



ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

## Central News – May 2024

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### Important dates

9 May 2024

Deadline for Motions of Urgency

10-12 May 2024

Annual Conference 2024

## Get ready for Annual Conference

Just days away from Annual Conference 2024, we look forward to welcoming delegates and visitors both in-person and remotely. Here is a roundup of what you need to know.

### Parade registration and wristbands

Online parade registration has now closed. If you have not registered but wish to participate in the parade, it is essential you register in advance at the Memorabilia/Help stand in the exhibition. Those who have registered can collect their wristband from the Memorabilia/Help stand. Wristbands will be required to join the parade on Sunday.

### Saturday evening entertainment and meal

For evening entertainment, we have a line-up of music and comedy starting at 6.30pm. For those who would like to enjoy a meal on site so they can catch the show, catering will open in the main hall from 5pm. Please note, meals should be pre-ordered [using this link](#). Choices include roast beef, chicken supreme or a nut roast, along with an assortment of side dishes. A pop-up bar will also be open in the main hall.

### Gwent County Raffle

Great prizes are up for grabs in a raffle organised by RBL Gwent County. Tickets are £1 each and will be available at the Memorabilia/Help stand in the exhibition area of the main hall.

### Donate non-perishable foods

As part of their FareShare initiative, ICC Wales welcomes the donation of non-perishable foods which are distributed to those in need. If you have anything you wish to donate, please drop it off at the main ICC Wales reception desk on arrival.

### Motions of Urgency

The deadline for submitting Motions of Urgency is **5pm Thursday 9th May**. A Motions of Urgency certificate is [available on MAP](#). All Motions of Urgency must be submitted by email to both of the following email addresses:

- [AReid2@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:AReid2@britishlegion.org.uk)
- [NationalConferenceCommittee@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:NationalConferenceCommittee@britishlegion.org.uk)

### Pre-book discounted parking

Discounted parking of £6 per day must be booked [using this link](#). For overnight parking there is an additional fee of £10. (£16 for 24 hours). Please note, discounted parking will not be available from parking ticket machines.

## Delegate Pack

All registered attendees should have received the Delegate Pack and supplementary information. The Conference agenda can be found [on MAP](#) along with [the CVs](#) of those nominated for the National Conference Committee. Hard copies of the Delegate Pack will be available at the venue. If you are registered and did not receive your copy, please contact [membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk).

## RBL Annual Report now available

The 2023 Royal British Legion *Annual Report and Accounts* is now available on the [RBL website](#). Hard copies will be available at Annual Conference in Newport.

## National Parade Marshal appointment

After conducting interviews at Haig House, with the authority of the National Chair, the panel has appointed Norman Espie BEM to succeed as National Parade Marshal (NPM) of The Royal British Legion. Norman will shadow our current NPM for 12 months where he will then be charged and assume office at the conclusion of our Annual Conference in Harrogate, May 2025 when the current NPMs term of office concludes.

The post of Deputy NPM will be advertised in the near future. It is the Ceremonial Working Group's intent that interviews will be conducted prior to Annual Conference 2024. Congratulations to Norman and we all look forward to working with you in the future.

## Remembering the Service and Sacrifice of the Generation of 1944

2024 sees the 80th anniversaries of momentous turning points of the Second World War. To help you mark these in your communities we have produced free-standing exhibition units that mark the important anniversaries of 2024. Available to order are a four-sided tower, one- and two-sided pull up banners and a large poster.

For 2024, you can 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 ordering 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 ordering portal. Any use of Branch funds must be authorised by your Branch Committee prior to ordering. Branches can apply for funding towards the cost of 80th anniversary events. Information on the process is available on MAP in the spend guides for [national events](#) and [local events](#).

An [online pack](#) to help you encourage members, Branches and communities to get involved in marking the service and sacrifice of the generation of 1944 is also available, as is a poster and leaflet for our [Remembrance Learning Programme](#).

If you are planning an activity for D-Day 80, we'd love to know about it. This will help us to capture all the amazing events that are happening and where for this key commemorative period. Please complete [this short online form](#) with details of what you've organised.

## Remembering Kosovo – 25 years on

This June we will mark the 25th anniversary of the end of the war in Kosovo and the deployment of the NATO-led international peacekeeping Kosovo Force (KFOR).

We are marking the anniversary with a Service of Remembrance at the National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire, on Sunday 23 June 2024 to remember the service and sacrifice of these British Armed Forces men and women. We invite all personnel who served with the KFOR mission, and/or their families, to join us. You can register via the [RBL website](#) - registration will close 20th May.

## Members' Census Webinar

On **May 16th at 6.30pm** an online webinar to thank members for their support and explore the meaning of census data for RBL and the Armed Forces community will take place. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions of our expert team about the information. [Click here](#) on or after 6.30pm on Thursday 16th May 2024 to attend. Please share this link with anyone you think may be interested.

Thanks to the RBL and Poppyscotland [Count Them In](#) campaign, the 2021 Census in England & Wales, and the 2022 Scotland counterpart, included a question on Service in the Armed Forces for the first time in its history! We are grateful to our members that helped make this campaign a success by writing to their MPs, signing petitions, and helping spread the word in their communities.

[Visit here](#) for more information. For any questions or queries, please email Public Affairs at [publicaffairs@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:publicaffairs@britishlegion.org.uk).

## Simplifying the enquiry process

As part of our ongoing work to improve the membership experience, we are simplifying the enquiry process for membership email enquiries. From 1st July 2024 any membership enquiries that are not directed to your MEO should be sent to [membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk) only.

### Why are we doing this?

By simplifying the enquiry process our dedicated Membership Services team can manage and track all enquiries received, ensuring a timely response is provided.

### What does this mean in practice?

From 1st July 2024 your MEO will remain your point of contact for all relevant enquiries and you should continue to email them directly. Any other membership enquiries should be sent to [membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk) only.

Should you have any questions please contact [membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk).

### Updated resources

Here is a roundup of recently updated resources you can find on MAP.

#### Recruitment and Retention Guide

A County Recruiting Officers' (CROs) guide that aligns with the new CRO training is now available. This guide is more detailed to enable counties and branches to plan and implement effective recruitment and retention. Digital and print versions are now available [on MAP](#).

We want to thank the team of CROs who, following the September 2023 Specialist Officers' Away Day, supported the Membership Training team with the development of the new CRO training, and were also involved in the review of the Recruitment and Retention Guide which had not been updated since 2017.

#### Membership Handbook forms

Standalone versions of all forms contained within the March 2024 Membership Handbook are now available [on MAP](#) in PDF and Word format.

#### About Us presentation

The *We are the Royal British Legion* presentation, which provides an overview of who RBL are and what we do, has been updated with the most recent data and information available. It is now available [on MAP](#) and the [members brand page](#) of the RBL website under *Core brand literature*.

#### Diversity and Inclusion Survey

In January 2022 we surveyed Branch Chairs to find out how confident they were engaging with more diverse communities in their area and what support they needed to do this. We received a huge range of responses and are now repeating the survey to enable us to assess the impact of our Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and develop our new strategy.

Please [take the survey](#) to enable us to find out about the impact our work has had and what more you would like us to do to support you in the future. It will close 5pm 7<sup>th</sup> June.

## Barrier for non-UK Armed Forces families removed

Our [2024 General Election manifesto](#) urged the Government to abolish the Minimum Income Requirement for personnel to bring family members born outside of the UK to the country they serve. In March, the Government responded to our calls, and announced that for serving personnel who want to bring their families to the UK, it would bring the minimum income requirement down to £23,496, which is the minimum Armed Forces salary. We are delighted with this win!

Families are essential support networks for anyone who serves. RBL and Poppyscotland believe that making it impossible for personnel to spend their evenings and weekends with their spouses, partners and children undermines their service to the UK and contradicts the Armed Forces covenant.

We are delighted that the Government will bring the income requirement for those who serve to the minimum Armed Forces salary, allowing family members to join serving personnel in the UK without barriers. Read our full statement [here](#).

## In Memory team update

Giving a gift in memory is a touching way to remember someone special by honouring their life and supporting a cause that was important to them. We really are honoured when friends and family make the decision to ask for donations to the Royal British Legion in lieu of flowers at funerals. Sometimes families want to arrange the collection themselves, and sometimes they ask funeral directors to coordinate this on their behalf. Whatever route our supporters choose, we're here to help make funeral collections on behalf of families, who are already facing an emotionally difficult time, as easy as possible.

Therefore, we are delighted to announce that you can now request our new free *Funeral Pack*, which contains collection envelopes, a collection box and other useful information to help with the collection of donations made at funerals, cremations, and other similar events. Request a free *Funeral Pack* from Supporter Care on 0345 845 1945 (Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm) or email [supportercare@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:supportercare@britishlegion.org.uk).

We also offer the opportunity to honour the memory of a loved one by professionally inscribing their name into our *Book of Remembrance*. [Visit our website](#) to find out more and inscribe a name.

## Upcoming branch opportunities

### The Great Get Together

The Great Get Together (21st – 23rd June 2024) is the UK's annual celebration of everything that unites our communities, inspired by Jo Cox's belief that we have more in common than that which divides us. This June, on what would have been Jo's 50th birthday, we hope her message will continue to inspire our communities to bring people together. Find out how to get involved on the [Jo Cox Foundation's website](#).

### Eden Project Communities

The Big Lunch is bringing millions of people together to share friendship, food and fun in their communities on 1st and 2nd June. Everyone can take part and this year Eden Project Communities are dishing up ideas to help make it the greenest Big Lunch yet. They've got loads of easy ways to help make this happen in your community. From doorstep cuppas and garden get-togethers to street parties and events bringing the whole neighbourhood together, you'll find everything you need to get your party started [on their website](#).

## Good practice

### **Fivemiletown, County Tyrone**

Fivemiletown Royal British Legion Branch and Club in Northern Ireland was delighted to receive the Kings Award for Voluntary Service from His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for County Tyrone Mr Robert Scott OBE on 20th April 2024. Equivalent to an MBE, the award is only presented after a rigorous selection process.

Fivemiletown RBL is a small rural Branch/Club with 200 members who are truly embedded into the fabric of their community. They recently received a National Award from RBL for their work in the community during the COVID 19 pandemic. In recent years they raised over £35,000 to build a community war memorial and a book called "Fivemiletown's Fallen" which tells the story behind the 73 names on the memorial.

Club Chairman Iain Lendrum BEM stated "While we maintain RBL's core values of acting as the lead for Remembrance and veterans' welfare we strive to be so much more in the local community. Our success is based on strong links between our Branch, Club, Members, and our local community."

The presentation was attended by over 100 branch/club volunteers, supporting community organisations and elected representatives. His Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for County Tyrone Robert Black OBE was accompanied by his newly appointed LL Cadet Aaron Magee, Deputy LL Frances Nolan and Graham Dodds. Lord and Lady Brookeborough also attended, maintaining their close links to Fivemiletown RBL. Branch Chairman Robert Carson commented "This award is a reflection

of the hard work put in by all our volunteers and to receive the signed Certificate and Crystal from King Charles makes it even more special.”

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