



ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

Central News – April 2024

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Important dates	
4 April 2024	Appeals and amendments to Motions deadline
20 April 2024	Specialist Officers Away Day
9 May 2024	Deadline for Motions of Urgency (5pm)
10-12 May 2024	Annual Conference 2024

March Membership Handbook

The revised Membership Handbook is now available [on MAP](#) or can be requested from your Membership Engagement Officer (MEO). A summary of the changes that have been made is also available to [view here](#).

The revised name, previously the *Membership Management Handbook* (MMH), is to ensure it aligns with what is stated in the Royal Charter. Sitting alongside the Royal Charter, the handbook was created to help RBL officers, committee members, members and staff ensure they act within the rules of the Royal Charter.

The *Membership Handbook* undergoes biannual revisions, in March and September; however, it is reviewed continually. Prior to each revision cycle, an opportunity for feedback is extended to all *Membership Handbook* users. This collaborative effort aims to enhance the document's efficiency.

Additionally, the Membership Compliance team works closely with subject matter experts and stakeholders across RBL, including but not limited to Legal, Safeguarding, Risk & Insurance, Remembrance and Finance. This is to ensure that all information and policy guidance remains current and relevant, maintaining the document's integrity as a comprehensive source of guidance, in line with charity and other UK regulations and guidelines. Following the gathering and review of feedback, a report is submitted to the Membership Council for approval of the proposed revisions.

Your input is valuable, and we encourage you to share any feedback or proposed revisions for the upcoming September revision using [this form](#).

Countdown to Annual Conference

We are now a little over one month away from Annual Conference 2024, 10th – 12th May. We look forward to coming together in person in Newport or online to hear news, updates and reports from Directors, to vote on Motions, discuss, debate and network.

Also, in a landmark moment for the history of the RBL, there will be the dedication of the three National Standards: the National RBL Standard, the National Women's Section Standard and the

National Youth Standard. This is the first time that the National Standards will have been dedicated together in the history of the RBL so is a moment that we are all looking forward to seeing. On the Sunday morning, there will also be a parade through Newport. The full provisional agenda is available in the [March Special Circular](#). Registration will open on Friday and attendees are encouraged to arrive and register as early as possible to avoid lines and reduce registration wait times.

[Annual Conference Membership Forum](#)

As mentioned last month, the 2024 Membership Forum will be held on the Sunday of Annual Conference, instead of on the Saturday as is usual. This is following feedback requesting that more time be allocated to the session. This year's forum will be shaped by key themes that have been identified as top priorities for members. A communication will be sent out in due course inviting pre-submitted questions.

[2023 Annual Report](#)

The RBL Annual Report will be available to view online on the main RBL website before Conference in early May. We encourage attendees to review this information online in advance where possible - limited hard copies will also be available for Delegates in Newport.

[Catering](#)

This year we have worked hard to resolve the issues experienced at last year's Conference with catering options. At lunchtime on 11th and 12th May there will be a variety of catering huts inside the main hall offering a range of hot and cold options, which we believe will be a significant improvement on last year. There is also a cafe at the ICC entrance which will be open all day serving light bites for breakfast and lunch. Please note that the venue is a cashless site, so only debit/credit cards are accepted for payment.

[Pre-order your Saturday evening meal at Conference](#)

On Saturday 11th May a carvery meal will be served on-site in the main hall from 5:00pm to those who have pre-ordered it. Roast Beef, Chicken Supreme or a Nut Roast are available, along with an assortment of side dishes. Find out more and pre-order your meal [using this link](#). A pop-up bar will also be open in the main hall.

[Updated Governance documentation](#)

Last month – alongside the March Special Circular – updated editions of the [Standing Orders of Conference](#) and [Royal Charter](#) were published on MAP and sent to Branch and County Officers via O365.

The Royal Charter sets out RBL's objectives and powers. It also details how the organisation is to be structured, organised, managed and run. Royal Charter v15 (September 2023) contains the following changes:

- **Rules 2, 3 and 25:** Amended as follows:
 - Rules 2 & 3: Amendments are required to reflect the change of terminology from “Membership Support Officer” to “Membership Engagement Officer”.
- **Rule 25:** Amendments are required to reflect how RBL will manage complaints between Members or against Members; against Trustees or any member of a committee; and against the Director General or Finance Director (our current CFO).

The Rules were amended following a special resolution of the Board of Trustees on 22nd September and are scheduled to be shared with the Privy Council and Charity Commission.

Resolutions updates: 2019 - 2022

Further to the motion carried at Annual Conference 2023 calling for improved frequency on the outcomes of previous motions, a document was compiled and circulated alongside the March Special Circular. It is also available [on MAP](#).

Enclosed in this document are all motions carried at Annual Conferences between 2019 - 2022, along with an updated statement from the Board of Trustees on the progress of those that are yet to be finalised. This reporting will be ongoing with a further update to be released later in the year, along with an update on the motions passed at Annual Conference 2023.

Read the resolutions updates document [on MAP](#).

Updated volunteer expense form

A standalone version of the volunteer expense form is now available [on MAP](#). Previously an appendix in the full policy document, this form has editable fields that can be filled in.

The current edition of SOP42 - Staff, Volunteer and Trustee Expense Policy is also available to view [on MAP](#).

Branch Funds Initiative Interest Rate increase

The Branch Funds Initiative (BFI) Interest Rate will be increased to 2% with effect from 1st April 2024. RBL branches should hold only up to £5000 in their bank accounts and any excess funds to be transferred to BFI or CCLA Accounts.

If you have any queries, please email: BranchAccounts@britishlegion.org.uk.

County and District grants 2024

The application window for 2024 County/District Grants will be 22nd April 2024 - 26th May 2024. Updated application forms and full guidance will be shared via email shortly, with the decision and payment date to be confirmed by end of May. Counties may prepare in the meantime by ensuring their County Plans are updated and agreed and they have access to their accounts - as this information will need to be submitted along with the completed application form.

All applications and supporting information should be submitted to Membership Services membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk by the County Chair or County Secretary only. We will be unable to accept applications received outside of these dates. Please contact your Membership Engagement Officer for support in completing the application where required and ensure they are aware of the submission so they can provide support. If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk.

Remembering the Service and Sacrifice of the Generation of 1944

2024 sees the 80th anniversaries of momentous turning points of the Second World War. RBL is marking the service and sacrifice of the generation of 1944 and is encouraging members, branches and communities to get involved and have created [a pack](#) to help you to do this.

To help you engage with your community we have produced display units exploring the themes being commemorated in 2024. Those who attended the March County Chairs Seminar had the opportunity to see an example of the four-sided tower option. Also available are one- and two-sided pull up banners and the option of a large poster. A poster and leaflet are also available for our Remembrance Learning Programme.

For 2024, you will be able to order the following display units:

- Exploring D-Day and the Battle of Normandy.
- Exploring the 80th anniversaries of 1944 including D-Day and the Battle of Normandy, Monte Cassino, Kohima, Imphal, Operation Market Garden and the Battle of the Scheldt.

An [online portal](#) has been set up where you can explore the range on offer and order units, paying by cheque. More information about ordering can be found [on MAP](#) or on the online portal. Any use of Branch funds must be authorised by your Branch Committee prior to ordering.

Branches will also be able to bid for funding (up to £350) towards the cost of 80th anniversary events. Information on the process will be shared soon.

D-Day 80th Anniversary Order of Service

Following several requests from Branch Chaplains, RBL's National Chaplain, Scott Brown, has kindly prepared an Order of Service that can be used and adapted as needed for local use. Kindly note that this is not official guidance or instruction and does not have to be used, it has been provided for those who would like it.

The Order of Service can be found [on MAP](#).

Commemorative Event Spend Guides

To support the delivery of local commemorative events such as D-Day 80, and to support national commemorative events, guidance has been created to clarify for branch and county spend. Please find guides for [local events](#) as well as [national events](#) on MAP.

Spring Training Plan 2024

The Learning and Development team has put together an April – June training plan for members. All courses listed on the plan are open to all members – with the exception of BCS - and can be booked via *Discover*. [View the plan on MAP](#). Should you have any questions please contact L&D@britishlegion.org.uk.

BCS update April 2024

The Membership Development team has put together an update on their ongoing Branch Community Support (BCS) work. Please find this update [here on MAP](#) for the latest, including updates on BCS systems, data, literature, training and more. Should you have any questions about this update, please contact BCS@britishlegion.org.uk.

BCS Contact Card

As mentioned last month, a new contact card designed to enable members to signpost potential beneficiaries in need of support to the RBL Contact Centre has been developed. These can now be ordered by emailing BCS@britishlegion.org.uk with your name, Branch/County role and address for delivery.

Please encourage your branch members to use these cards if they meet veterans and/or their families requiring assistance.

Campaigns Policy and Research Impact Report 2023

With the launch of the [RBL Councillor Network](#), the [Credit their Service](#) campaign, our 2024 [General Election manifesto](#), kicking off major new research and understanding our community using Census

and wider data releases, 2023 was a busy, exciting and successful year for the [Campaigns, Policy and Research team](#).

We are only able to make an impact because of the support of our members, campaigners, volunteers, fundraisers and partners who drive our campaigning efforts by engaging with us and promoting our campaigns in their community.

To read our 2023 Impact Report in full, [click here](#). To keep up to date with what we do and get involved with our campaigning work, join our [Campaigner Community](#).

Good Branch and County Guide

Following on from very useful discussions we had at the March County Chairs' Seminar, we'd like to continue collecting insights into what makes a great branch or county. We're not looking to repeat the procedures that branches and counties must follow in the Membership Handbook – rather, we want to gather the practices that really make a branch or county work well, including the management approaches that ensure an effective committee, the great formation and member engagement and the activities which epitomise the purpose of membership.

We'd love to hear from as many Branch and County Officers as possible, so please send your thoughts [using this link](#).

Membership Directorate Star of the Month

Each month the Membership Directorate nominates their 'Star of the Month'. Staff nominate each other in acknowledgement of their outstanding work and contribution to RBL. One winner is chosen by the Directorate's Senior Management Team and awarded a certificate and a small star trophy.

Following the March County Chairs' Seminar an action was taken to share our winners with Branch and County Officers each month. Therefore, we are delighted to introduce our February Star of the Month, Ellen King, Clubs Compliance Coordinator!

Here's why she was chosen: "Ellen's independent initiative, collaborative approach, and expertise have been instrumental in ensuring outstanding outcomes. She builds strong networks, collaborates effectively, and is always approachable and helpful. Ellen's contributions make her a true asset to the team and deserving of the Star of the Month recognition".

Congratulations Ellen!