budget** | **RAG** | **Remarks / Evidence** |
| 1. Continue to increase branch membership from across the village and wider community | Ongoing year-long tasks Review qtly next at Aug 2024 | Chair and committee | Steady and manageable increase in branch membership numbers. Encourage existing branch members to recruit branch members from their friends and family | Minimal | **Amber** | Recruitment is hampered by the over-zealous application of GDPR rules across the MoD which denies visibility of service leavers to local ex-military organisations |
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| **2.5 SCHEDULED YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUTH ORGANISATIONS**  The Royal British Legions aim of for youth involvement is:   * to encourage and support uptake in Youth Membership, * the affiliation of youth organisations with local RBL branches and development of Legion Youth Bands and Majorette Troupes. * and to promote a perpetual understanding of Remembrance in the Youth of the Nation.   The Board of Trustees have entrusted the maintenance and review of the Membership  Youth Policy to the Membership Council to provide a structure and guidelines by which Counties are to abide. | | | | | | |
| 1. To foster and maintain links with local youth organisations and schools. | Aug 2024 | Committee  Ceremonial Team | Minutes of meetings | None | ***Green (Ongoing)*** |  |
| 1. To arrange youth event for affiliated cadets/ schools | Aug 2024 | Committee  Ceremonial Team | Minutes of meetings | None | **Green (Ongoing)** | . |
| 1. To participate in County led youth activities and initiatives, | Aug 2024 | Committee  Ceremonial Team | Minutes of meetings | None | **Red** |  |

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| **2.5 TRAINING**  We have a fairly balanced Committee, with differing levels of knowledge and proficiency. There is a need for induction training in County Management in house and for succession planning. The Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary to attended Branch Management training |

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| **Objective** | **Target Date / review** | **Responsibility** | **Key Performance Indicators** | **Cost/ Budget** | **RAG** | **Remarks / Evidence** |
| 1. Succession Planning | Ongoing  *Review* | Chair  Committee | All members to attend each course identified as being of direct relevance. | Possible reasonable travel expenses | **Red** | Training Matrix |
| 1. Ensure the Branch Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer RBL attend County run training courses | Aug 2024 | Chair/ Vice Chair | Ensure key committee members are trained and therefore suitably qualified to hold their post ensuring the RBL standards and requirements are met and where possible excelled | Possible reasonable travel expenses | **Amber** | County/Branch Management Training to be undertaken by committee members. |
| 1. Increased Awareness of Duties and Responsibilities. | Ongoing  Review Quarterly | Chair  Committee | Attendance at County/Branch Management Courses as required  Background reading and information disseminated to committee.  Focused discussions. | Possible reasonable travel expenses | **Amber** | Periodic reminders of duties required at branch meetings |

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| **2.6 Administration and Finance**  The County is competently run, and there is a high level of professionalism, this however is dependent upon a limited number of key Officers. The County has benefitted from various sources of income and is financially sound. This provides a firm foundation from which to carry on moving forward. All matters that arise are properly progressed, with key issues being discussed and recorded within the relevant Minutes, which are kept on file. All returns are submitted on time. Technology has been incorporated into various levels of County business.  However, there is a need to ensure that all Officers are correctly and fully inducted, both at local levels and nationally. We need to move easily accept the changes arising from technology and to consider succession planning for all Officers. However, this will be limited until such time the Legion is able to deliver the requisite training courses. Additionally, it is incumbent on County that all the processes and systems incorporated are promulgated and adoption by County Branches. |

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| **Objective** | **Target Date / review** | **Responsibility** | **Key Performance Indicators** | **Cost/ Budget** | **RAG** | **Remarks / Evidence** |
| * To ensure continued efficiency through scrutiny and understanding of all the RBL Guidelines. | Ongoing | Committee | Key points recorded  in Minutes | None | **Green** |  |
| * To broaden awareness of the Royal British Legion in the County, both as a source of support for beneficiaries and as a membership organisation which has much to offer those who join. | Ongoing | Committee |  |  | **Amber** |  |
| * To ensure that RBL Members do all they can across the County to support current and potential beneficiaries of the Royal British Legion and to promote the role of the Royal British Legion across the County. | Ongoing | Committee |  |  | **Amber** |  |
| * Submit MS1 paperwork in a timely manner for County and oversee the submission of Branch documentation in accordance with the RBL Timetable | November 2024 | Chair  Treasurer  Secretary | Following the AGM,  the County Secretary submit the  completed MS1  in accordance  with  RBL timelines | Nil | **Green**  **(Ongoing)** | Key factor in securing a vote at the County and National Conferences for Branches.  2024 MS1 |
| * Submit the End of Year finances in a timely manner | June 2024 | Chair  Treasurer / Secretary | Ensure the accurate  and timely  submission of the branch End of Year finances in  accordance with  RBL timelines | Nil | **Green**  **(Ongoing)** | 2024 County and Branch finances  submitted to the satisfaction  of the RBL on time and a full  and accurate reflection of branch finances. |
| * Hold a planned and structured AGM each **February** | February  2024 | Chair and Secretary | Hold an AGM each November in order to  vote in new committee members and County officials, review the  County Bye Laws and County Plan | Nil | **Green**  **(Ongoing)** | 2024 AGM held in  February 2024. |
| * Hold a County Annual Conference | February  2025 | Chair and Secretary | County Annual Conference agenda should include, as a minimum:  • Reports (including the Chair’s report and welfare report).  • Accounts for the past year.  • The corporate address (to be given by the allocated speaker).  • Motions, including the proposal of amendments to the Royal Charter and the membership rules.  • Review of the County Plan.  • Nominations for membership of the Conference Committee. | TBC | **Amber** |  |
| * Draw up County Plan by November each year for review and agreement and presentation at the County Annual Conference | November  2024 | Chair, Vice and Secretary | Produce a County Plan covering activities and aims, to be reviewed  and updated at least quarterly. To be  provide to the County Chairman for comment  by December 2024 for review prior to the  County AGM in 2025 | Nil | **Green** | Completed in 2024  and passed to the MSO and County Chairman.  County quarterly reviews in January, April, July and October |
| * Set an Annual Training Budget to facilitate, the governance and management of Standard Bearer Training | Feb 2025 | Chair  Treasurer  County Parade Marshall  Secreatry | Determine the annual budget for Ceremonial Training for the coming year and voted on as part of the County Annual Conference | TBC | **Red** | Budget to be managed and reported to the Committee at each County Meeting by the County Parade Marshal. To minimise the expenditure wherever possible and to ensure that the County receives value against budget. |
| 1. To improve communications between the County Committee, branches and CSB’s so that there is greater awareness of views, activities, and events for all. | Ongoing | Chair  Committee | All branches should have a dedicated Oxfordshire Committee member to assist with Branch Admin.  A separate admin group should be established specifically for CSB’s | Nil | **Red** |  |
| 1. To provide support to Branch Officers for:    * The Provision of Welfare    * To encourage and train County Branches to move to digital admin, especially the use of branch officer email addresses. | Ongoing | Chair  Committee |  | Nil | **Red** |  |
| 1. To provide support to Oxfordshire County Supported Branches (CSB’s) by visits from County Committee Members during AGM’s and invitations for Point of Contact’s to meet with other CSB POC’s and County Committee. | Ongoing | Chair  Committee |  |  | **Red** |  |
| 1. The provision of support packs for Military Unit presentations. | Ongoing | Chair  Committee |  |  | **Green** |  |
| 1. To work with Oxfordshire County Lieutenancy on joint liaisons to publicise the Royal British Legion | Ongoing | Chair  Committee |  |  | **Green** | 2024 Oxfordshire Annual Poppy Appeal |
| 1. To ensure that all authorised personnel use Office 365 and MAP to its full capability. | Ongoing | Chair  Committee | Officers to use RBL accounts | Nil | **Green** |  |