



## Central News – November 2022

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Important dates	
11 November 2022	Armistice Day
12 November 2022	Festival of Remembrance
13 November 2022	Remembrance Sunday
29 November 2022	Membership Town Hall

*Please remember to use this online [form](#) to share your feedback about Central News. Some of you reported that not all links in the previous issue worked correctly. Please email [dnikolakopoulou@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:dnikolakopoulou@britishlegion.org.uk) with details of any links you cannot access.*

## Cost of Living Grants Programme launched



The increases in the cost of living are a significant concern for many people. The Armed Forces community are no exception to this, and we have seen a notable increase in the number of people receiving grants related to everyday living costs.

In common with many charities, the RBL is taking further action to support our community and has introduced a new programme to assist. This includes energy cost top-up grants which will help those struggling to pay their energy bills with up to £200 per month depending on their financial circumstances.

It also includes school uniforms, kitchen appliances and digital access equipment that do not require ongoing case management.

For needs that require more support such as mobility equipment, housing needs and debt, we are asking people to [contact us](#) via our contact centre.

We have launched a portal where eligible people can submit applications to us for the cost of living grants. This portal can be accessed at [www.rbl.org.uk/costofliving](http://www.rbl.org.uk/costofliving)

The initial response to the launch of the portal has seen a very large uptake, and we are estimating that during this period of very high demand, our response times will be slower than our target of five working days. We are currently estimating that it may take an applicant up to two weeks to receive a response to their application.

We are hopeful this new scheme and application route will be a significant benefit to the people we support, and we encourage Members to share the above link with people [eligible for our support](#) who will benefit from it.

We know not everyone will want to apply for support online and our existing processes where people can access our services via the Contact Centre remain unchanged.

## Annual Conference

Next year's conference will follow a hybrid format, enabling delegates and visitors to attend the entire 3-day event, in person or online. Delegates will have an opportunity to access and debate motions in advance through the online platform, as well as in person at Conference. Whether attending virtually or in person, delegates will have a chance to vote at the same time during the conference.

To register a delegate, your Branch must be compliant, and you can register using the [Application Form](#) available through the Membership Administration Portal (MAP). The deadline for registering your delegate is **Friday 7 April 2023**.

Everyone can attend as a visitor. All visitors must register before Annual Conference using this [form](#). It can also be accessed via the [RBL's website](#).

After registration has closed, all those who have successfully registered will receive a confirmation email with joining instructions.



## November Membership town hall – save the date

The next town hall is scheduled for **Tuesday 29 November at 6pm**.

Following the presentations from senior RBL staff, you'll get a chance to ask your questions.

Please save the date in your diaries. We'll provide more details on the agenda and how to join the session nearer the time.

And finally, a big thank you to those who've attended previous town halls and shared your feedback with us. We'll take your comments into account as we work to make improvements to your town hall experience.

## Local Authorities and Remembrance

Every September the Director General, the Local Government Association and the National Association for Local Councils send a letter to the Leaders of all Local Authorities and Councils. The letter re-states the responsibilities of Local Authorities to organise and support a Remembrance Event as a civic duty.

It recognises that this does not necessarily include a Parade but that where a Parade is planned, identifies the ways in which the RBL can support the Authority. RBL is unable to bear the costs of the Event or take responsibility for road closures or road stewarding, as this would not be covered by our insurance.

## Non-red Poppy Wreaths

The Royal British Legion has no objection to wreaths other than red poppy wreaths being laid at war memorials or in Remembrance services. The RBL respects the rights and freedoms of groups and

individuals to make their own decisions how to observe Remembrance and the right of others to wear poppies and lay wreaths consisting of other colours and flowers. However, the RBL's red poppy is a universal symbol of Remembrance and peace which is inclusive of all regardless of race, belief, origin, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Importantly, the red poppy raises funds to support our Armed Forces community, veterans and their families in their time of need.

We see no contradiction in wearing other emblems alongside the red poppy, or laying other wreaths alongside the red poppy wreath. We recognise the right of any group or individual to express themselves within the law.

## Centenarian Membership

At this year's conference a motion requesting that membership is automatically granted to any member attaining their Centenary was carried. The motion is supported in part by the Board of Trustees meaning that all members turning 100-year-old will be offered membership free of charge and will be known as Centenarian Membership.

Centenarian Membership is still in its early stages, as we are working to put the necessary systems in place, to establish which of our current members are eligible as well as how these memberships will be issued going forward. Please look out for further information in Central News and from your MSOs in due course.

## Becoming a trustee



By now, your branch should have received the election pack (call for nominees) either via email, in the post, or both. (If you still haven't, please contact [trusteeelections@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:trusteeelections@britishlegion.org.uk) for another copy)

If, having read the pack, anyone in your branch is curious to find out more then they can visit our Board of Trustees web page [here](#) and/or attend one of our "Life as a Trustee" briefing days.

Alternatively, if they want to speak to someone in confidence about the role, please ask them to contact Janice Scanlan at [JScanlan@Hunter-Healthcare.com](mailto:JScanlan@Hunter-Healthcare.com)

**'Life as a Trustee' days**

These will be held at Haig House, 199 Borough High Street, London, SE1 1AA, at the following times:

Date	Location	Time
Wednesday 16 November	Binyon meeting room	10:00-13:00
Wednesday 14 December	Jellicoe meeting room	10:00-13:00
Wednesday 25 January	Earl Haig meeting room	10:00-13:00

**Please note the January date shown is different from the one in the published pack.**

Booking one of the briefing days in London is simple; just ask the member to email [trusteeelections@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:trusteeelections@britishlegion.org.uk) requesting the date they would like to attend. We will email them back to confirm receipt of the request and confirm their place.

## Membership Council Elections

All eligible branches in the five regions up for election should have received their election pack now. These have been sent either via email, in the post, or both. If your branch has not received a copy, please contact [MCElections@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:MCElections@britishlegion.org.uk).

As a reminder the five regions for this election are:

- London
- Northern
- South West Midlands
- East Anglia/Essex
- Manchester/Lancashire

The call for nominees is still open until 12th December 2022, and for details on the role of a Membership Council Member please find these in the Election Pack.

Any questions please do not hesitate to contact [MCElections@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:MCElections@britishlegion.org.uk).