

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION
Northamptonshire County Plan (2023-2026)
Revision for 2025 County Conference

The County Plan for the Royal British Legion in Northamptonshire for 2023-2026 is set out below. The plan has been revised in the hope that it would reflect rather more directly the priorities and activities of The Royal British Legion across Northamptonshire and provide a framework around which the Legion could develop what it does and how it does it while still providing what is required for our county and nationally.

It is to be hoped that it is a good reflection of what needs doing, but comments will always be welcome as to how it can be improved. This plan will be reviewed on a quarterly basis to monitor outcomes and make changes as necessary.

The 4 objectives which have been identified in the plan are:

- A. To ensure that members do all they can across the County to support current and potential beneficiaries of the Royal British Legion.**
- B. 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.**
- C. To broaden awareness of the Royal British Legion in the County, in the wider community as an organisation within the very fabric of our local and county communities.**
- D. To improve communications between the County Committee and Branches so that there is greater awareness of views, activities and events.**
- E. Continue to promote The Royal British Legion as “Custodians of Remembrance” to ensure all age groups are engaged in the year-long round of Remembrance of our nation’s military casualties, their dependents and families.**

Ian Byrnes
County Chairman

Phil Blanchard
County Vice-Chairman

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INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

The Royal British Legion is one of the most widely recognised and trusted organisations in the United Kingdom, with a decades-long record of supporting its beneficiaries: those who are serving or have served in the Armed Forces and their families. Over time, as with all organisations, the Royal British Legion has had to change and adapt the way it works. Against a background of diminishing membership numbers both locally and nationally as well as that concern, the key objectives of the Royal British Legion in Northamptonshire are outlined on Page 1.

To achieve our objectives a number of actions have been identified:

Progress Ratings 1=Low Success, 5=High Success

	What we will do and why	How will we do it?	Resources needed	Progress (1-5)
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with groups and branches to share information as effectively as possible so that branch members feel involved in the County and good ideas are shared with all who might be interested. Support for branches who are experiencing difficulties in management and administration. Encourage branch participation in County and National Conferences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To use the widely circulated County Newsletter with details of local and county events with brief details of a range of items of wide interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County Committee and Branch officials to utilise the County Newsletter. County Committee Members' time and travel costs used to ensure a visit to all Branches not represented on the County Committee at least twice per year. Time and County Committee travel costs and venue hire costs. 	4
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Newsletter to be distributed widely to branch officers a minimum 8 times a year and details to be included on the website. 		5
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County Committee Members to attend branch meetings at least twice a year (including the Branch Annual General Meeting) in furtherance of the County Policy called "Branch Links" and support branches as required in participating in County and National Conferences, emphasising the hybrid nature of the National Conference. After National Conference each year to keep branches informed of county and national matters, to provide an opportunity for officers and members to meet those from other branches, to seek to 		2

	What we will do and why	How will we do it?	Resources needed	Progress (1-5)
		<p>encourage new officer for roles in the branches and for County Committee to provide a range of information for branches to disseminate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold the County Conference annually. 		5
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As “Custodians of Remembrance” to promote awareness throughout this and subsequent years of The Royal British Legion and observation of key Remembrance events (e.g., ANZAC Day, Armed Forces Day, Post 1945 Remembrance). Parades and services on Remembrance Sunday and the Two Minutes Silence on 11th November so that these crucial events are widely understood in Northamptonshire. • Organise and run an event to engage school age children in Northamptonshire directly in commemorations of Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County-wide contact with the media by County staff, local communications with the media and communities by local branches. Publicity of all events that reflect The Royal British Legion’s role as “Custodians of Remembrance” in the current year and beyond. • County and branch liaison with local authorities and other bodies to ensure that remembrance is observed appropriately and that all casualties of conflict are listed on the appropriate war memorial. • Include key commemorations in the County Remembrance Diary. • Ensure pupils/students from across the school-college age spectrum in Northamptonshire are engaged in Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day. Promote events such as secondary-college age Youth Triathlon, Poetry Competition etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Committee and branch officials’ time for communication and liaison with local authorities and other agencies (e.g., schools), and attendance at Remembrance events county-wide. • Travel costs if required. 	4 3 4 2
3	<p>Keep local branches apprised of events at which Standard Bearer representation may be appropriate so that branch and county standards can be paraded as widely as possible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate regular events through the County Newsletter and website. • Communicate unplanned events such as funerals through branch officials (participation to be reported through the BCS system – see below) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Committee time for communication. • Funding for travel by Standard Bearers. 	3 2

	What we will do and why	How will we do it?	Resources needed	Progress (1-5)
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BCS Reporting System. 	
4	Work with schools to promote the Legion's Learning Pack and ensure that the availability of the pack on-line is well communicated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact schools and youth organisations with information about the pack: agree at a local level if this will be done by local Branches or County Committee. Age range appropriate class lesson notes to be made available to teachers for key national events, not merely at Remembrance (D Day, Outbreak of WW1 & 2, Peace in 1918 & 1944 & 1945, Korean War, Falklands War, Iraq, Afghanistan and other conflicts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County Committee and branch officials time for communication. County to urge relevant action by Haig House. 	<p>2</p> <p>1</p>
5	Ensure attendance at events where information about The Royal British Legion can be widely distributed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to attend range of events. Look for other opportunities for local representation at events in communities across Northamptonshire including branch events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants' time and travel costs. Use of county resources and equipment as available and cost of stalls in some cases if appropriate. 	<p>1</p> <p>1</p>
6	Work with local and County Cadet organisations to promote links with The Royal British Legion.	Affiliate cadet units with local Branches and attend cadet events as a proven way to build good relationships and awareness: invite cadet participation in Branch and County events, establish closer links with the Cadet units based at the Reserve Forces Centre in Northampton.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County Committee and branch officers and Committees. Participants' time and travel costs. 	1
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicise opportunities for training for officials and members so that everyone is up to date. Arrange locally run training 	County Committee to identify training requirements, book national or arrange locally run courses as necessary and send out information in the County Newsletter.	County Committee liaison with national training team and local trainers (see also BCS requirements below).	5

	What we will do and why	How will we do it?	Resources needed	Progress (1-5)
	courses if required.			
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Poppy Appeal events in Northamptonshire to raise funds, to raise awareness of the Poppy Appeal and engage young people in particular in the process. Work with the Poppy Appeal Manager and Poppy Appeal Organisers to promote and run the Poppy Appeal and other fundraising events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with representatives of other groups to set up and run events (Youth Triathlon, Band Concerts, Armed Forces Day etc) The number of persons in the 18-35 age range seemingly not engaging with the Poppy Appeal it is a matter of concern; work is needed at Local and national level in terms of publicity as why it is important in our national life. Wide circulation of information through relevant documents, emails and website, encouraging participation Greater branch participation in the Poppy Appeal Launch. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poppy Appeal Manager, County Committee, and branch officials' time. Participants' time and travel costs; some funding for elements which may be included on the day such as site costs, if appropriate. 	<p>2</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p>
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness of the work of The Royal British Legion through interaction with key elected and other representatives and opinion formers. Branches to liaise with respective local councils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend civic events at County or local level, invite key people to attend/participate in events. Invite Civic Leaders to attend the County Conference and Branch events. Branches need to involve local councils in events and not just Remembrance. The awareness of who and what the RBL is and does cannot be assumed in the 21st Century. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County Committee and branch officials' time and travel costs. Publicity at all local authority levels. 	<p>2</p> <p>3</p> <p>2</p>
10	Work with other service-related charities, so that we share ideas, information and effort when it is appropriate to do so and to promote the Armed Forces Covenant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite participation in The Royal British Legion events where appropriate and set up links with local branches of other service charities in Northamptonshire. Ensure wide dissemination of details of events 	County Committee and branch officials' time and travel costs.	<p>1</p> <p>1</p>

	What we will do and why	How will we do it?	Resources needed	Progress (1-5)
		concerning the Armed Forces Covenant in the county via the County Newsletter and local media.		
12	Work to improve recruitment of members in local branches and encourage the willingness of others to work with The Royal British Legion without necessarily becoming formal members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange training for County and Branch recruitment staffs. • Production of a County Recruitment and Retention Guide to assist branches to assist in local recruitment. • Improved engagement with armed forces and cadet units in Northamptonshire, other uniformed and veteran groups. • Emphasise to all RBL branches that recruitment of active members is the key not just to standing still regarding branch size, but also in the identification of future branch officials, the concept of “succession” planning must be grasped at all levels within the County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Committee and branch officials’ time. • Support from the MEO to ensure membership growth and retention. 	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>2</p>
13	Improve communications with Haig House to share constructive ideas for improvements.	Feedback views and information from County and branches to Haig House, and from Haig House to County, branches and members. Ensure through representations that all forms, policies, and particularly the Membership Management Handbook, that all content and references are accurate.	County Chairman’s time. County Committee representations to RBL Membership Council and relevant Directorates at Haig House	3
14	Promote and support the Branch Community Support (BCS) program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage all branches or groups of branches to seek to have a BCC and BCS Supporters • Support branches in the training of BCS representatives and supporters to ensure they are qualified and DBS Checked and have completed all mandatory requirements so they can deliver BCS and submit monthly reports on time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National BCS Training Program and DBS checks. • County Community Support Co-ordinator’s time and expenses. • Branch Community Coordinator’s and BCS 	<p>3</p> <p>2</p>

	What we will do and why	How will we do it?	Resources needed	Progress (1-5)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver presentations on BCS to branch officers, members and community groups. 	<p>Supporters' time and expenses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCS Reporting System. 	2