

The Royal British Legion
The Royal County of Berkshire
and Vale of White Horse

COUNTY CIRCULAR
NOVEMBER 2016

LEST WE FORGET

Brigadier M C Thursday-Pelham OBE
County Vice President

Jag Cook,
Secretary Blewbury Branch

Our deepest sympathies go to their family and friends

BRANCH SECRETARIES:

Please bring these items to your members' attention and display this circular where your members can read it.

LEGION STRATEGY FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS – MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

Dear all,

Yesterday the Board of Trustees met to discuss our proposed strategy and aims for the Legion for the next five years and our planned budget for next year.

Inspired by those we support, our aim is to offer the breadth, depth and quality of service they deserve. We cannot do this on our own. There is huge public support for our Armed Forces.

In response, our purpose is to be at the heart of a national network that supports our Armed Forces through thick and thin – ensuring their unique contribution is never forgotten. Our strategy follows simply from this. Central to our strategy is collaboration between members, volunteers, staff and our many partners.

Today I am delighted to let -

After the remembrance period is complete we will share more detail of the strategy so that we can all gain a shared understanding of our purpose and plans and begin to understand what the strategy will mean for us as members, volunteers and staff.

I know that many of you have been working hard for weeks and months to get ready for remembrance and the launch of the Poppy Appeal on Thursday 27 October. Thank you to everyone for all your work. I hope your appeal and your commemorations go well and I look forward to sharing with you all our plans in the near future.

Best regards,
Charles Byrne
Director General

POPPY APPEAL FIGURES FOR YEAR 2015-2016

Berkshire: £944,782.82

National:: £44.599M

COUNTY FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE 5 NOVEMBER

The County Festival of Remembrance will be held on Saturday 5 November at Waingels College, Woodley, Reading. RG5 4RF.

Tickets are £12.00 each. Please contact the MSO regarding tickets.

ARMED FORCES RACEDAY and BERSKIRE POPPY LAUNCH

For those of you who were able to attend the Armed Forces Raceday at Newbury on Saturday 22 October I hope you enjoyed the day and found it worth attending. I would like to thank those Legion members, in particular, who turned out to work on the day, be they as standard bearers, stall minders or money counters, amongst other tasks. Some of you had to endure some pretty cold conditions, while others were busy counting money until long after racing had finished. There was also a good deal of work carried out before the event as well but it all seems to have been worthwhile. By good luck the mist lifted sufficiently to allow the arrival of the helicopters at the start of the Poppy Launch which ran bang on time. Several non-Legion members I spoke to commented on how moving and appropriate the ceremony was. The support from the Army and the RAF was superb and the cadets did an excellent job with their collecting buckets. You will be pleased to know that £6,979.35 was raised for the Poppy Appeal, but more than this we highlighted the profile of the Legion within the Royal County and the Vale of White Horse.



Thank you all

David
County Poppy Appeal Co-ordinator & President

Drew

WOMEN'S SECTION UPDATE

Following positive and constructive discussions, the joint Working Group of representatives of the Women's Section and of the Board of Trustees of The Royal British Legion submitted a plan for the modernisation of The Women's Section to the Board of Trustees on Thursday 20 October.

We are delighted to announce that this plan, having been agreed by the Central Committee of the Women's Section, has been approved by the Board.

We look forward to working together, through the existing Working Group, to develop the necessary procedures and bye-laws that will enable the transition to take place on or before 01 October 2017.

We are happy that, having listened to concerns from all aspects of membership, both in the main part of The Royal British Legion and in the Women's Section, the Legion has achieved an amicable solution that will enable both parties to move forwards as one whilst retaining the unique identity of the Women's Section.

The key areas approved are set out below and will guide the modernisation of the Women's Section, and its inclusion in the governance structures of The Royal British Legion, commencing on or before 01 October 2017.

- The Royal British Legion Women's Section membership will abide by the governance arrangements of The Royal British Legion, and shall be accountable to the Membership Council, to which it shall be entitled to appoint one member.
- The Section will be called The Royal British Legion Women's Section.
- The Royal British Legion Women's Section will retain its National Status.
- The Royal British Legion Women's Section will retain its National Standard.
- The ceremonial dress of the Women's Section will also be retained.
- The Chairman of The Royal British Legion Women's Section will remain on the Board of Trustees.
- The Chairman of The Royal British Legion Women's Section will continue to lay a wreath at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday until November 2018, after which one wreath will be laid by The Royal British Legion National President on behalf of the whole organisation.
- The accounting and funding practices of The Royal British Legion Women's Section shall follow Royal British Legion practice.
- The membership fees will be aligned to those of The Royal British Legion by 01 October 2019.
- The Royal British Legion Women's Section Central Committee will continue to operate sub-committees for welfare, conference and finance and the Section's schemes will be administered by the Royal British Legion Central Grants team.
- The Royal British Legion Women's Section Branches will be eligible to attend and participate in Annual Conference, and from 2018 onwards a member of the Women's Section will be able to stand for election to the National Conference Committee.
- The next Annual Conference of the Women's Section will take place in April 2017 as usual. Subsequent Annual Meetings of the Women's Section will be of a duration of no more than one day, and will be held in the time period between November and February to enable any motions or nominations to be submitted at least 13 weeks before The Royal British Legion Annual Conference.

We would like to thank all those who have made positive contributions to the discussions surrounding the modernisation of The Women's Section. We thank you for your patience while these have been ongoing, and we look forward to the successful implementation of the plan.

Kind regards,

Terry Whittles
National Chairmen

Marilyn Humphry
National Chairman Women's Section

STANDARD BEARERS COMPETITION 2016

The results of the Standard Bearers Competition held on 9 October are:

RBL

- 1st Ron Grace, Newbury
- 2nd Andy Gale, Tilehurst
- 3rd John North, Lambourn

Youth

Miss Emily Lander

Women's Section

- 1st Miss Victoria Moxon
- 2nd Miss Helen Mannerings
- 3rd Mrs Helen Lander

Well done to all the competitors and thank you to the Judges, Marshalls, Scrutineers and Hungerford Branch for organising the venue and providing the refreshments prior to the competition.

AROUND THE EDGE WALK

Three members from Tilehurst Branch completed their part of the Around the Edge Walk and raised almost £800.

Colin Edwards, Chris Gunston & Rodney Payne completed the 10.8 mile walk from Goring bridge to Caversham bridge. The weather was fair and the walk took just over 4 hours with 2 rest stops.



MEMBERSHIP

The renewal process is well underway and over 162,293 members have already successfully renewed. Reminder letters will be sent out on or after 15 November. Branches please check the payments received on MAP so you can monitor those who have not renewed and offer assistance with the renewal process if required. Remember that the lists are updated once a week so there may be up to 7 days between the payment being cleared and the record showing as fully paid on MAP. Please bear this in mind when speaking with your members.

Please remember that the only Membership Application Forms you can use are the printed double sided forms with LIVE ON and the RBL emblem at the top left of the page. You can get copies of the form from Poppy Appeal either by emailing poppymembership@britishlegion.org.uk or telephoning 01622 795801. You should destroy any other membership application forms you are holding including electronic copies. If you have a Membership Secretary do please pass this information onto them.

BRANCH ACCOUNTS – DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT 30 SEPTEMBER 2016

Thank you to the Treasurers and Branches who have sent in their accounts. There are four Branches still to submit accounts and the MSO will contact these Branches directly.

COUNTY HANDBOOKS

Handbooks have been printed and will be sent out to Branches. It is realised that some of the information will change after the Branch AGM's. These handbooks are produced free of charge to the County.

COUNTY AWARDS COMMITTEE

We are fast approaching the time of the County Conference and I ask that if you were presented with a Trophy at this year's Conference in January could you please return it to County by the middle of November so we can get them checked out for any repairs and get them cleaned and engraved. Thanking you in advance for your cooperation in this matter.

BRANCH MS1 FORM AND MS1 B STANDARD BEARER FITNESS DECLARATION

This years MS1 Form was sent out with the previous circular. If you require a printed or electronic copy please contact the MSO. The deadline for receipt is 31 December but if Branches can submit them as soon as possible after their AGM's it would be greatly appreciated. The database needs to be updated by early January for any election information which will be sent direct to Branches.

Regarding the MS1 B Standard Bearer declaration, please send this to the MSO and not to the Ceremonial Officer as previously advised.

COUNTY CONFERENCE

If you wish to send a delegate to County Conference or to Annual Conference in May your audited Branch Accounts must have been received at County Office by 30 September and your MS1 must be received by 31 December 2016. Delegate Applications for County Conference must be received by no later than 30 November

The guest speaker will be Anny Reid, who is a trustee of the Legion. There will be time for a question and answer session. Any questions should be submitted to the MSO in advance, no later than 7 December please to give her time to obtain answers.

ROYAL CHARTER VERSION 11, 1 OCTOBER 2017

The new version of the Royal Charter is enclosed and is also available on the RBL website www.britishlegion.org.uk. and on the MAP.

SALVATION ARMY FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE 13 NOVEMBER

All Members and Branch Standards are invited to attend the Salvation Army Festival of Remembrance on Sunday 13 November at 6.15pm at the Reading Citadel on Castle Hill roundabout, Ansty Road, Reading RG1 7JR. Free parking is available in the Advantage building opposite the Citadel, entrance to the car park is in Coley Place, Castle Hill.

BANCH COMMUNITY SUPPORT

This is now live and fully accessible with Office 365. Branches who have registered will be sent their log in details and passwords by the MSO.

ELECTION TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Four members of the Board of Trustees retire at National Conference in 2017. Their replacements will serve a three year term (which expires after Conference in 2020). Branch nominations for the four posts must be submitted to the director General by 20 January 2017. If more than four names are submitted Branches will then be balloted.

The documentation about the elections is enclosed.

APPLICATIONS FOR POSITION OF NATIONAL PARADE MARSHAL

A letter is enclosed from the National Chairman inviting application from current RBL Parade Marshals to become the National Parade Marshal Designate in February 2017 and subsequently the National Parade Marshal immediately following Annual Conference in May 2018 for a period of 3 years.

SWANBOURNE ENDEAVOUR 23 OCTOBER 2016



The Area Manager, the Herts Advice and Information Officer and two of the Advice and Information Team Leaders children took part in the Swanbourne Endeavour. The RBL is beneficiary charity of this not-for-profit mini tough mudder. Anyone wishing to donate to the event will be greatly appreciated and you can donate directly to their fundraising page - https://www.justgiving.com/Mark-Collins40?utm_source=Sharethis&utm_medium=fundraisingpage&utm_content=Mark-Collins40&utm_campaign=pfp-email.



ARBORFIELD BRANCH POPPY DANCE

The Arborfield Branch held a Poppy Appeal dance on Saturday 8th October where £770.20p was raised for the Appeal



POP-IN CENTRES NOW SELLING SOME ITEMS FROM POPPY SHOP

Following overwhelming feedback from the Area Teams and visitors to our Pop-in Centres requesting Legion merchandise, we ran a successful trial for almost 12 months in our Newcastle Pop-In Centre and, having overcome some last minute technology related issues that caused a few delays, I am delighted to announce a merchandising capacity in all 16 Pop-In Centres from 25 October 2016. We will now be able to retail around 25 of the best-selling items from the Poppy Shop from each of our Pop-Ins. We know that throughout the year, and particularly over the Poppy Appeal, a high percentage of people coming into our Pop-Ins are interested in purchasing the items on display.

We have introduced this facility to ensure that anybody coming into a Pop-In Centre who wants to purchase the merchandise they see on display is able to do so, and so staff can make the most of this to help those that visit us have an even more positive experience of the Pop-In, and of the Legion.

The primary purpose of our Pop-In Centres is, and will remain, the provision of advice and information to our beneficiaries. They also provide a high street setting for our supporters, members and the general public to engage positively with the Legion. We will ensure that regular reviews of merchandising from Pop-Ins take place and that our ability to retail is used continually to enhance the experience for all those coming into our Pop-Ins.

Antony Baines
Director of Operations

Footnote: The total sales for Pop In Centres in the first week were £13,436.

POPPY PODS

In July this year The Duchess of Cornwall opened the first ever “Poppy Pod Village” in Brockenhurst, New Forest. The village consists of 20 wooden camping pods which are solar powered and wheelchair accessible.

The pods provide free residential holiday facilities for service personnel, veterans and their families which are free to use during school holidays and weekends. Each Poppy Pod is named after a battle from Amiens to Ypres and pine seeds from Gallipoli have been planted nearby. The Poppy Pods were funded by grants from the Armed Forces Community Covenant (£250,000) and the Brockenhurst Branch of the Legion (£50,000).

Become a Poppy Pod Member by phoning the centre on 01590 623160 to pay a £15 fee (this covers you for a 3 year membership). For more details: <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/tilebarn/tilebarn-poppypods.htm>



COUNT THEM IN CAMPAGIN

Support is continuing to grow for questions concerning membership of the Armed Forces Community to be added to the next census.

- 216 MPs backing the campaign, passing the threshold of one third of the House of Commons. This support has come from across the political spectrum, and across the United Kingdom e.g. 43/59 Scottish MPs, 19/40 MPs in Wales, and 10/18 MPs in Northern Ireland.
- 97 local authorities have either passed council motions declaring their support for the campaign, or will shortly pass a motion of the full council
- The Ministry of Defence, Department for Work and Pensions, Department of Health, NHS, Local Government Association and Welsh Local Government Association have all publicly pledged their support for the campaign.
- Alongside Poppyscotland, the following military charities have pledged their support for the campaign: Help for Heroes; RAF Benevolent Fund; Forces in Mind Trust; Forces Pension Society; CAIS/Change Step; British Forces Resettlement Services; Army Families Federation; Navy Families Federation; RAF Families Federation; Blesma; SSAFA; Walking with the Wounded; Combat Stress and RBLI.
- We are also being supported by The King's Centre for Military Health Research; Royal College of Psychiatrists and Northumbria Universities' Hub for Veteran and Military Family Research

If you are on social media you can give the campaign a plug using the hastag #CountThemIn.

Please continue to spread the word about the campaign.

Branch Enclosures

Royal Charter
National Parade Marshal letter from National Chairman

(only hard copy recipients, already sent to electronic recipients)
Election to Board of Trustees documentation.
Certificate of Public Products Liability Insurance 2016 to 2017

Membership Support Officer:

Jennifer Strange
T: 0118 9762362
E: jstrange@britishlegion.org.uk

Welfare

Rodger Cartwright, Case Officer
Ann Bethell & Victoria Gornall-King
Advice & Information Officers
T: 0808 8028080
E: Southeastmidlands@britishlegion.org.uk
Knowledge base:
<http://support.britishlegion.org.uk/>

Community Fundraiser:

Samantha Hickton
E: shickton@britishlegion.org.uk
T: 07802 801663

Regional Clubs Relationship Manager, Midlands

Pauline Swann,
T: 07970 375421
E: pswann@britishlegion.org.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2016

November	5	County Festival of Remembrance	Waingels College, Woodley 7.30pm
	12	Festival of Remembrance	Albert Hall, London
	13	Remembrance Sunday	
	13	Salvation Army Festival	6.15pm The Citadel, Castle Hill roundabout, Reading.
	26	Women's Section AGM	2pm Newbury RBL Club

2017

January	21	County Conference	11.00am Burghfield Community Sports Association
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Dates of County Committee meetings held at 7.00pm at the County Office, Eversley Road, Arborfield. Reading RB2 9PR

17 November
26 January 2017

If members wish to attend please advise Jennifer Strange, Membership Support Officer.

Standard Bearer Training

The Sunday morning drills have finished for the year and will start up again around April next year.

In the meantime if any Standard Bearers require any guidance the Ceremonial Team are very happy to help. Please contact please contact the County Ceremonial Officer, Mr Phil Shaw tel. 07971 463653. Email; philshaw59@gmail.com