

# Royal British Legion Oxfordshire April 2026



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April 2026

*(This Newsletter is produced quarterly Apr, Aug, Dec annually)*

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### *Message from the County Chair - Fiona Lovesey*



The first quarter of 2026 has been an exceptionally busy and productive period for the County Team. January saw the successful delivery of the 101st County Conference, which was extremely well attended and warmly received. This momentum continued on 21 February 2026, when the County proudly hosted the Southeast Region Regional Standard Bearer Competition (a full report appears in the Events section of this newsletter).

Throughout March, preparations have been underway for the forthcoming 102nd Oxfordshire County Conference, led by our Vice Chair, Tjark Andrews. In parallel, County Parade Marshal Pete Clarke has published the 2026 Standard Bearer schedule and, by the time this newsletter reaches you, will have already delivered the first training session of the year.

I am also immensely proud to share the news that the nomination of our County Treasurer, Mr Andrews Bowes, for the National Award RBL Gold Badge has been approved by the National Chair. Those who know Andrew will appreciate just how well deserved this honour is. It is a fitting recognition of the commitment, professionalism, and tireless effort he has given to supporting the County, our Branches across Oxfordshire, and the wider Royal British Legion. Andrew is truly an asset to the County. A full report can be found in the Events section of this newsletter.

During March, I represented RBL Oxfordshire alongside the National Chair in discussions with the Resilience Leads from Oxfordshire County Council and West Oxfordshire District Council. These discussions focused on developing and updating the Royal British Legion's response to the Repatriation of Fallen Service personnel. The revised policy is reproduced within this newsletter and is also available on the RBL Oxfordshire website. It is important that Branch members familiarise themselves with these changes and understand the Legion's role and level of participation.

Our work continues at pace, with the next major priority being the review and update of the County Plan. We are hopeful that this can be presented to Branches later in the year.

Key notable dates that will be pressing at the time of publication of this newsletter are:

- **23 Mar - 06 Apr 26** - Registration for Annual Conference closes midday 23 March for in-person attendees, and midday 6 April for virtual attendees
- **06 Apr 26** - Nominations for Standard Bearer Applications from County/Branches for the Festival of Remembrance to be submitted to County Chair before submission to National central point of contact on 07 Apr 26. This is a huge departure from previously years and has been promulgated by the National Parade Marshall Norman Espie so make sure you apply through myself and the County Parade Marshall by the 06 Apr 26.

Finally, we still need volunteers to join the County Committee either in specific posts or as a Committee Member. If you are interested by reach out to either myself or the County Secretary.

Have a wonderful Easter.

**Fiona Lovesey**

## ***Oxfordshire County Committee***

### **County Committee Members**

#### **County President**

Mrs Ann Mid-Winter [Oxfordshire.President@RBL.Community](mailto:Oxfordshire.President@RBL.Community)

#### **County Chair**

Vacant - Chair -Mrs Fiona Lovesey [Oxfordshire.Chair@RBL.Community](mailto:Oxfordshire.Chair@RBL.Community)

#### **County Vice Chair**

Vice Chair - Mr Tjark Andrews [Oxfordshire.ViceChair@RBL.Community](mailto:Oxfordshire.ViceChair@RBL.Community)

#### **County Secretary**

Mr Rob Lovesey [Oxfordshire.Secretary@RBL.Community](mailto:Oxfordshire.Secretary@RBL.Community)

#### **County Treasurer**

Mr Andrew Bowes [Oxfordshire.Treasurer@RBL.Community](mailto:Oxfordshire.Treasurer@RBL.Community)

#### **County Parade Marshal**

Mr Peter Clarke [Oxfordshire.ParadeMarshal@RBL.Community](mailto:Oxfordshire.ParadeMarshal@RBL.Community)

#### **County Training Officer**

Mr Derek Bradshaw [Oxfordshire.CTO@RBL.Community](mailto:Oxfordshire.CTO@RBL.Community)

#### **County Recruitment Officer**

Mr Brian Leach [Oxfordshire.Recruitment@RBL.Community](mailto:Oxfordshire.Recruitment@RBL.Community)

#### **County Community Support Co-ordinator**

Vacant

#### **Oxfordshire Club Liaison Officer**

Vacant

#### **County Standard Bearer**

Mr Tjark Andrews [Oxfordshire.StdBearer@RBL.Community](mailto:Oxfordshire.StdBearer@RBL.Community)

#### ***County Branch Liaison Officers***

- **County Chair – Fiona Lovesey ([Oxfordshire.Chair@RBL.Community](mailto:Oxfordshire.Chair@RBL.Community)):** Benson and District, Watlington, Thame and Stanton Harcourt

- **County Treasurer – Andrew Bowes (Oxfordshire.Treasurer@RBL.Community):** Bix, Shiplake, Nettlebed, Ramsden, Headington and Standlake & Northmoor
- **County Recruitment Officer - Brian Leach (Oxfordshire.CRO@RBL.Community):** Bicester, Kidlington, Kirtlington, Heyford and Deddington
- **County Training Officer - Derek Bradshaw (Oxfordshire.CTO@RBL.Community):** Littlemore, Yarnton, Eynsham, Cassington and Islip
- **County Parade Marshal – Pete Clarke (Oxfordshire.ParadeMarshal@RBL.Community):** Chipping Norton, Bloxham, Kingham and Banbury
- **County Standard Bearer – Tjark Andrews (Oxfordshire.StdBearer@RBL.Community):** Burford, Bampton, Charlbury, North Leigh and Carterton
- **County Secretary – Rob Lovesey (Oxfordshire.Secretary@RBL.Community):** Dorchester, Henley, Peppard, Wheatley and Chinnor



## *Legion Staff*

### **Membership Engagement Manager (MEM)**

Mr Chris Jones [Central.MEM@RBL.Community](mailto:Central.MEM@RBL.Community)

### **Membership Engagement Officer (MEO)**

Ms Lebo Nyoni [Oxfordshireshire.MEO@RBL.Community](mailto:Oxfordshireshire.MEO@RBL.Community)

### **Poppy Appeal Manager (Oxfordshire)**

Mr Yanto Evans [YEvans@britishlegion.org.uk](mailto:YEvans@britishlegion.org.uk)

## **Financial Year End - Andrew Bowes**

### **Branch Treasurers**

The Membership Financial Year End will soon be upon us some simple preparation will make the end of year process easier.

1. If it is expected that the branch will not have any transactions in June, trigger an end of June Bank statement by depositing a penny into the account. Not having an end of month bank statement is always a reason for account query.
2. Contact your usual Independent Examiner now to confirm that they will be willing and available to carry out the Examination so you can make the return before 30 September.
3. Speak to the Branch Chairman to ensure that there will be a suitable meeting in July or August where the Account can be accepted by the Branch Committee and signatures obtained for the Accounts and Authority to Disclose certificates.
4. Consider if the Branch could make use of the Small Branch accounts form *“the income received did not exceed £500 and the expenditure incurred did not exceed £500 in total for the year; excluding receipts and payments from the Royal British Legion Head Office (i.e BFI Interest, WS Benevolent fund & Poppy appeal transfers); and the total bank balance reported (excluding the Branch BFI) does not exceed £5,000.”*
5. If you think there will be problems with the Branch Accounts ask for help now **General Finance rules** – Use of RBL Funds - A Summary from the guidance leaflet issued for use by County Supported Branches (CSB).

What follows are some key points but the full text can be found in the Membership Management Handbook:

- Reasonable expenses from funds are allowed for Branch business including the purchase of relevant equipment.
- All funds held by RBL Branches, including CSBs, are charitable funds and as such fall within the responsibility of the Board of Trustees. They do not “belong” to the Branch. Should a Branch cease to exist, the funds remain an asset of the RBL.
- The MEO is obliged to inform Head Office of any donation received by a Branch of more than £5000 (but these funds will be retained at local level).
- Branches are permitted to use Branch funds to undertake Remembrance events, but a Branch must attempt to secure services at little or no cost. Expenditure must be reasonable and proportionate. Local Authorities must be encouraged to bear the cost of any Civil Act of Remembrance (i.e., Remembrance Sunday Services), even if the RBL assists in the organisation.

- If a Branch is made aware of a beneficiary requiring support, they must encourage the beneficiary to get in touch with the Contact Centre. The Branch can make a payment to Head Office to support an individual case but cannot make payments directly to a beneficiary.
- No funds may be expended on the upkeep/ maintenance of War Memorials unless the Memorial is owned by the Branch.
- No fundraising activity should run at a loss as expenditure incurred would not qualify as charitable. All surplus funds should either be donated to the Poppy Appeal or Branch funds (depending on the stated purpose of the fundraising activity. The donor must always be clear about what they are donating money for).
- Any funds raised specifically for Welfare may only be used for that purpose in accordance with the Royal Charter. A Branch must not “hold” funds when they can be used to provide support to our beneficiaries. Donations are given in the expectation that they will be used for charitable work, not for being held in a Branch account. It is suggested that any considerable funds are forwarded to the Poppy Appeal or the County Welfare Fund.
- Branches may not make donations to other Charities unless permission has been granted by the External Grants Team or the Board of Trustees. RBL members may not raise money for other charities whilst declaring themselves to be RBL members (i.e. by wearing the RBL membership badge, whilst standing at a RBL branded stand).
- Social events must not be subsidised . Expenditure incurred and income received may pass through the Branch but must be earmarked for that purpose only. Surplus funds left over after the event must either be transferred to Branch funds or the Poppy Appeal.
- Any funds held in Trust at Head Office may only be used for the purposes specified within that Trust document. Please ensure that if applicable, your Branch is fully conversant with those terms.
- If a Legacy is left to a Branch this must be referred directly to the Legacy team at Head Office as they have the legal expertise to deal with it. Failure to refer to Head Office could result in the loss of the Legacy. If a Legacy is £5000 or less, the funds will be transferred directly to the Branch funds. If it is a larger amount then the Legacy will be held in Trust at Head Office and its funds can be accessed with help from the MEO.
- Branches, including CSBs, must not subsidise RBL Clubs in any form. To do so would be a misuse of charitable funds and might result in being required to personally reimburse the Charity.

- Branch Property Trusts are not assets of the Branch but are separate Trusts linked to the Branch and usually require their funds to be used for the benefit of beneficiaries in a specific geographical area.

***If you are ever in doubt about whether a payment should be made using Branch funds, please seek advice from the County Treasurer/MEO***

***first. [Oxfordshire.Treasurer@RBL.Community](mailto:Oxfordshire.Treasurer@RBL.Community) [LNyoni@BritishLegion.org.uk](mailto:LNyoni@BritishLegion.org.uk) or [Oxfordshire.MEO@RBL.Community](mailto:Oxfordshire.MEO@RBL.Community)***

***Andrew***

## ***County Committee Vacancies***

The County Committee has some vacancies which need to be filled from the membership these are:

- County Community Support Coordinator
- County Training Officer
- County RBL Club Liaison Officer

If these are areas which you feel you might like to contribute to the running of the County, please get in touch with the County Secretary to discuss further. Training and support will be provided for all posts where necessary

## ***RBL Policies and Guidance Updates***

Branch Secretaries are asked to review the following policy and guidance documents located in the MAP Documents Library, some of which have been recently updated, and advise their Branch Committees as appropriate:

- Youth Policy (in Youth Policy and Affiliation folder).
- Changes to cheque processing (in Branch Finances folder).
- Various safeguarding policy and guidance updates (in Governance and Policy folder)
- Updated Membership Application Form and Youth Band Member/Standard Bearer.
- Application forms (in Recruitment and Retention folder).
- Aspire Leadership Programme Overview 2026 (in Training folder).
- Revised Application Form for Meritorious Service (in Membership Forms Library).

## Changes to the RBL Youth Policy

As you are aware, the new 2025 Youth Policy was launched late last year. It represents a significant change in policy to ensure the RBL works with young people safely and in line with regulations. One notable change is that the old version of Youth Membership is no longer open for applications, and those currently registered as Youth Members will 'age out' by 2029.

Two new youth roles replace this; **Youth Standard Bearers** and **Youth Musicians**. Find the new application form for those roles on MAP.

As Parade Marshals are one of the few roles within membership authorised to work with young people, the changes in the new policy affect you directly. It is important that you read and adhere to the policy, (and the Keeping Yourself Safe Guide). Some of the key policy actions / changes are highlighted below:

- Before you undertake any training or ceremonial activities involving young people you must undergo the **criminal records check** (or equivalent) and the **relevant training** as listed in the policy. Any Standard Bearer who supports Parade Marshals with training or ceremonial activities involving young people must also adhere to this.
- Although the Branch Parade Marshal role appears in the Membership Handbook and in the Youth Policy, there is no formal training in place. As a result, **Branch Parade Marshals should not be carrying out training for young people at the current time unless written approval** has been granted by the National Parade Marshal or Ceremonial Working Group. This is why they are not referenced in Paragraph 13 of the policy. Branch Parade Marshal training will be coming later this year and the policy will be updated following its launch.
- Young people who are designated Youth Standard Bearers or who are taking part in Standard Bearer training **must register as a Youth Standard Bearer**. An element of common sense should be applied here - if a young person wishes to try standard bearing and attends one session (delivered in accordance with the Youth Policy), we would not expect them to register, however if they are planning to attend further sessions then they must be registered. This does not include young people who are being trained as a group for a third-party youth organisation eg.: when you deliver training for a group of cadets on behalf of, and organised by, the other organisation and where a member of the adult staff / volunteers will be present throughout.
- MS1Bs should be completed by the parent or legal guardian for any existing Youth Members subscribed to the old youth membership format. New Youth Standard

Bearers should complete *Section E – Fitness to Participate* on the new youth application form.

- In order for us to maintain a record of young people who have been involved in training, you should take a list of names of young people who attend your training sessions. The **attendee's names should be uploaded to our youth register** via this form, along with the name of any other members involved in delivering the training.
- Reference must be paid to the detail in *Paragraph 3* of the Youth Policy – there should be no exceptions to this; **a responsible adult, as defined in the policy, must attend with the young person** and that individual cannot be someone acting on behalf of the RBL.
- You must hold the **next of kin details** for Youth Standard Bearers who are attending ceremonial events where they may be apart from their parent or legal guardian while the event or event preparation occurs.

The new Youth Policy enables us to meet our duties to young people and support you in your role. You can read the policy on MAP.

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

### ***Ceremonial Update Pete Clarke***

After a successful County Standard Bearers Competition, County Conference and also hosting this year's South East Midlands Region, Regional Standard Bearers Competition. We have Started training this month in preparedness for upcoming parades and ceremonies as well as our 2026 County Standard Bearers Competition, date tbc. The dates of the training are listed below.

There have been some changes in the membership handbook that effect Standard Bearers and their training. Most notably the RBL youth membership policy. It is now the responsibility of the County Parade Marshal to train youth Standard Bearers, this means that no other members can train them, unless they hold an A grade Parade Marshals qualification, and in date enhanced DBS and have completed, and are in date with their RBL online safeguarding training. Only in very **EXCEPTIONAL** circumstances will the National Parade Marshal and the RBL Ceremonial Working Group give permission to someone other than the CPM to carry out the training and this will be a one-off exception, provided they meet the requirements/qualification's I have just mentioned. So, if you have youths who carry your Branch Standard, please encourage them to come to our training sessions, where the policy will be adhered to. It should however, be noted, that the youths parent or legal chaperone **must be present** throughout the training.

A few noteworthy upcoming events this year.

- **03 May 26** tbc, May Bank Holiday Sunday, Holga Dansk Memorial service at Bladon Village Church. Further details will be promulgated to branches in due course.
- **27 Jun 26** June Armed Forces Day Parade and show in Banbury,
- **13 Sep 26** Battle of Britain Parade and Service Banbury.
- County Competition, date to be decided.

Remaining training dates to be held at Stanton Harcourt Village Hall, timings are 09:30-11:30. Please encourage your Standard Bearers to come and train, just need your Standard, Sling and Gauntlets, ***the RBL are looking to make it Mandatory for all Standard Bearers to take part in at least one County Parade Marshal lead training session a year, via a motion at this year's National Conference.*** It is highly likely that this motion will be passed and made a rule for all RBL Standard Bearers.

#### Training Dates

- 26 Apr 26
- 31 May 26
- 21 Jun 26
- 26 Jul 26
- 27 Sep 26
- 25 Oct 26

Best wishes, and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible throughout the year.

**Pete**



## *Repatriation Policy Update*

### **Royal British Legion Oxfordshire Repatriation Policy**

Following a meeting held between the Royal British Legion Oxfordshire Chair and the resilience lead for Oxfordshire County Council to discuss the process of notification for Repatriation of Armed Forces personnel, the following Policy was determined. The RBL National Chair, a former County Councillor also attended the meeting.

#### Royal British Legion Participation

- **Confirmation of the repatriation notification process** – it was agreed that the email accounts associated with the Royal British Legion would be limited to the current National Chair and County Officers/Membership team only. At present a maximum of 48 hours notice of a repatriation will be given and the roles selected gives enough cover to ensure the message is picked up promptly and actioned appropriately. RBL.Community email addresses will be used to ensure continuity if the incumbent changes:
  - National Chair
  - Oxfordshire MEM
  - Oxfordshire MEO
  - Oxfordshire Chair

- Oxfordshire Vice Chair
  - Oxfordshire Secretary – the Secretary will have responsibility for the onward dissemination to Oxfordshire RBL Branches and the RBL Bikers as well and notifying the County Parade Marshal. The notification to Standard Bearers, and Royal British Legion members will be undertaken at County Level as access to emails and contacts under GDPR are controlled. This will enable Branches through their SBs and their Branch Members to pay their respects.
  - Oxfordshire Treasurer
- **Reissue of the Civil Authorities Repatriation Plan** – the civil authorities have confirmed that the Civil Authorities Repatriation Plan is currently being revised and will be subject to final authorisation by the authorities involved. This will be shared with the Royal British Legion once finalised.
  - **Royal British Legion Participation** – it was reiterated that the Royal British Legion has no responsibility for the organising of the Repatriation process or any activities associated with the Carterton Repatriation Memorial Garden other than notifying our membership of any pending repatriation and so that members and Standard Bearers may attend. It must be remembered that it is the family's wishes if the funeral cortege pauses at the Carterton Memorial Repatriation Garden. Additionally, if the family does not wish to have a presence at the Carterton Repatriation Memorial Garden then their request must be upheld. Furthermore, the Order of Precedence for the military presence and Standard Bearers must remain with the casualty's parent Regiment, Corps or Service Association. The County Parade Marshal can assist but must be secondary to the parent unit Association. RBL Branches or former members are not to take any organisation, information dissemination, or management of any event held at the Carterton Memorial Repatriation Garden. The RBL Oxfordshire County Officers will act as a conduit for the passing of information only to its membership. The wreaths and Union Flag should be the responsibility of the Local Council both in storage, presentation and maintenance. This should not be down to the Royal British Legion Local Branches or County.
  - **Standard Bearer Participation-** The attendance of County and Branch Standards should be managed collaboratively with the Regimental Associations; the Royal British Legion is not the controlling authority. Ceremonial protocols and guidance for the Royal British Legion in attendance would be provided by the Oxfordshire County Parade Marshal but not the responsibility of the Royal British Legion. County and Branch standards will be subject to their usual approval process via their respective Chair and documented in County/Branch minutes to ensure Public Liability Insurance

cover. CSB Standards should apply to the County Chair for approval as the de facto Branch Chair and the approval minuted at County level.

## Summary

The Repatriation policy will be widely demonstrable on the RBL Oxfordshire Web-Page. The repatriation is not the responsibility of the RBL to organise; the RBL **are not responsible for repatriation flights and ceremonies themselves, these are military operations and the County/District Council**. The focal point of remembrance has been the Memorial Garden which is the preserve of the Council and not the Royal British Legion. Whilst the Legion encourages its members to pay honour and respect to those who have fallen in service to the nation. Our presence is most visibly demonstrated by the parading of the Branch Standards, but as the Legion is part of the local community many Legion members will stand silently among those who gather to pay their respects.

## Training - "Discover" Portal



The Royal British Legion (RBL) is incorporated by a Royal Charter, which serves as its governing document, outlining its objectives, powers, structure, management, and rules. It functions similarly to a constitution and is a legally binding document recognised by the Charity Commission and the government.

### Key aspects of the RBL Royal Charter

- **Incorporation:** The Charter incorporates the RBL, making it a single legal entity rather than an association of individuals under the Companies Act.
- **History:**
  1. The first Charter was granted to the British Legion in 1925 by King George V.
  2. The organisation received "royal status" and became "The Royal British Legion" in 1971.

3. The original Charter has been updated over the years by various Supplemental Charters to adapt to the changing needs of the ex-Service community.
4. The most recent version of the Charter (version 17) is dated 17 Jul 25

### **Purpose and Objects:**

The Charter sets out the RBL's charitable objects, which broadly include relieving the need, suffering, and distress of beneficiaries and their dependants, promoting education and resettlement, and commemorating those who have died in service.

### **Governance:**

The Charter details how the organisation is to be run, including the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees, the Annual Conference, and the membership.

### **Amendments:**

Motions for amendments to the Charter can be put forward by members at the Annual Conference and must be subsequently ratified by the Board of Trustees. Any changes only take effect if approved by the King in Council.

You can view the full Royal Charter and Rules on the official

All Branch Officers and Committee members should attend training sessions commensurate to their role in the Branch. A useful guide to Branch (and County) Roles including the relevant Terms of Reference can be found at the embedded document.

The County Training Officer (CTO) is Derek Bradshaw and can be contacted [Oxfordshire.CTO@RBL.Community](mailto:Oxfordshire.CTO@RBL.Community)

### **TRAINING NEWS**

There is now a great selection of development and management training which members may find beneficial, especially if you are new to an Officer or Committee post in your branch. All these are now available on the Discover Training Portal which everyone can register on and then book those courses you would like to do. Some are on-line only whilst others might need you to attend face-to-face. The following are currently available:

- Branch Management (***mandatory for all Branch Officers***)
- County Management (***mandatory for all County Officers***)
- County Training Officer
- County Recruiting Officer
- Branch Recruiting Advisor
- Branch Treasurer (***mandatory for all Branch Treasurers***)

- LOMAS (recommended for all new users of LOMAS)
- Independent Examiner (mandatory for all IE prior to registration with the County)
- Secretaries Course (Branch and County) **(new)**
- Branch Community Support Branch Community Support Coordinator **(mandatory for all BCS Coordinators)**
- Branch Community Support (BCS) - New Coordinator **(mandatory for all new Coordinators)**
- Branch Community Support Refresher **(to be completed every 2 years by BCS Staff)**
- Informal Resolution
- Outlook Navigation
- Safeguarding Adults **(mandatory for all BCS Staff)**
- Data Protection **(mandatory for all Branch and County Officers)**

For further details including Course Prospectus, guidance on how to register and use Discover, please contact Derek Bradshaw [Oxfordshire.CTO@RBL.Community](mailto:Oxfordshire.CTO@RBL.Community)

### ***Keeping in Contact - RBL Community E-Mail Addresses***



All County and Branch officers whose role requires access to sensitive information are required to use an RBL-issued email when communicating on behalf of the charity, and to use provided tools for sharing and storing this information.

This is to keep our charity, our members and our beneficiaries safe from cyber crime and identity theft, and to comply with the law.

All qualifying County and Branch officers without access to an RBL.Community email account can now register for an account.

Registering for your account is easy. All you need to do is contact the Membership Engagement Officer (MEO) [Oxfordshire.MEO@rbl.community](mailto:Oxfordshire.MEO@rbl.community) who will get you started.

Training support is available from the County Training Officer (CTO) once your account is activated, in addition to using it for communicating on behalf of RBL. You will be able to receive direct RBL communications, access important county and/or branch information, and interact with other branch and county officials around the UK and overseas via the RBL-exclusive social network, Viva Engage.

The following are eligible for accounts at Branch level:

- Chair (**mandatory**)
- Vice Chair
- Secretary (**mandatory**)
- Treasurer (**mandatory**)
- Standard Bearer Branch
- Community Coordinator (BCC)
- Events Mem Sec (subject to review)

This applies also the County Supported Branches and the requirement for the Point of Contacts for have an official email address:

- Point of Contact 1 (**mandatory**)
- Point of Contact 2 (**mandatory**)

To obtain your Branch RBL.Community accounts please email Lebo our Oxfordshire Membership Engagement Officer at

[Oxfordshire.MEO@rbl.community](mailto:Oxfordshire.MEO@rbl.community)

## Diary Dates



### County Forthcoming Events and Key Dates

- **23 Mar - 06 Apr 26** - Registration for Annual Conference closes midday 23 March for in-person attendees, and midday 6 April for virtual attendees
- **06 Apr 26** - Nominations for Standard Bearer Applications from County/Branches for the Festival of Remembrance to be submitted to County Chair before submission to National central point of contact on 07 Apr 26.
- **03 May 26** tbc, May Bank Holiday Sunday, Holga Dansk Memorial service at Bladon Village Church. Further details will be promulgated to branches in due course.
- **08 - 10 May 26** - National Annual Conference Brighton
- **27 Jun 26** June Armed Forces Day Parade and show in Banbury
- **18 Jul 26** – RBL Oxfordshire County Committee Meeting
- **01 Aug 26** – Release of the August Edition of the County Newsletter
- **13 Sep 26** Battle of Britain Parade and Service Banbury.
- **30 Sep 26** - Last date for submission of Branch Accounts to MEO (although 31st August preferred if possible).
- **01 Oct – 30 Nov 25** – Branch Annual General Meetings to be held between these dates. MS1/MS1B/MS1CSB to be completed. (Branches Note: MS1B must be completed in addition to MS1 or MS1CSB otherwise Branch and Standard Bearer not compliant
- **21 Oct 26** – RBL Oxfordshire County Committee Meeting
- **01 Dec 26** - Release of the December Edition of the County Newsletter

- **31 Dec 26** – Deadline for the submission of all ***MS1s or MS1CSBs and MS1Bs*** to the MEO and County Secretary by email
- **30 Jan 27** – 102nd Oxfordshire Annual County Conference – Carterton Community Hall

### **County Standard Bearer Training**

The training will be held at Stanton Harcourt Village Hall unless notified of any change.

- 26 Apr 26
- 31 May 26
- 21 Jun 26
- 26 Jul 26
- 27 Sep 26
- 25 Oct 26

## ***Events***

### **Southeast Region Regional Standard Bearer Competition**

RBL Oxfordshire hosted the Southeast Region Regional Standard Bearer Competition on 21 Feb 26 at Carterton Community Centre. The Competition saw competitors from Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Oxfordshire. Three Counties took part in the main competition: Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire and one contender in the Women's Section Competition. The results were:

- 1st Place went to Paul Norris Buckinghamshire
- 2nd to Emily Lander of Berkshire
- 3rd to Tjark Andrews of Oxfordshire.

In the Women's Section

- 1st Place went to Many Glidon of Hertfordshire.

Oxfordshire RBL wish to thank all the Competitors, their support and especially all the adjudicating and officiating members that made the competition the success it was. Well done everyone.



### **Honours and Awards**

The Chair has the greatest of pleasure that she is able to announce that following a successful nomination for Mr Andrew Bowes (County Treasurer) has been awarded a Royal British Legion Gold Badge. This is in recognition of his outstanding support that has been the cornerstone of Oxfordshire County's management and administration within the Royal British Legion. Andrew has provided steadfast leadership under five County Chairs, each relying on his exceptional expertise, deep institutional knowledge, and unwavering enthusiasm. Above all, Andrew embodies the Legion's motto, "Service not Self". His unwavering commitment, professionalism, and achievements have profoundly impacted every branch and member of the Royal British Legion in Oxfordshire. In recognition of this remarkable dedication, a Gold Badge is not only deserved but is the most fitting expression of our deep esteem and gratitude for all that Andrew has given to the Royal British Legion and the Oxfordshire Branches. Lynda Atkins has indicated that as National Chair and one of the former County Chairs to have benefited from his support that she would like to present Andrew with his Gold Badge at the Turning of the Page Ceremony in Christ Church Oxford on 2 May 26. You are invited to attend the ceremony where following the award will be made. Andrew has been closely associated with the organising the event and supporting veterans would be a very fitting environment. I hope you can join the Chair and the County Committee in celebrating Andrews award.

### **Voting in this year's RBL Elections**

Civica Election Services has now distributed a candidate booklet and ballot papers to branches. This is a great opportunity for members to have a say on RBL's governance by electing some key leadership roles. Please hold a branch general meeting where members can come together to consider candidates for Trustees and Membership Council representatives (where applicable). Voting is open from 2 March – 9 April for four Trustee roles and the West Midlands Membership Council elections. The voting window for Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland Membership Council election is open from 16 March – 23 April

## **Nomination of Festival of Remembrance Standard Bearers**

This year's Festival of Remembrance will take place at the Royal Albert Hall on Saturday, 8 November 2026. Each county / district is kindly asked to submit three Standard Bearer (SB) nominations, listed in priority order (1–2–3). Youth SBs may be included, but this must be clearly indicated at the time of submission. Due to a maximum capacity of 100 SBs, not all nominees will be selected. However, all submissions will contribute to a reserve list to ensure broad representation across counties and districts. Nomination priority should be given to SBs who have not attended previously or who have not attended for some time.

Branches/CSBs in Oxfordshire are to apply via email to the County Chair- [Oxfordshire.Chair@RBL.Community](mailto:Oxfordshire.Chair@RBL.Community) who will coordinate with the County Parade Marshall the requests for attendance before submitting to the single points of contact by the 07 Apr 26

### **Information Required for Each Nominee**

Please provide the following details ***no later than 1800 hrs on Monday, 6 April 2026:***

- First name
- Last name
- Email address
- Representing County/District/Branch

## *Roll of Honour*



- **Late Patrick Ronald - Royal Air Force** – the funeral was held on 13 Feb 26 at Banbury Crematorium.
- **Late Don Belcher - formerly of Chalgrove Branch and Chalgrove PAO** - the funeral was held on 20 Feb 26 in Somerset.
- **Late William Dobson - formerly Royal Ordnance Army Corps** - the funeral was held on 03 Mar 26 at Christ Church Henley on Thames.
- **Late John Colgrove - formerly Royal Air Force and Benson and District Branch** - the funeral was held on 06 Mar 26 at the Memoria South Oxfordshire Memorial Park Garford,
- **Late Brian Alan Tiptree - 7th Bn King's Shropshire Light Infantry and Henley on Thames Branch** - the funeral was held on 06 Mar 26 at the Reading Crematorium.

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*1 - Keep updated with RBL Oxfordshire information at  
<https://counties.britishlegion.org.uk/counties/oxfordshire>*

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## Oxfordshire Veterans Group



**Empowering Oxfordshire Veterans**

Associated With Changing Lives  
Supporting veterans, reservists and their families.  
email: [oxfordshireveterans@gmail.com](mailto:oxfordshireveterans@gmail.com)

Providing comprehensive welfare support and community engagement for veterans in Oxfordshire with a focus on health, benefits, and well-being.

**We Meet**

**Veterans Coffee Morning**  
3rd Friday of the month @ Barton Neighborhood Centre, Underhill Circus, Barton, OX3 9LS

**Veterans Brunch**  
1st Saturday of the month @ Abingdon British Legion Club, 25 Spring Road, Abingdon, OX14 1AH