

MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK PART 4: BRANCHES

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1. General Provisions

- 1.1. The government and management of the branch shall be entrusted to the Branch Officers and the remainder of the Committee of whom four (4) shall form a quorum. They shall exercise a controlling oversight and act upon the affairs of the branch in accordance with the Royal Charter.
- 1.2. Branches must act upon the instructions issued by the Board of Trustees, the Membership Council and the County/District Committee.
- 1.3. Branches are to elect a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary from their branch members, to serve for one (1), two (2), or three (3) years, as decided by vote at the Branch Annual General Meeting and in accordance with the Branch Bye-Laws. This does not prevent a member holding office within a branch for as many years as they are elected.
- 1.4. The Branch Committee may appoint a President of the branch to serve as many terms, in three year terms, as decided by the Committee. The Branch President is an Officer of the branch but is not a member of the Branch Committee. He/she is entitled to speak but not to propose, second or vote at Branch Committee or general meetings.
- 1.5. Branches are also to elect a further minimum of three (3) other members to serve on the Committee.
- 1.6. In line with national policy, if vacancies arise for post of Branch Vice-President these should not be filled unless there are extenuating circumstances for doing so. Where this occurs, appointments for Branch Vice-Presidents are for a one year term, for as many terms as required. Branch Vice-Presidents are not Officers of the Branch Committee and are not entitled to attend meetings unless invited to do so. Branch Vice-Presidents are not entitled to propose, second or vote at branch meetings.
- 1.7. The Branch Committee members must follow in every respect the duties and responsibilities as outlined by the Board of Trustees and the Membership Council and adhere to all Legion policies and procedures. They must serve the interests of the Charity at all times.
- 1.8. Should the branch have an associated club, Branch Officers must not serve as officers of that Club Committee as this could place individuals in a position of conflict of interest and potential breach of trust, but they may be in attendance.
- 1.9. The tenant or representatives of the tenant of properties held in trust by the branch are not eligible for election as Officers or Committee members onto the Branch Committee due to the conflict of interest between Landlord and Tenant.
- 1.10. Employees of tenants occupying Legion properties are not to serve as members of an associated Legion Branch Committee.
- 1.11. Health and safety guidance in relation to Branch properties not occupied by a Club or other tenant under a licence agreement can be obtained from the Legion's Health and Safety team at Head Office. Branches in this situation, that then lease out their property for events or to other organisations for short periods of time, have some legal duties. They should have a copy of the latest Health and Safety policy and any other relevant documents, comply with legislation and

complete the necessary risk assessments. Advice on this can also be obtained from the Legion's Health and Safety team at Head Office. They are also liable for inspections by enforcing authorities, for example Environmental Health Officers.

- 1.12. A Branch Committee will meet at least quarterly if it is properly to fulfil its obligations.
- 1.13. A branch should hold Branch General Meetings regularly, and must hold a Branch Annual General Meeting (AGM) once a year.
- 1.14. The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the branch and the Branch Committee at which he is present. In his absence the Vice-Chairman will preside. In the absence of both Officers the meeting shall elect a Chairman from the members present.
- 1.15. The Chairman, or other member in the Chair, shall be entitled to vote on any matter. In the event of an equal number of votes being cast on any matter, the motion shall be 'not carried'. In the event of a tied vote for an election to Office, the members will be invited to vote again by secret ballot, and if this procedure still produces a tie, the matter shall be decided by lot. There shall not be a "casting vote" from the Chairman.
- 1.16. No Officer or Committee member of the branch shall be in arrears with his/her subscription, and will have to stand down if this occurs.
- 1.17. A branch may send a branch delegate to Annual Conference and the Annual Meeting of County/District Conference, as long as they have complied with the requirements of the branch account return and Branch Committee appointments return. The MS1 form must be fully completed.
- 1.18. The number of delegates a branch may nominate to meetings of County/District Conference and Annual Conference is limited to one (1). Any branch with a total of more than three hundred (300) Members and Life Members, as recorded on the national database at the date of receipt by the County/District of the application for delegate credentials, may send a second delegate. Branches with more than one thousand (1,000) Members and Life Members may send one additional delegate for every five hundred (500) Members and Life Members over one thousand (1,000).
- 1.19. A branch may submit Motions and Charter Motions and nominations for consideration at the Annual Meeting of County/District Conference as well as nominate candidates for National Officers, National Conference Committee, Membership Council and for the Board of Trustees as long as it submitted the current MS1 form and latest year end accounts on time.
- 1.20. A branch which is dissatisfied with any decision of its County/District Committee relating exclusively to that branch may, within twenty-eight (28) days after receiving notice of this decision, raise a complaint, in accordance with the procedures prescribed by the Membership Council, giving particulars of the decision and of the grounds of the complaint. The Branch Secretary must, at the same time, send a copy of the complaint to the County/District Committee.

2. Functional Provisions

- 2.1. All correspondence shall bear in clear, legible characters the branch's title, address, a statement that the Legion is a registered charity, the Legion's Registered Charity Number 219279 and the branch number as issued by Head Office. The signatories of all correspondence shall clearly designate their appointment in legible, prominent characters. No one is authorised to use Legion headed paper in a manner which may be misleading, or may give the recipient the impression that they have a contract with the corporate body of The Royal British Legion.
- 2.2. Each branch is to ensure that it has been allocated a geographical area of responsibility by the County/District in which to carry out its core functions of membership, welfare and fundraising with the exception of National branches.
- 2.3. Each branch is to appoint, at the Committee Meeting immediately following the AGM, a Welfare Committee or Welfare Representative to undertake welfare work in the branch's area of responsibility. Accredited caseworkers should ideally be included on the Branch Welfare Committee where possible.
- 2.4. Each branch is to actively support the Poppy Appeal arranging for collections to take place in their area of responsibility.
- 2.5. Use of electronic equipment
 - 2.5.1. It is desirable that all Branches are electronically connected which in turn makes for both rapid and cost effective communication. The preferred option is that the Branch officers who are computer literate use their personal computers for Legion business and claim the additional expenses occurred from the branch administrative fund if they wish.
 - 2.5.2. Where a branch has a branch office a desktop computer and printer may be purchased and shared by all branch officers and caseworkers using individual accounts. In this case the full expense of the desktop, printer, broadband, and all the consumables is permitted.
 - 2.5.3. Where a branch does not have a branch office, a laptop purchase is not to be considered unless the computer is accessible to more than one person and the broadband is already available to the user at no additional cost to the Branch. In this case printers are not easily portable and may present a problem if printing is a requirement.
 - 2.5.4. All property so purchased must be registered on the Branch Property register and if mobile a current signature for the holder obtained

3. Membership Provisions

- 3.1. Branches must consider all applications for membership and maintain a branch membership register. The Branch Committee will ensure that any failure to renew membership is pursued and the action taken recorded in the branch minutes. All new members are to be encouraged to pay their membership fee by Direct Debit Subscription Payment (DDSP).
- 3.2. Branches are entitled to require their Members, excluding their Youth Members, to pay an annual branch subscription in addition to the membership fee. They must

ensure that the branch subscription fee is used for administrative purposes only and not for benefit of members or other objects of The Royal British Legion.

3.3. Branch Committees must hear members' complaints.

4. Financial Provisions

4.1. Branches are to maintain a receipts-and-payments type branch account.

4.2. Branches will have their branch accounts audited or examined each year within three (3) months after the close of the Field Financial Year. The branch accounts return pro forma is to be submitted by 30 September each year.

4.3. Branches are to provide access to their branch accounts to any person so authorised by the Board of Trustees.

4.4. Branches must not raise funds using the Legion's name for any non-Legion purpose.

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

FORM MS1 – BRANCH INFORMATION

All sections of this form must be completed. Section 1 of this form must be completed by the Branch Secretary after the Branch Annual General Meeting. The Branch Welfare Committee Secretary must complete Section 2. Please complete this form **in capitals** and return to the Membership Support Administrator.

BRANCH:			
BRANCH CODE: BR			
CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS:			
EMAIL ADDRESS :		WEBSITE:	
BRANCH MEETINGS: Monthly/Quarterly /Other If other, specify:	DAY:	TIME:	VENUE:
SECTION 1 BRANCH COMMITTEE OFFICERS AND APPOINTMENTS for the year ending 30 September 20__			
PRESIDENT	Membership number	Name:	
		Telephone:	
		Email:	
CHAIRMAN	Membership number	Name:	
		Telephone:	
		Email:	
VICE CHAIRMAN	Membership number	Name:	
		Telephone:	
		Email:	
SECRETARY	Membership number	Name:	
		Telephone:	
		Email:	
TREASURER	Membership number	Name:	
		Telephone:	
		Email:	
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Membership number	Name:	
		Telephone:	
		Email:	
POPPY APPEAL ORGANISER	Membership number	Name:	
		Telephone:	
		Email:	
STANDARD BEARER	Membership number	Name:	
		Telephone:	
		Email:	

SECTION 2		
BRANCH WELFARE COMMITTEE OFFICERS for the year ending 30 September 20__		
CHAIRMAN	Membership number	Name:
		Telephone:
		Email:
VICE CHAIRMAN	Membership number	Name:
		Telephone:
		Email:
SECRETARY	Membership number	Name:
		Telephone:
		Email:
TREASURER	Membership number	Name:
		Telephone:
		Email:
If a Branch is unable to form a Welfare Committee it must appoint a Branch Welfare Representative.		
BRANCH WELFARE REPRESENTATIVE	Membership number	Name:
		Telephone:
		Email:

SECTION 3	
DELEGATE(S) TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF COUNTY/DISTRICT CONFERENCE	
NAME	Membership number
<i>Add names as appropriate</i>	

SECTION 4		
The individuals named on this form as Officers/Members of the Branch Committee and Branch Welfare Committee were duly elected/appointed.		
Branch Secretary		
NAME	SIGNATURE:	DATE:
Branch Welfare Committee Secretary		
NAME:	SIGNATURE:	DATE:

SECTION 5
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY OF APPOINTED BRANCH OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS
<p>Where a Branch Officer or Committee Member is appointed during the Legion year the agreement as under section 6 of this MS1 must be read, agreed and minuted at the first meeting of the new appointee: "I acknowledge my responsibility as Branch Officer/Committee Member and agree to follow in every respect the duties and responsibilities as contained in the Royal Charter and the Membership Handbook and as required by the Board of Trustees, the Membership Council and the Charity Act. I also agree to my contact details being published in the County/District Directory or Handbook (hard copy and digitally). I will be vigilant to serve the interests of the Royal British Legion at all times."</p>

**THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION STANDARD BEARER AND STANDARD BEARER JUDGES
PHYSICAL FITNESS CONFIRMATION**

SECTION A – STANDARD BEARER/STANDARD BEARER JUDGE

Full Name: _____

I acknowledge that:

1. During Competitions and Parades the Royal British Legion will make every effort to ensure my safety. However, as with any physical activity, I acknowledge that there are health risks and a minimum level of physical fitness required.
2. Chapter 6 of the Ceremonial Handbook stipulates that a Standard Bearer should be “physically fit and well able to handle the Standard under all conditions”.
In signing this form I am confirming that, in accordance with Chapter 6 of the Ceremonial handbook, I have read and understood the responsibilities and risks associated with Standard Bearing and Judging, including but not limited to:
 - Standard Bearing/Judging is a physical activity and so I must ensure I am both physically fit and strong enough to carry a Standard in all reasonable weather conditions.
 - As a Standard Bearer I will be expected to be able to carry a Standard which is eight foot long and up to 3.5kg in weight (in wet or windy weather conditions Standards may become heavier and/or difficult to hold upright).
 - Some actions such as Dips may put a strain on the carriers back and shoulders.
 - A Standard Bearer Judge may be required to remain on their feet for periods of up to three hours.
 - Competitions and Parades can reach National level which may prove demanding and stressful for some.
3. If I am in receipt of any disability related allowance or benefit I must inform the appropriate authorities of my intention to undertake the role of Standard Bearer and/or Judge as this may affect my eligibility status.
4. If I am over the age of eighty-five I am not fully covered by Legion Personal Accidental or Public Liability Insurance whilst undertaking Legion duties.*

In signing this form I confirm that, to my knowledge, I have no physical conditions or disability that could potentially put myself or others at harm whilst performing my duties as a Standard Bearer/Standard Bearer Judge. If I have, or suspect I have, a health problem which means I may not be able to fulfil all duties required of the role safely, I undertake to inform the appropriate Ceremonial Officer in charge of the Competition/Parade.

Standard Bearer/Judge Signature: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: ____/____/____

SECTION B – CEREMONIAL OFFICER

I understand that in accordance with paragraph 6.1.2. of the Ceremonial Handbook, I hereby affirm that to my knowledge, the above named Standard Bearer/Judge is in a physically fit state with no known disabilities which may put them or others at risk whilst they complete their duties at Legion events:

Ceremonial Officer Signature: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: ____/____/____

*In the Women’s Section the maximum age for Standard Bearers is eighty and Parade Marshals is seventy-five.

1. General

- 1.1. All members are recorded on a central database maintained at Head Office. All Branches receive a copy of the membership listing at membership renewal time in October each year. Electronic copies can be obtained through the Local Membership Officer (LMO). Your LMO will be either a Membership Support Officer (MSO).
- 1.2. At annual renewal, usually August through September, membership cards are printed for each cash-paying member and distributed to the respective branches. The branches should then issue those cards as receipts for subscriptions paid. The number of cash cards issued to each branch is recorded as a debit on the branch account which is maintained on the central database.
- 1.3. The amount paid for each membership card is called the Membership Fee. Branches may add to this an additional amount for administration known as the Branch Subscription Fee.
- 1.4. Head Office will send branches a Direct Debit subscription rates form annually in June. Branches must indicate on the form the amount of Branch Administration Fee that is to be added to the Affiliation Fee. The form is to be returned to the LMO when complete and by 15 July at the latest. Similarly clubs will be sent a DDSP Rates form annually in June where they must enter their club subscriptions. If the correct information is not returned in time, the database will not contain the correct information and members who pay by DDSP will be charged an incorrect amount.
- 1.5. Membership fees should be paid on the dates detailed in the Annual Timetable. Payments are via Direct Debit or by cheque. Membership fees are collected on behalf of the Board of Trustees and paid into the General Fund and are used to pay the costs of running Legion membership.
- 1.6. Branches are encouraged to register with their banks for Direct Debit (DD). This will enable cash to be transferred between the branch and Head Office. Branches in the Branch Funds Initiative (BFI) can choose to transfer the bulk payment of Affiliation Fees from the BFI to the appropriate membership account.
- 1.7. A member will continue to be a member so long as his name remains on the central database of members, provided that he has not resigned or died, and that his membership has not ended for failure to pay the membership fee or branch subscription or for other good reasons.
- 1.8. Any member whose membership fee or branch subscription is three (3) months in arrears will cease to be a member of that branch, and his name must be removed from the database of members.
- 1.9. If a member's status is questioned, his card of membership for the current Corporate Financial Year will provide sufficient evidence of membership.
- 1.10. A former member of the Legion may not claim back the fees, subscriptions or other money he has paid to the Legion except as a loan.

2. Membership Application

- 2.1. Branches will ensure that each new applicant for membership completes an application form. New members are to be encouraged to complete the direct debit instruction and pay by DDSP. UK tax-payers should complete the Gift Aid statement.

branches will retain the branch section of the application for their records and give the new member the receipt section.

- 2.2. Completed applications are to be sent to the MSO who will check the application for correct completion prior to sending it to the Central Data Input centre (CDI). Membership fees paid by cash payers will be recovered from the branch by DD and no cheques need to be sent during the year.
- 2.3. The accuracy of the database depends on the information received from branches. It is very important that the postal address and postcode are clearly stated on the Application Form. Incorrect information on the database is often caused by members failing to inform their branch or County/District of changes to their personal details.
- 2.4. The Secretary of the branch must inform the applicant within seven (7) days whether his application has been accepted or rejected. Membership will date from the day the Branch Committee decides to admit the applicant. An applicant may raise a complaint, in accordance with the Governing Regulations and procedures prescribed by the Membership Council, against rejection of an application for membership, giving the grounds for the complaint.
- 2.5. If the Membership Council later finds that someone was not eligible for membership or was admitted to a class of membership in error, it may terminate the membership at once or transfer the person to the correct class of membership.
- 2.6. An affiliation fee will be charged to the branch account as each cash membership card is issued during the Legion year. These fees will be shown on the account statements provided to all branches. Branches that are not registered for DD must pay all debit amounts by cheque within 21 days on receipt of their statement. DD branches will be notified of the date and amount to be debited from their bank account no less than two weeks prior to any transaction. Branches can also choose to have their debit amount paid by transfer from the BFI.
- 2.7. Membership fees for new cash members will be shown on regular statements sent to branches. These amounts should be paid by cheque by overseas branches, which are the only exceptions of the Legion policy that all branches pay by DD, within 21 days of receipt of a statement issued by Head Office showing a debit balance (DB). DD branches will be notified when a payment is due to be taken from their bank account.

3. Card Issue

- 3.1. Membership cards for cash payers are sent to branches in September. Branches are responsible for collection of all applicable fees prior to issuing of the Member card and any supplement information to members. Cards should never be issued unless payment is received as the card is the receipt for their subscriptions.
- 3.2. Direct Debit members, for whom the branch does not have to collect a Membership Fee or Branch Subscription, will not have their cards delivered to the branch. Their cards will be posted directly to their address as recorded on the central database.
 - 3.2.1. Cards sent directly to members (i.e. DD payers and Life Members) may not be returned for credit by the branch; this is because the branch was not charged for the initial card issue.

- 3.3. Each card issued to branches represents the value of the Membership Fee. The branch will be charged this amount for each card and must manage the card according to its monetary value.
 - 3.3.1. Life Members' cards are issued free of charge as a single issue, with no expiry date, at the end of the Legion Year in which they are awarded Life Membership of the Legion. Life Membership Cards are sent directly to the member. Life Membership is awarded by the National Chairman and cannot be allocated at Branch level.
- 3.4. Membership cards are issued on a One Card per Member, per Branch, per Legion Year basis. Replacement cards may be requested through the MSO via completion of Form MS13. An administration charge must be paid in advance before a replacement card will be issued. When ordering a replacement card the member's name and membership number are required. If a lost card is subsequently found, please do not return either card as no refund will be provided.
 - 3.4.1. Free "Proof of Membership" may be requested through the MSO via completion of Form MS13.
- 3.5. Branches will be credited for current membership cards returned before 1 February and unsigned by the member. A membership card which has been issued to the member cannot be returned for credit when members subsequently resign, transfer or die. Cards should be sent with a completed Form MS6 to the Central Data Input unit.
- 3.6. Although the last date for the return of unwanted membership cards for credit will be 1 February, branches should return cards which they are aware will not be issued as soon as possible.
- 3.7. All cards returned prior to 1 February will show as a credit on the Branch Affiliation fee account. No cards will be accepted for credit after the closing date of 1 February.
- 3.8. Branches are advised to send cards via First class post, preferably Registered/Signature post. Proof of Postage, available from Royal Mail, may be required should cards be lost in the post.

4. New Member Applications

- 4.1. Each new member application should be submitted to the MSO using the current application form only.
- 4.2. All new members will be issued their card direct to their home address.
- 4.3. From 1 October 2005 it is policy that all new and reinstated members should pay by Direct Debit by completing the Direct Debit Mandate instruction attached to the application form. Direct Debit is more efficient for the branch and for the Royal British Legion and lowers administrative costs significantly.
- 4.4. The branch should retain their own Membership records based on the details provided by the Member when they apply to join. Branches should not send any cheques or cash with applications as total fees will be collected by DD. Branches must ensure that personal information is stored in line with the Data Protection Act.

5. Transfers

- 5.1. Members may, if they wish, transfer to another branch by application to a branch that is willing to accept them. If they have paid all fees and subscriptions due to their current branch, they will not need to make any additional payment within that Corporate Financial Year.
- 5.2. A member may raise a complaint, in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Membership Council, against a rejection of his request to transfer to another branch.
- 5.3. No transfers are allowed from 1 August to 31 October. Any transfer request received during this time will be rejected and needs to be resubmitted after 31 October. This is due to the annual card renewal in October. The member's card will have already been produced and the branch will have been debited for it.
- 5.4. The member should hand their current paid-up membership card to the Branch Secretary of the branch they want to join. The Branch Secretary should complete Form MS7 and provide the member with the receipt included on the form. The rest of the form should be sent to the MSO with the member's card attached.
- 5.5. In the absence of a current card, "Proof of Membership" may be requested through the MSO via completion of Form MS13, or a new application form will need to be submitted, ensuring the Direct Debit Mandate instruction is completed if the member wishes to pay by DD. The member will then be enrolled as a new member of that branch, issued with a new card and the branch will incur a charge equivalent to the membership fee at that time for each paying member.
- 5.6. Both the old and new branch will be made aware of the changes via the Membership Changes Report.

6. Notification of Deceased Members

- 6.1. As soon as a branch is aware that a member is deceased, the MSO should be informed so that the database can be updated.
- 6.2. Every effort will be made to ensure that no further mail is sent to the member's address but one further copy of the Legion magazine may be delivered as these mailing lists are produced in advance of the publication date.
- 6.3. Membership cards should not be retrieved from relatives, but relatives should be advised, if possible, to cancel any direct debits which may be in force.
- 6.4. In any notification to the MSO always quote the membership number.

7. Branch Membership Fee Accounts

- 7.1. Affiliation Fees should be remitted to the MSO as soon as possible after branches receive their statement showing a debit balance. All Affiliation Fee debts, other than Membership Fee payments for new members, should be paid by 31 March. Failure to pay by this deadline will affect the branch's eligibility to send delegates to Annual Conference.
- 7.2. A continuous account is run on behalf of each branch. All credits and debits will be shown on this account and statements of their Affiliation Fee account will be issued to branches twice during the Legion year. A sample Branch Statement with a transaction key is available as part of this Handbook.

8. Direct Debits

8.1. Two types of Direct Debit are operated by the Legion and care should be taken not to confuse the two:

8.1.1. Direct Debit of Affiliation Fees: It is Legion policy that all branches (less overseas) should pay their Affiliation Fee in respect of their cash paying members by DD. Collection from the branch bank account will be made in the first week of March. Any branches not yet registered for Direct Debit should complete form MS3 and send it to their MSO.

8.1.2. Direct Debit Subscriptions Payment (DDSP) is the service offered to members to enable branch and club subscriptions (administration and joining fees) to be paid by Direct Debit. The Direct Debit mandate should be signed and dated by the applicant and should not be more than six months old when submitted.

9. Direct Debit Subscription Payment

9.1. It is Legion policy for all new and reinstated applicants from 1 October 2005 to pay by Direct Debit Subscription Payment.

9.1.1. No applicants will be denied membership if they are unable to pay by Direct Debit.

9.1.2. Members may change their method of payment from cash to DDSP at any time.

9.2. Branches and clubs should advise their MSO of subscription rates for the coming year no later than 15 July. Where this information is not provided it will be assumed that the branch subscription and club subscription remain unchanged from the previous year.

9.3. DDSP payments for existing members are collected in October. Subscriptions for new members paying by DDSP will be collected from their bank accounts four (4) to six (6) weeks after card issue. Members will be notified of the date and amount of collection when they receive their membership card.

9.4. Where the DDSP is recorded as having failed, i.e. a Direct Debit rejection, the member will be informed via post of the failure and reason. The member will be requested to complete a new Direct Debit mandate instruction to allow a second request for payment of subscriptions to be made.

9.4.1. The member will have 45 days to respond to this request. Failure to respond within the time limit will result in their membership being lapsed

9.4.2. A failed Direct Debit does not prevent the member from paying by DDSP in future years.

9.4.3. The member can opt to change their method of payment from Direct Debit to cash. The member must pay their outstanding balance, in cash, to their branch. The DD mandate will be cancelled in the central database and they will be listed as a cash payer.

9.5. The branch will be notified concurrently of their members DDSP failures via a DDSP Failures Report. Branches will be requested to assist in contacting their members to ensure they are aware of the failure and inform them of their options.

9.5.1. Where the branch is unable or unwilling to collect the subscriptions from the member where the DDSP has failed, the branch should notify Head Office so that the member can be lapsed. The branch will not receive a credit as they were not charged for the initial issue of the membership card.

9.6. Clubs are independently registered Industrial and Provident Societies licensed to use the Legion's name but are not part of the Charity. Therefore registration for DD by clubs is not obligatory. Only if clubs are registered and if we are informed of the rate of club membership, can we collect any club subscriptions and club joining fees.

9.6.1. Clubs may register for DD with their MSO so that the club subscriptions can be collected from the member's bank account and transferred to the club bank account, with the Membership Fee element of the subscription retained by Head Office. Registration is carried out using form MS8.

10. Gift Aid

10.1. Members who pay UK income tax at the basic rate (or higher) should complete a Gift Aid declaration, if they have not already done so at the point of joining. The declaration is on all card carriers and may also be obtained from your MSO, Branch Secretary or Head Office. Gift Aid costs nothing to members but will enable the Legion to claim back from the Inland Revenue the income tax which has been paid by members on the amount of their Membership fees.

10.2. Only one declaration is required per member. The branch cannot use old Gift Aid declarations from previous membership forms as they are not approved for use. It is essential that branches promote Gift Aid. Additional funds received through this action assist the Legion in its work at no cost to our members.

11. Data Protection

11.1. The Royal British Legion needs to collect and use certain types of information about the people with whom it deals in order to operate. These include current, past and prospective members, beneficiaries, Legion employees, volunteers, supporters and others with whom the Legion conducts its charitable business. We have a legal duty under the Data Protection Act 1998 to prevent such information falling into the wrong hands.

11.2. We regard the lawful and fair treatment of personal information by The Royal British Legion as important to the achievement of our objectives and to the success of our operations. This is also essential to maintain confidence between those with whom we deal and ourselves. The Royal British Legion will therefore ensure that our organisation treats personal information lawfully and correctly through appropriate management and strict application of our policies and procedures. To this end, we fully endorse and adhere to the Data Protection Principles, as set out in the Data Protection Act 1998.

11.3. In accordance with Data Protection Act 1998 Branch Officers are responsible for the security and confidentiality of any membership data received from Head Office or from an individual. Access to this information should be limited.

11.4. In addition to our commitment, the Data Protection Act gives more extensive rights in relation to the information we hold. Personal data and sensitive data should not

be obtained, held, used or disclosed unless the individual has given consent. The Royal British Legion interprets 'consent' to mean that the data subject has been informed of the intended processing and has agreed to the processing freely of his/her own accord.

11.5. If a person prefers that we stop using their information until we have advised about our services, or if they feel that we are using the information about them in any way which they believe may cause them (or another person) substantial damage or distress, they can write to us at the address below to request that their records are no longer used in this way.

11.6. A person has the right to access information we hold about them (apart from information which we may be obliged to withhold because they concern other people as well as them). To obtain a copy of your personal information you must make a request in writing which you can send to:

Data Protection Officer

The Royal British Legion

199 Borough High Street

London SE1 1AA

Or send an email to: dataprotection@britishlegion.org.uk

11.7. There is a processing fee of £10 for all requests (as permitted by the Data Protection Act), and we will require proof of identity. We aim to reply as promptly as we can and, in any case, within the statutory timeframe of 40 calendar days.

12. Legion Magazine

12.1. Members may report non-receipt of their copy of the Legion Magazine through either their local Branch, the MSO or direct to Head Office. Members should quote their name, address and membership number.

12.2. Households with more than one member may wish to cancel one or more of their copies of the magazine to save the Legion money. Members may inform the MSO or Head Office to have their Magazine cancelled. Members should quote their name, address and membership number.

12.3. Members who wish to read the Legion Magazine digitally can do so at www.legion-magazine.co.uk and may opt out from receiving the Magazine at home through either their branch, the MSO or direct to Head Office. Members should quote their name, address and membership number.

September	<p>Listing of members sent to all branches together with the membership cards of cash payers. Also included will be a list of those members paying by DDSP on 1 October, a Card Issue Invoice with a breakdown of the cash cards issued and Affiliation Fee due to be paid by the branch.</p> <p>Branches should verify member details and notify their MSO of any changes or errors.</p> <p>Life and Youth Membership cards and cards for DDSP members will be sent directly to the members and are not included in the invoice.</p>
October	<p>Branch and club subscriptions collected by Head Office from those members paying by DDSP.</p>
November	<p>Successfully collected branch and club subscriptions paid by DDSP credited to branch and club bank accounts.</p> <p>Club DDSP payers list sent to clubs.</p>
1 February	<p>Final return date for non-renewed/unissued membership cards. Cards returned after this date will be processed, but no credit given. Branches requiring a credit for late card returns must submit a case in writing to Membership Services through their MSO.</p>
February	<p>Notification to all branches confirming the amount to be collected by direct debit during the first week of March. The amount to be debited will be the balance on the account as at close of business on 1 February.</p>
Last week of February	<p>If paying Membership fees by Direct Debit, ensure sufficient funds are in the appropriate branch bank account.</p>
First week of March	<p>Collection of the Affiliation Fee from branches paying by Direct Debit or from BFI. If the Direct Debit fails, the branch must pay the outstanding fee by cheque.</p>
March	<p>Branch Affiliation Fee statements as at 1 March sent to all cash paying branches. Payments by cheque must be made to the MSO by 31 March.</p> <p>DD branches notified of any DD rejection and an additional statement sent for payment by cheque to be paid to the MSO by 31 March.</p> <p>Payment must be made to the MSO only. The back of the cheque should be endorsed with the branch code and branch name. <u>Do not send any cash or cheques to Head Office.</u></p>

March – April	Request for mid-year printout of branch members may be submitted to the MSO. Listings will be supplied by e-mail. Listings by email can be obtained from the MSO throughout the year free of charge.
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31 March	Last date for payment of Affiliation Fee by cash branches and those branches where the Direct Debit has failed.
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April	List of outstanding Branch Affiliation Fees to MSOs.
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31 May	Final Date for replacement cards to be requested.
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Mid June	Request and submission of subscription rates for Legion year of all branches and clubs registered for DDSP. Branch and Club Secretaries must return their completed forms to their MSO by 15 July, indicating any changes in their subscription rates.
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15 June	Applications made by 15 June will receive a Membership Card that expires 30 September of that Legion year and will be charged the listed Membership Fee for that year. Members will be further charged their annual Membership Fee in October and will be sent a new Membership Card for that Legion year. New applicants may request their application be held until 1 July.
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1 July	Applications made from 1 July will be charged the annual Membership Fee for the following year and will receive their Membership Card with an expiry date of 30 September of the following year, resulting in up to 15 months of membership.
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25 July	Last date for amendment of member details prior to printing of membership cards for the Legion year. Cards are printed in August for delivery to branches in September. Amendments should still be notified using form MS2 after this date but will not be reflected in the details printed on the membership card or membership listing. Conversion from cash to DDSP is not possible during the renewal period. Members who wish to convert will need to pay cash for the current year and register for DDSP for next year.
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1 August – 31 October	No transfers between branches are possible during this period. Normal rules apply from 1 November.
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The following forms are in current use for Membership and Membership Fee purposes. The majority of these forms are available in electronic format from your MSO. The MS4 and MEM20 may be obtained from Poppy Appeal in Aylesford at 01622 795815 or email: PoppyMembership@britishlegion.org.uk.

MS1	Notification of Branch Officers and Appointees
MS2	Membership Amendment Change of member's details, e.g. Address, deaths.
MS3	Direct Debit Instruction to authorise bulk collection of Membership fees from a branch bank account via Direct Debit.
MS4	Membership Application
MS5A	Branch Closure
MS5B	Formation of a Sub-Branch
MS5C	Branch Amalgamation
MS6	Membership/Affiliation Card Return
MS7	Application for Transfer of Membership
MS8	Registration of Club for DD
MS9	Formation of a Branch
MS13	Request for Replacement Card/Proof of Membership
MS14	Proof of Membership

STATEMENT AND INVOICE FOR PERIOD: 01/10/2012 TO 30/09/2013

DATE	TRANS DETAILS	TYPE	A/C REF NO.	TRANS	DEBIT	CREDIT	BALANCE
1 01/10/2012	BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD						0.00
2 01/10/2012	Card Issues	MEM	INV100000555	10	130.00		130.00DB
2 01/10/2012	Card Issues	MEM	INV100000557	40	520.00		650.00DB
3 15/10/2012	DD Conversion	CRD	CRD00000111	1		-13.00	637.00DB
4 01/11/2012	Card Returns	CRD	CRD00000112	6		-78.00	559.00DB
5 02/11/2012	Card Issue	MEM	INV100000558	3	39.00		598.00DB
6 17/11/2012	CRD	CRD	CRD012334098	10		-20.00	578.00DB
7 17/11/2012	CSHP	CSHP	PAY000010236	10	20.00		598.00DB
8 01/03/2013	CSHR:002345	CSHR	REC0000063097	1		-598.00	0.00

Any statement you receive with a DB (debit) Balance must be paid to your MSO within one month of the date of the statement.

KEY TO TRANSACTIONS DETAILS

1. Balance brought forward
2. Debit applied for Cash Cards Issued to Branch
3. Credit Cash Card for a member who has converted to Direct Debit
4. Credit for Cash Cards returned unsold and member lapsed
5. Cash Cards Issues for new members on a weekly basis
6. Credit Branch for members Branch subscriptions collected by Direct Debit
7. Pay Branch subscriptions collected by direct debit from members into Branch Bank Account
8. Credit for collection of Membership fees from Branch bank account by direct debit

CRD	Credit
CSHP	Cash Payment to Branch/Club
CSHR	Cash Receipt from Branch (either cheque payment or collection of Membership fees by direct debit)
JNL	Journal Entry to make a debit or credit adjustment to the Membership fee account

1. Purpose

1.1. Branch bye-laws instruct the branch members on how their particular branch is organised and structured and how it is to function.

2. Model Branch Bye-laws

2.1. Branch model bye-laws are agreed by the Membership Council as a template upon which a branch may base its bye-laws. All branches are to draft branch bye-laws. If a branch has not drafted their own bye-laws it is assumed that the model bye-laws apply to that branch.

3. Content

3.1. Branch bye-laws should contain the following information:

- Branch name and number.
- Branch meeting place, frequency of meetings, timings, etc.
- Branch structure.
- Branch Committee by function and appointments.
- Committee election process, length of tenure and procedure for replacement.
- Branch sub-committees and their terms of reference.

4. Authorisation

4.1. When model bye-laws are not adopted by a branch and alternative branch bye-laws are adapted to suit the management of a particular branch they are to be approved by the County/District Committee before they can take effect.

4.2. If a County/District Committee refuses to approve branch bye-laws, the branch is entitled to appeal against the refusal to the Membership Council, whose decision will be final. Such bye-laws must be based on model bye-laws approved by the Membership Council.

.....BRANCH BYE-LAWS

As authorised by the Membership Council

APPROVED

County/District Chairman

.....
(Signature)

Date:

The following Branch Bye-Laws are supplementary to The 2003 Royal Charter of Incorporation and Schedules of the Royal British Legion hereafter known as “the Royal Charter” and procedures as laid down in the Membership Handbook. They shall be binding on the Officers and Members of the
..... Branch.

All proposed alterations and amendments to these Bye-Laws shall, after being passed by a two-thirds majority of those members present, qualified to vote and voting on the appropriate motion at the Annual General Meeting of the Branch, be submitted to their appropriate County/District Committee for approval and shall not come into force until they have received the latter’s approval.

1. Branch name and number

.....

2. Branch meeting place, frequency and timings of meetings

.....

3. Branch Committee by function and appointments

.....

4. Branch sub-Committees and their terms of reference

.....

5. General Provisions

All matters not mentioned herein shall be settled by reference to the Royal Charter. In any question of interpretation, the matter should be referred to the Director General through the Secretary to the Membership Council, as should any question to which these bye-laws do not apply.

..... **BRANCH BYE-LAWS**

As authorised by the Membership Council

APPROVED

Chairman of the Membership Council
(Signature)

Date:.....

The following Branch Bye-Laws are supplementary to The 2003 Royal Charter of Incorporation and Schedules of the Royal British Legion hereafter known as “the Royal Charter” and procedures as laid-down in the Membership Handbook. They shall be binding on the Officers and Members of the Branch.

All proposed alterations and amendments to these Bye-Laws shall, after being passed by a two-thirds majority of those members present qualified to vote and voting on the appropriate motion at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Branch, be submitted to, and approved by, the Membership Council on behalf of the Board of Trustees in accordance with the Royal Charter. The Bye-Laws should be submitted to the Membership Council for approval via the Membership Support Officer (Overseas) at Head Office.

1. Branch name and number

.....

2. Branch meeting place, frequency and timings of meetings

.....

3. Branch Committee by function and appointments

.....

4. Branch sub-Committees and their terms of reference

.....

5. General Provisions

Upon the dissolution of the Branch and its removal from the Legion’s Register of Branches, the fund, investments, etc. of the Branch shall be passed to the Head Office of the Legion to be used for the purpose of the Legion generally.

All matters not mentioned herein shall be settled by reference to the Royal Charter. In any question of interpretation, the matter should be referred to the Director General through the Secretary to the Membership Council, as should any question to which these bye-laws do not apply.

..... **BRANCH BYE-LAWS**

As authorised by the Membership Council

APPROVED

District Chairman

.....
(Signature)

Date:

The following Branch Bye-Laws are supplementary to the 2003 Royal Charter of Incorporation and Schedules of the Royal British Legion hereafter known as “the Royal Charter” and procedures as laid-down in the Membership Handbook. They shall be binding on the Officers and Members of the Branch.

All proposed alterations and amendments to these Bye-laws shall, after being passed by a two-thirds majority of those members present qualified to vote and voting on the appropriate motion at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Branch, be submitted to, and approved by, the District Committee on behalf of the Board of Trustees in accordance with the Royal Charter.

1. Branch name and number

.....

2. Branch meeting place, frequency and timings of meetings

.....

3. Branch Committee by function and appointments

.....

4. Branch sub-Committees and their terms of reference

.....

5. General Provisions

Upon the dissolution of the Branch and its removal from the Legion’s Register of Branches, the fund, investments, etc. of the Branch shall be passed to the Head Office of the Legion to be used for the purpose of the Legion generally.

All matters not mentioned herein shall be settled by reference to the Royal Charter. In any question of interpretation, the matter should be referred to the Director General through the Secretary to the Membership Council, as should any question to which these bye-laws do not apply.

1. General

1.1. Branch Officers and Committee members are representatives of the Legion in their County/District. Except for the Branch President, they are elected at the Branch Annual General Meeting by those members eligible to vote, for a period of one (1), two (2) or three (3) years, in accordance with the branch Bye-Laws and take office from the close of the appropriate Annual General Meeting.

1.2. The Branch Officers and Committee members are required to perform their role in accordance with all national and local policies and procedures. The Legion's objects, policies and procedures are outlined in the Royal Charter and Membership Handbook.

1.3. Retirement, Resignation or Dismissal of Branch Committee Members

1.3.1. The Royal British Legion recognises that there are certain circumstances when the relationship between the Branch Committee member must come to an end. The following circumstances will make the role of Branch Committee Member untenable:

1.3.1.1. His/her written notice of resignation;

1.3.1.2. His/her becoming bankrupt or insolvent;

1.3.1.3. An unsatisfactory level of clearance being received following a DBS or screening application;

1.3.1.4. His/her becoming incapable for medical reasons of fulfilling the duties of a Committee Member;

1.3.1.5. His/her being directly or indirectly interested in any contract linked to Branch activities and failing to declare that interest;

1.3.1.6. and his/her death.

1.3.2. The Branch Chairman reserves the right to ask a Branch Committee member to relinquish his/her office if there is an evident conflict with The Royal British Legion's mission, values and objectives, or where there is failure to accept a majority decision of the Branch Committee.

1.4. Key responsibilities of all Branch Officers and Committee members:

1.4.1. Undergo initial appropriate training courses in a period of time as determined by the Training Advisory Group and attend regular update training to ensure they remain conversant with changes in Legion policies.

1.4.2. Be fully conversant and adhere to the contents of The Royal Charter as well as Legion policies and procedures.

1.4.3. Ensure that the branch complies with charity law and with the requirements of the Charity Commission as regulator, in particular that the branch prepares reports on what it has achieved and Annual Returns and accounts as required by law.

- 1.4.4. Ensure that the branch does not breach any of the requirements or rules set out in the Royal Charter and Membership Handbook and that it remains true to the charitable purposes and objects set out there.
- 1.4.5. Act with integrity and avoid any personal conflict of interest or misuse of Legion funds or assets and not receive any payments out of the Legion's funds other than reasonable and necessary out-of-pocket expenses, such as the cost of travel to attend meetings.
- 1.4.6. Ensure that funds are spent or earmarked for the purposes for which they were raised and should avoid undertaking activities that might place the Legion's endowment, funds, assets and reputation at undue risk.
- 1.4.7. Act in a timely manner with requests from County/District and National level, as well as being the key liaison between members of the branch and the County/District representatives.

2. Branch President

2.1. Introduction

- 2.1.1. The Branch President is an appointment of the Branch Committee to serve for as many years in a three year term as decided by the Committee.

2.2. The role of a Branch President

- 2.2.1. The President, although an Officer of the branch, may attend and speak at the meetings of the Branch Committee but may not propose, second or vote.
- 2.2.2. The Branch President has both a representational and encouraging function. The incumbent should therefore be a person distinguished in public life, the local community and the Legion, and be able to counsel the Chairman and Officers as necessary in the execution of their duties.
- 2.2.3. A Branch President should have the ability to 'open doors', establish useful contact and bring influence to bear in order to promote the best interests of the Legion within the local community.

2.3. Key responsibilities of a Branch President

- 2.3.1. Give clear, constructive and comprehensive encouragement to the Branch Committee when required.
- 2.3.2. Assist the Branch Committee with hosting local dignitaries at branch events.
- 2.3.3. Present branch awards.
- 2.3.4. Devote the time necessary to attend conferences, meetings and events.
- 2.3.5. Represent the Legion in the local community.
- 2.3.6. Preside at the opening of the Branch AGM and give the presidential address.
- 2.3.7. If required by the Branch Committee, discuss suitable successors for the role of Branch President with the branch and having arrived at a consensus, negotiate discreetly and confidentially with the person targeted, to establish a willingness to serve and accept the duties involved.

3. Branch Chairman

3.1. The Branch Chairman is the senior elected Officer on the Branch Committee. He is expected to show strong leadership, management and diplomatic skills in ensuring that a close bond and liaison is maintained between the Branch Committee, the branch members and the County/District. He should be loyal to the County/District Committee, the Membership Council and Board of Trustees but be prepared to represent the views and concerns of the branch through the County/District Chairman.

3.2. The Branch Chairman is accountable for all branch activities and must delegate activities in a manner that will ensure duties are performed effectively.

3.2.1. The Branch Chairman must have extensive knowledge of all issues affecting the branch and ensure that they comply with Legion policies and procedures. The Branch Chairman must be conversant with the Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook and other relevant policies and procedures, and must be prepared to advise the Branch Committee accordingly.

3.3. Key responsibilities of a Branch Chairman

3.3.1. Direct all branch activities.

3.3.2. Chair and manage meetings effectively ensuring that they are planned accordingly to content and time, avoiding the imposition of personal ideas on the meeting but encouraging participation from members.

3.3.3. Delegate duties to the Committee members and to ensure that these duties are performed effectively and in accordance with Legion policies and procedures.

3.3.4. Ensure that proper handovers take place between newly elected Branch Officers, elected Committee Members and their predecessors. This includes ensuring that all minute books, correspondence, Legion publications, branch papers and keys are handed over.

3.3.5. Ensure the Treasurer has a correct audit/examination undertaken and is agreed by both the outgoing and incoming Officers and that both are satisfied with the security of cash and cheque books.

3.3.6. Set an example as an active member of the Legion and to be available for advising both the Committee and branch members when necessary.

3.3.7. Ensure that sub-Committees, individual Officers and members for specialist functions are appointed where necessary.

3.3.8. Ensure that all Branch Committee Members are aware of their duties and responsibilities and encourage them to undergo training.

3.3.9. Ensure all new Members receive an induction to the Legion.

4. Branch Vice-Chairman

4.1. The role of a Branch Vice-Chairman is to aid the Branch Chairman in managing the branch. He should be expected to show strong leadership, management and diplomatic skills, in particular when deputising for the Branch Chairman.

4.2. Key responsibilities of a Branch Vice-Chairman

4.2.1. Deputise for the Branch Chairman in his absence.

- 4.2.2. Attend all branch meetings so that he can be conversant with on-going issues, and changes taking place within the Legion, in particular at branch level.
- 4.2.3. Deal with any specific tasks given to him by the Chairman, such as the organisation of a branch event or chairing of a sub-Committee.
- 4.2.4. Ensure all new Members receive an induction to the Legion.

5. Branch Treasurer

5.1. The role of a Branch Treasurer

- 5.1.1. The role of a Branch Treasurer is to administer the financial management of the branch, ensuring that the Chairman and Committee are at all times aware of the financial state of the branch.
- 5.1.2. The Branch Treasurer must be conversant with the relevant provisions pertaining to all financial matters as prescribed in the Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook and other relevant policies and procedures, and must be prepared to advise the Branch Committee accordingly. The Branch Treasurer must always bring to the attention of the Chairman and Committee the financial implications of any decision they are considering.
- 5.1.3. The Branch Treasurer should present the accounts in a clear and intelligible way at the AGM, bearing in mind that many members may not be familiar with accounting procedures and should answer any questions openly.

5.2. Key responsibilities of a Branch Treasurer

- 5.2.1. Attend the Legion Branch Treasurers' course prior to or within six months of taking post, or the earliest course thereafter.
- 5.2.2. Attend refresher training in accordance with Legion policy.
- 5.2.3. Be responsible to the Branch Committee for all the financial affairs of the branch, including the annual accounts, the welfare account, branch bank accounts, membership subscriptions, insurance premium payments etc.
- 5.2.4. Attend and produce a report for the General and Committee Meetings of the branch at least quarterly in order to advise the Branch Committee and, when necessary, the branch members on the financial affairs of the branch.
- 5.2.5. Control all monetary transactions, ensuring that they meet with guidelines contained within the 'Use of Legion Funds Policy' and record these in the branch receipt and payment ledger, retaining all receipts and supporting documents on behalf of the Branch Committee.
- 5.2.6. Receive from the Branch Secretary or Membership Secretary all membership subscriptions and to ensure that all monies received are banked at the earliest opportunity, entered in the ledger/cashbook and that supporting documents are filed and safeguarded.
- 5.2.7. Ensure that the branch accounts are examined/audited as required by The Royal Charter and to submit the branch account return with supporting documentation to the Membership Support Officer.
- 5.2.8. Ensure that all cheques for payment are made out correctly and that they bear the registered Charity number and the statement that the Legion is a registered

charity. Also to ensure that all cheques are signed by at least two (2) of the authorised signatories, one of whom shall be the Treasurer, and that they are clearly endorsed 'A/C Payee only'. No signatory is to sign a blank cheque.

5.2.9. Ensure that the Branch Committee authorises annually the limit the Treasurer may expend on a single item without reference to the Committee, and that this authority is minuted.

5.2.10. Ensure that all expenditure, other than petty cash, is by cheque and that the details of all expenditure are reported to the Branch Committee at their regular meetings for their approval. All such reports are to be minuted. Also, to ensure that if a petty cash system is in use that it is authorised by the Branch Committee and that it operates as an imprest system. The petty cash book is to be checked monthly by the Treasurer and at least one other Branch Officer and should be countersigned by these individuals as being correct. The petty cash limit should be no more than £50.

5.2.11. The Branch Treasurer should be computer literate to enable them to use the Legion On-line Membership Accounting System (LOMAS) to administer the branch accounts.

6. Branch Secretary

6.1. The role of a Branch Secretary

6.1.1. The Branch Secretary has a very important task in that they are responsible to the Branch Chairman and Committee for the efficient management of the branch administration.

6.1.2. The Branch Secretary's role as part of this remit is to organise Branch General and Committee meetings on a regular basis, liaise with the County/District Committee regularly to update information such as replacement officers, handle all vital documents pertaining to the branch and, in the absence of a Membership Secretary, control all aspects of Membership, maintaining accurate records of applications, membership cards and returns, and monies in relation to fees.

6.2. Key responsibilities of a Branch Secretary

6.2.1. Act as point of contact for receipt of correspondence issued by the County/District Committee, staff, the Membership Council and Board of Trustees, and to ensure all correspondence received is communicated to the Branch Committee for appropriate action.

6.2.2. Liaise with the Branch Chairman in the preparation of the agendas for all branch meetings, ensuring that all the Branch Committee members are provided with the relevant details.

6.2.3. Attend and record minutes of all General and Committee Meetings and safeguard all papers and documents of the branch, especially legal documents such as title deeds and insurance policies.

6.2.4. In the absence of a Branch Membership Secretary, carry out the duties pertaining to this role as outlined in the job description of the Membership Secretary.

- 6.2.5. Maintain a complete and current set of Legion handbooks, publications and guides for reference.
- 6.2.6. Forward without delay any information required by or on behalf of the Board of Trustees, Membership Council or Executive Board.
- 6.2.7. Ensure all returns are fully completed, signed and dated and submitted within the determined timescale.

7. Branch Membership Secretary

7.1. Introduction

- 7.1.1. The Branch Membership Secretary is an appointment of the Branch Committee.

7.2. The role of a Branch Membership Secretary

- 7.2.1. The Branch Membership Secretary is responsible to the Branch Chairman and Committee for the efficient management of the branch membership administration.
- 7.2.2. The Branch Membership Secretary's role as part of this remit is to control all aspects of membership, maintaining accurate records of applications, membership cards and returns, and monies in relation to fees.

7.3. Key responsibilities of a Branch Membership Secretary

- 7.3.1. Promote the Legion and encourage Membership within the branch.
- 7.3.2. Attend a Recruiting Advisors course at the earliest opportunity to be able to advise on the process of applications.
- 7.3.3. In accordance with Legion policy, encourage all potential members to sign up for Direct Debit and to promote Gift Aid.
- 7.3.4. Receive all applications for membership; to monitor eligibility for membership by personally checking documents and to send to the County/District staff the appropriate forms for action.
- 7.3.5. Receive members' membership cards, if the cards do not go direct to individuals, and to issue a temporary receipt for the Membership Fees and Branch Subscription.
- 7.3.6. Hold an up-to-date copy of the computerised branch membership data list, as issued by Head Office, and to advise County/District staff without delay of all changes thereto e.g. deaths, resignations, members' change of address and the transfer of members to/from another branch.
- 7.3.7. Draw the Branch Committee's attention to any branch member who is three (3) months in arrears with their branch membership fees, in order that a reminder can be sent to the individual.
- 7.3.8. Carry out, on behalf of the branch, the annual renewal process of membership cards for all cash payers.
- 7.3.9. Ensure all membership cards to be returned following renewal, are received by Central Data Input by 1 February annually.
- 7.3.10. Liaise with the Branch Treasurer, ensuring that the Direct Debit Subscription Rates report is returned prior to the date stipulated, and the fees recorded reflect the agreed branch subscription.

7.3.11. Keep and hand to the Branch Treasurer all monies received, taking into account established procedures for cheque and cash handling, together with particulars of the fund to be credited, within three (3) days of receipt. The Treasurer will issue a receipt and/or countersign the petty cash book.

8. Branch Committee Member

8.1. The role of a Branch Committee Member

8.1.1. A Branch Committee Member occupies a key place in the management of the Branch. He must follow in every respect the duties and responsibilities as required by the Board of Trustees and Charity Law.

8.1.2. A Branch Committee Member, is to be ever vigilant that he serves the interests of the Charity at all times.

8.2. Key responsibilities of a Branch Committee Member

8.2.1. Aid the Branch Committee, County/District Committee, Membership Council and Board of Trustees to carry out the work of the Legion and in particular promote the objects at local level.

8.2.2. Attend all branch meetings.

8.2.3. Attend any training required, as directed by the Branch Chairman, or in accordance with Legion policies.

8.2.4. Assist with the Poppy Appeal and other benevolent fundraising activities within the branch.

8.2.5. Provide the County/District Committee, the Membership Council or the Board of Trustees with any information they may require in the interest of the Legion.

8.2.6. Assist in approving bye-laws for the governance of the branch in accordance with the terms of the Royal Charter and Membership Handbook.

8.2.7. Assist in appointing any necessary sub-Committees.

8.2.8. Assist in making individual appointments for any special duty or position.

4.1.5 NOMINATIONS FOR, ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS TO BRANCH COMMITTEE 1/2

1. Branch Committee Elections

- 1.1. A blank nomination sheet is to be circulated to members or, if available, placed on the branch notice board or published on the branch web site, not less than twenty-one (21) days prior to the AGM.
- 1.2. The nomination sheet should list each Branch Office and its tenure.

The nomination sheet should also list the position(s) sought for Committee and appointments and request the following information: name of nominee, member/life member, proposer and seconder. A member completing the nomination sheet should return the sheet to the Branch Secretary no later than seven days prior to the AGM.
- 1.3. No canvassing is permitted.
- 1.4. Seven days before the AGM the returns from members and the list of nominations should be checked by the Branch Committee. The candidates' current membership status must be verified by the Branch Secretary and their consent to stand for office or position must be confirmed. The Branch Secretary will create a master nominations list.
- 1.5. Immediately after this, the master nominations list will be circulated to branch members or, if available, placed on the notice board or branch web site along with the AGM Agenda.
- 1.6. The election for Branch Officers will take place prior to the election of Committee Members and specialist appointments. The Branch President will take the chair during the election of the Branch Chairman.
- 1.7. In the event of a vacancy arising amongst the elected officers or Committee members following the AGM, the same shall be filled for the remaining period of the branch's electoral year until the end of the original term, by co-option of the Branch Committee, which will be subject to confirmation by election at the next Branch Annual General Meeting. Co-opted members may propose, second and vote.
- 1.8. Where a Branch Officer or Committee Member is co-opted during the Legion year the agreement as under Section 6 of this MS1 must be read, agreed and minuted at the first meeting of the new appointee: "I acknowledge my responsibility as Branch Officer/Committee Member and agree to follow in every respect the duties and responsibilities as contained in the Royal Charter and the Membership Handbook and as required by the Board of Trustees, the Membership Council and the Charities Act. I also agree to my contact details being published in the County/District Directory or Handbook (hard copy and digitally). I will be vigilant to serve the interests of the Royal British Legion at all times."

2. Voting

- 2.1. If present, those standing for Committee position may be asked to stand and identify themselves. Voting is to be by ballot by those eligible members present unless the position is unopposed in which case the person is elected automatically. Only those members present at the meeting are eligible to vote.

4.1.5 NOMINATIONS FOR, ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS TO BRANCH COMMITTEE 2/2

3. Branch Appointments

- 3.1. Members can be appointed to fulfil particular duties as required by the Branch Committee. The Branch Committee, at their first meeting following the AGM, will make further specialist appointments to the Committee. These appointees are appointed by function (Standard Bearer, Welfare Representative, etc.) and have no voting rights on the Committee, unless they were also elected as Committee Members at the AGM.
- 3.2. No member of the Branch Committee shall be elected or appointed to more than one (1) office or position on the Branch Committee, but this shall not exclude an Officer or member from undertaking one (1) additional specialist function on behalf of the Branch Committee.
- 3.3. Close family members (i.e. spouses, partners, children, parents and siblings as well as spouses and partners of siblings) must not hold positions in which they approve each other's expenses or oversee and check on the work of another. This includes election/co-optation of spouses in the roles of Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary.
- 3.4. Close family members should not sign each other's nominations for Legion Awards.

1. General Provisions

- 1.1. The Branch Annual General Meeting (AGM) must be held within two months of the close of the Corporate Financial Year, i.e. between 1 October and 30 November each year.
- 1.2. All branch members must be given every opportunity to attend the Branch AGM.
- 1.3. A convening notice should be circulated to all members at least twenty one (21) days before the date of the AGM or placed on the branch notice board or on the branch web site. This information must be circulated as widely as possible and where members have email addresses they should be sent by email. Included with the convening notice should be:
 - 1.3.1. A notification of attendance.
 - 1.3.2. Information on how to add items to the agenda for discussion at the AGM.
 - 1.3.3. A nomination sheet for Branch Office/Committee.

2. Purposes

- 2.1. The main aims of the Branch AGM are to:
 - 2.1.1. Review the previous year's activities and to adopt objectives for the following year.
 - 2.1.2. Adopt the annual accounts.
 - 2.1.3. Elect Officers and Committee Members.
 - 2.1.4. Consider Motions and Charter Motions for submission to the Annual Meeting of the County/District Conference.
 - 2.1.5. Appoint delegate(s) to the Annual Meeting of the County/District Conference and to Annual Conference.
 - 2.1.6. Nominate candidates for election to the Board of Trustees, the County/District Committee, the County/District Conference Committee, the National Conference Committee.

3. Outline Agenda

- 3.1. An Agenda may include:
 - 3.1.1. Act of Remembrance.
 - 3.1.2. Apologies for absence.
 - 3.1.3. Chairman's opening remarks.
 - 3.1.4. Adoption of Minutes of previous AGM.
 - 3.1.5. Matters arising from previous minutes.
 - 3.1.6. President's address.
 - 3.1.7. Chairman's report.

- 3.1.8. Individual Officers' reports (if required) – these should expand on the Chairman's report.
- 3.1.9. Reports and adoption of a new three year plan.
- 3.1.10. Presentation and adoption of accounts.
- 3.1.11. Election of Officers and Committee Members.
- 3.1.12. Nominations to National Office.
- 3.1.13. Motions and Charter Motions for the Annual Meeting of the County/District Conference.
- 3.1.14. Appointment of Delegates to the Annual Meeting of the County/District Conference and Annual Conference.
- 3.1.15. Special items (guest speakers).
- 3.1.16. Handover to new Chairman.

4. Preparation

- 4.1. Nominations from members for Office and Committee are to reach the Branch Secretary at least seven (7) days before the AGM.
- 4.2. The Agenda is to be discussed before the AGM by the Branch Chairman and Secretary. Any items raised by the members should be included if deemed appropriate. Seven (7) days before the AGM the list of nominations should be checked by the Branch Committee for eligibility for office or position. The agenda and nominations for Office and/or Committee are then to be made known to all members immediately via publication on the branch notice board or on the branch web site.
- 4.3. If more than one person is nominated for an office or position a ballot is to be held.
- 4.4. If the office of Branch Chairman is due for election, the President should take the chair during the election.
- 4.5. The President's address is to contain Legion matters external to the branch. Topics for the address may be obtained from the local Membership Support Officer.
- 4.6. The Chairman should prepare his/her report and review of the branch three year plan.
- 4.7. A branch three year plan should include:
 - 4.7.1. Membership – plan for developing active membership through recruitment and retention and taking part in community activities.
 - 4.7.2. Welfare work – plan for providing welfare support through hospital and home visiting and the network of trained Caseworkers.
 - 4.7.3. Poppy Appeal – plan to increase fundraising activities.
 - 4.7.4. Functions and events – plan to provide functions and events for members and the wider local community.

4.7.5. Training – plan for Branch Officers to attend training courses at County and National level.

4.7.6. Ceremonial – plan for Remembrancetide.

5. Branch Committee Meeting

5.1. The first meeting of the newly-elected Branch Committee should take place as soon as possible after the AGM.

5.2. At this first Branch Committee meeting a Branch Welfare Committee or a Welfare Representative is to be appointed.

5.3. Additional Committee members e.g. Branch Standard Bearer and Social Secretary will also be appointed as branch activities require. Such appointees have no Committee voting rights unless they have separately been elected as full Members of the Committee. A Poppy Appeal Organiser can also be nominated by the branch for registration with the Poppy Appeal. The Poppy Appeal reserves the right not to accept the Branch nomination for PAO if circumstances warrant this.

5.4. At the first meeting of the Branch Committee the Branch Secretary will complete the MS1 Form (Branch Information) in its entirety, taking particular care that all elected and appointed Members of the Committee complete and sign the *Certificate of Acknowledgement of Responsibility*.

5.5. The Branch Secretary must send the completed MS1 to the local Membership Support Officer as soon as possible after the first meeting of the Branch Committee. The deadline for the receipt of this document at the Area Office is 31 December annually.

4.1.6.1. EXAMPLE CONVENING NOTICE - BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1/1

(branch headed paper)

CONVENING NOTICE
BRANCH AGM

Notification is hereby given that the Annual Meeting of

..... Royal British Legion Branch will be held:

at

LOCATION:

on

DATE: TIME:

The business to be transacted shall be to:

- Consider reports and accounts for the past year.
- Elect the following Officers of the Committee:
 - Branch Chairman (- Year Term).
 - Branch Vice-Chairman (- Year Term).
 - Branch Secretary (- Year Term).
 - Branch Treasurer (- Year Term).

(note: delete where applicable)

- Elect members to the Branch Committee.
- Consider and raise Motions and Charter Motions to the Annual Meeting of County/District Conference.

Please complete the enclosed Branch AGM Registration and Nomination

Form and return to the Branch Secretary **no later than**

(Name)

Branch Secretary

(Signature)

1. General Provisions

- 1.1. Branch General Meetings must be held at regular intervals, preferably quarterly.
- 1.2. Branch General Meetings are a means for letting the branch members know what is happening in the Legion, County/District and Branch. The Branch Chairman is to report against the objectives outlined at the AGM.
- 1.3. A General Meeting is an opportunity to seek volunteers to help with branch activities.

2. Agenda

- 2.1. The Agenda is to be short, carefully planned and specific to the branch's work. A social activity may follow. An Agenda may include:
 - 2.1.1. Act of Remembrance.
 - 2.1.2. Chairman's opening remarks (theme of Meeting).
 - 2.1.3. Apologies for absence.
 - 2.1.4. Introduction of new members.
 - 2.1.5. Minutes of previous General Meeting.
 - 2.1.6. Matters arising.
 - 2.1.7. Update by Chairman.
 - 2.1.8. Reports by Officers.
 - 2.1.9. Branch Programme.
 - 2.1.10. Points for the next meeting.
 - 2.1.11. Date of next General Meeting.

3. Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) or Special General Meeting (SGM)

- 3.1. If a branch has a single matter to discuss/debate an EGM or SGM may be called by the Branch Committee.
- 3.2. The branch may, at a Special General Meeting convened for that purpose, by resolution of the Branch Committee or at the request of a minimum of two-thirds of the Members and Life Members of the branch, remove from office or position any Branch Committee Member, and may elect another Member to take the place of a person so removed, or of a person who has resigned or of a person who has ceased to be a Member of the Committee.
- 3.3. Seven (7) days notice of an EGM or SGM is to be given to all branch members.

1. Purpose

- 1.1. Branch Committee Meetings must be held at least quarterly. The Branch Committee meeting must be quorate, if not decisions will be null and void.
- 1.2. A Branch Committee is to actively promote the objects of the Legion within its allocated geographical area. Branch Committee Meetings are the management tool by which the Committee plans and implements its responsibilities.
- 1.3. All Committee members, both elected and appointed, are to attend Branch Committee Meetings.
- 1.4. All Committee Meetings will be chaired by the Branch Chairman unless he is prevented from attending in which case the Vice-Chairman or any other person present will chair the meeting.
- 1.5. Any member of a Branch Committee who is absent for three (3) consecutive Committee meetings in a twelve (12) month period shall be deemed to have vacated his/her seat unless a good and sufficient reason has been given and is duly recorded in the minutes as acceptable to the Branch Committee.

2. Agenda

- 2.1. The Agenda is to be short, carefully planned and specific to the branch's work.
An Agenda may include:
 - 2.1.1. Act of Remembrance.
 - 2.1.2. Chairman's opening remarks (theme of meeting).
 - 2.1.3. Apologies for absence.
 - 2.1.4. Minutes of previous Committee Meeting.
 - 2.1.5. Matters arising.
 - 2.1.6. Update by Chairman.
 - 2.1.7. Financial Report
 - 2.1.8. Reports by Officers and specialist appointments.
 - 2.1.9. Branch Programme – work achieved – future targets.
 - 2.1.10. Date of next Committee Meeting.

3. Agenda Items (applicable to all Committee Meetings)

- 3.1. Minutes of the previous meeting are to be circulated before the Meeting.
- 3.2. Correspondence should not be read out to the Committee. A float file containing recent correspondence is to be available for Committee Members to read before the meeting.
- 3.3. When welfare cases are discussed the anonymity of the beneficiary must be respected at all times.
- 3.4. Reports from Officers and specialist appointments should be circulated with the Agenda at least three (3) days prior to the meeting.

3.5. 'Any Other Business' is not to appear on the agenda. The agenda is to be closed by the Chairman at the start of the meeting. The Chairman will decide at what stage items proposed for discussion will be discussed. Items may have to wait for future Committee Meetings.

4. Preparation

- 4.1. Committee meeting agendas are to be planned carefully by the Chairman with the Secretary.
- 4.2. Papers, letters and reports should be circulated with the agenda. This permits short discussion prior to voting.

1. Policy on the Use of Legion Funds

- 1.1. The Board of Trustees issued the *Policy on the Use of Legion Funds* in November 2005. Key points in the Policy are:
 - 1.1.1. All funds held by Legion branches are charitable funds and as such fall within the overall responsibility of the Board of Trustees.
 - 1.1.2. Any funds held with restricted terms specified by the donor must be used only within the terms of the restriction.
 - 1.1.3. If a legacy is left to a Legion branch, the legacy and all related documentation must be sent to the Legacy Department at Head Office to administer the estate.
 - 1.1.4. If a donation in excess of £3,000 is received by a Legion branch the branch is to notify Head Office through /Area staff.
 - 1.1.5. Any funds donated to or raised by a branch for Welfare may be used only for Welfare purposes as specified in the Objects in the Royal Charter.
 - 1.1.6. A branch may not use its funds to subsidise the running expenses or capital expenditure of another branch.
 - 1.1.7. Branches are not permitted to give grants or to make donations to other Charities. The only exceptions are a donation to a local ex-Service Charity with authority from the Operations Division and a donation to the Central Benevolent Fund to be allocated to a grant that the Board of Trustees have already agreed.
 - 1.1.8. Any proposed large fundraising event (i.e. with expenditure in excess of £1,000) should be approved in advance by the Fundraising Division through the Community Fundraiser to ensure that it is in line with current strategy and does not clash with any other large event.
 - 1.1.9. Organised events specifically in connection with the Poppy Appeal (such as Poppy Appeal Ball), fundraising for the branch or a branch function (such as an Anniversary Dinner or a ceremonial occasion) should be treated as part of the normal business of the branch and should be discussed and agreed at branch Committee meetings. They should not be run at a loss, as to do so would incur expenditure that does not qualify as charitable, and any surpluses should be donated either to the Poppy Appeal or used for branch funding activities if not raised specifically for the Poppy Appeal. All the receipts and payments in respect of those events should be accounted for in the branch accounts or on the receipts and payments form.
 - 1.1.10. All other social events, which would not be part of the normal business of the branch should not be matters discussed and agreed by Branch Committees but could be discussed and agreed at branch membership meetings. These events should not be subsidised by the branch, as such subsidy would not be charitable expenditure. None of the income received or expenditure incurred on these events should pass through the branch's accounts other than the specific amounts of any donated surpluses from the events which should be shown as monetary gifts and donations. Examples of such events are Christmas dinner for the branch members, or trips to museums, National Memorial Arboretum and outside the branch area.

- 1.1.11. Sporting events must be self funding.
- 1.1.12. Funds held purely for the financial purposes of the members (such as Christmas Clubs, Lottery Syndicates, etc.) must not be held by the branch or be passed through branch bank accounts.
- 1.1.13. Branches are permitted to use branch funds to undertake Remembrance events. Branches must attempt to secure services at little or no cost. Expenditure must be reasonable and proportionate. Local Authorities must be encouraged to meet the costs of any Civil Act of Remembrance, even if the Legion organises an event on their behalf.
- 1.1.14. Branch funds may not be used to create, clean, repair or update Memorials unless the Memorial is owned by the branch and responsibility has not been passed to another party. Memorials are usually the responsibility of the Local Authority and Legion funds must not be used to carry out work that is the responsibility of a public body.
- 1.1.15. Branches may spend funds on recruiting but the money spent must be reasonable.
- 1.1.16. All branch accounts must be held in the name of The Royal British Legion. Personal accounts or accounts in the name of Committee Members must NOT be used, even for temporary cash balances.
- 1.1.17. Branches are not permitted to trade, whether in alcohol or any other commodity, without the express consent of the Board of Trustees. If they do, they are doing so illegally. They can offer low value items for a suggested donation (not a minimum donation). There is an HMRC concession around one off fundraising events, which are not subject to VAT, direct or corporation tax if they meet certain conditions, the main one being that they are primarily to raise funds and that no more than 15 similar events are held in the same location per year.
- 1.1.18. Branches are not permitted to subsidise Legion clubs or any other social purpose from charitable funds whether by way of carrying charges which should properly fall to the club or social purpose, by making loans or by making reductions or deferrals of rent due to the branch from the club. To do so would be to misemploy charitable funds and might, after due process, result in the Branch Committee Members, personally, being required to reimburse the Charity.
- 1.1.19. Committee members who misuse or misemploy branch funds could, after due process, be held personally liable to refund those funds to the branch.
- 1.1.20. Branches are not permitted to offer paid employment and have paid employees. Legion funded positions come under the remit of the organisation and branches cannot pay for employed positions through their own funds as problems could occur under employment legislation of making any such payment; these include the presumption of a contract, which may put the Legion at risk of an action under employment legislation. If a branch feels that it needs a paid resource then it will need to apply through the Executive Board and ultimately the Governance Committee for a post to be established. The individual would be employed on a fixed term basis dependent upon the amount of funding provided i.e. three years.

2. General

2.1. To each branch fund is credited:

2.1.1. members' branch subscriptions,;

2.1.2. all money raised or received by the branch specifically for its own purposes and benefit, provided the Board of Trustees gives prior approval to the method of fund-raising. The approval must be in writing on the authority of the Director General (or other person designated for that purpose by the Board of Trustees).

2.2. The members of the Branch Committee are collectively responsible for the branch funds. The Committee is responsible for ensuring that there are adequate controls and accounting records and that expenditure complies with the policies and procedures of the Legion and with Charity law.

2.3. The Branch Chairman has overall authority and responsibility of branch finances and administration. The Branch Treasurer controls the fund under the Committee's direction and must report the branch's financial state to the Committee at least once a quarter.

2.4. The Branch Committee is to approve the Treasurer's paying limit. The limit is to be established each year and recorded in the Committee's minutes. Only the Branch Committee can authorise proposed expenditure above this limit. Generally, between £250 and £500 will be sufficient depending on the size of the branch.

3. Banking

3.1. The branch must maintain its own bank account which bears the name of the branch. UK branches should seek permission from Finance Directorate to open a new bank account. Branches should open an account with the corporate bank (currently Lloyds).

3.2. Every cheque in the chequebook is to be endorsed with the branch's name and the Charity's registered number (Registered Charity No. 219279).

3.3. The Branch Treasurer is to maintain an account ledger, either in electronic or hardcopy format. When keeping records in electronic format, regular printouts and back-ups are to be made and stored remotely and securely.

3.4. The Treasurer is to record all income and expenditure in each activity fund within the account (e.g. 'General', 'Welfare', 'Fundraising'). All funds, whatever their purpose, are classed as charitable funds.

3.5. The Treasurer, under the branch Committee's direction, will safeguard the branch account chequebook, paying-in book and bank statements.

4. Accounting

4.1. The account ledger's layout of funds should reflect the branch Account format as defined in the format of the annual branch account return. Every transaction is to be entered into the ledger. Cash and cheques are to be banked at the earliest opportunity. Any amount over £1,000 should be banked within 24 hours.

4.2. All items of expenditure must be supported by invoices or receipts. On rare occasions, when an item of expenditure is incurred for which no invoice or receipt is available, the person incurring the expenditure should create and sign a voucher, detailing what the

expenditure relates to and the amount involved. The voucher must be countersigned by an independent Officer of the branch.

- 4.3. The Branch Treasurer is to reconcile the bank statements with the entries in the ledger and with the chequebook stubs and paying-in book. On each occasion when the accounts are presented to the Committee the branch Chairman is to sign them as so reconciled and reviewed.
- 4.4. Vouchers and receipts must be kept for a period of seven (7) years.
- 4.5. Where branches operate a Petty Cash account, the account must be held by the Branch Treasurer and have a limit of no more than £50. All petty cash payments and reimbursements must be recorded in the account ledger
- 4.6. In case of cheques being drawn for cash all the supporting receipts must be provided. If the amount on the receipts is less than the amount on the advance cheque, the balance must be returned and recorded in the ledger. The maximum amount on such cheques must not exceed £50.

5. Annual Accounts

- 5.1. The Legion's Field Financial Year ends on 30 June annually. Each branch must prepare an annual branch accounts form. The branch accounts form is usually sent in May and is accompanied by Guidance Notes. The Treasurer prepares the form but it is the responsibility of the Branch Officers to ensure that it has been completed correctly. A copy of the bank statement with the closing balance for the year and any investment confirmations should be included with the returns. The original is to be signed by the Branch Officers.
- 5.2. Branches using the LOMAS (Legion Online Membership Accounting System) will not receive any paper forms or Guidance Notes, as they can automatically obtain a report on the branch annual accounts from the system.
- 5.3. The completed forms, ledger and supporting books are to be examined or audited by an independent examiner or a qualified auditor who has to sign the form prior to the branch accounts being presented to the AGM. The Treasurer must be available at the AGM to answer questions. Branch must cover the cost of the independent examination or audit from the branch funds, but should avoid paying the audit fees if at all possible.
- 5.4. Branches must refer to the 'Guide to completing the year end Branch return' issued every year with the branch accounts forms by the Finance Department to establish whether they need an independent examination or audit. The Guide defines who should undertake the independent examination or audit of branch accounts. If only an independent examination is required, it is highly recommended that branches use the Royal British Legion Legion trained Independent Examiners (IEs). A list of approved Legion IEs is issued every year to the Membership Support Officers.
- 5.5. If requested by the Membership Council, the branch accounts must be audited by a qualified auditor. Any expenses incurred by the Membership Council due to such audit taking place will be paid for by the branch fund in question.
- 5.6. The relevant examined or audited annual accounts must be returned to Head Office within three (3) months after the close of the Field Financial Year via the local Membership Support Officer. The accounts do not have to be approved by the Branch

AGM prior to being sent to the local Membership Support Officer. A copy of the bank statement with the closing balance for the year for each bank account held and any investment confirmations should be included with the returns. Any other documents required with the returns will be listed in the Guidance Notes sent to branches.

5.7. The annual accounts and the report of the independent examiner or auditor must, where practicable, be kept clearly displayed at the branch premises, where any member may inspect them at any reasonable time.

5.8. After the first full year of a new branch, branch accounts must be completed. However, if the branch wishes to attend Annual Conference, the branch must submit accounts irrespective of whether they have been formed for less than a year.

6. Protection Against Fraud

6.1. It is each branch Committee's responsibility to ensure that proper precautions to avoid fraud are implemented. These include but are not limited to:

6.1.1. The bank account is to be kept in the name of the Legion branch.

6.1.2. The account is to have a mandate of up to 4 signatories two of whom must sign every cheque.

6.1.3. The signatories must be branch Committee members.

6.1.4. Signatories are not to sign blank, undated or partly completed cheques.

6.1.5. 4.6. In case of cheques being drawn for cash all the supporting receipts must be provided. If the amount on the receipts is less than the amount on the advance cheque, the balance must be returned and recorded in the ledger. The maximum amount on such cheques must not exceed £50.

6.1.6. The chequebook and paying-in book are to be kept under lock and key.

6.1.7. Bank statements are to be checked immediately on receipt. Any unexplained entry is to be investigated immediately.

6.1.8. Money collected for specific purposes is to be properly accounted for and any surplus brought to the main account.

6.1.9. Expenses payments are to be approved by the Branch Committee. Expenses will only be paid if they comply with the principles of SOP42 which is the policy on expense claims issued by the Finance Division. Expense claims containing mileage rates should be checked by the Branch Treasurer. There are two types of car mileage rate: one for privately owned vehicles and another one for mobility cars (which is the same as the Legion car rate). The car mileage rate must not be exceeded. Both type of rates can be found in the SOP42.

6.1.10. Invoices or receipts must be obtained for all expenditure incurred.

7. Gift Aid

7.1. Membership Gift Aid

7.1.1. The Royal British Legion Membership benefits from Gift Aid. We ask members to consider ticking the Gift Aid box on their membership form, as we are allowed to claim Gift Aid on our membership subscriptions under an exemption agreed with HMRC. The charity can reclaim 25p on every £1 that is donated. So for

example on a membership fee of £12, we receive an additional £3 per member. If every member who is a British tax payer would tick the Gift Aid box, this would raise the General Fund income by 25%. At the moment, just over 40% of our members are Gift Aiding their subscriptions, whereas we believe that over 90% qualify.

7.2. Gift Aiding donations to The Royal British Legion

7.2.1. The Legion also benefits from the generosity of our supporters both within and outside of Remembrancetide and we receive a number of donations throughout the year. Many donations that are given to branches, Counties/Districts and Poppy Appeal Organisers are accompanied by Gift Aid Declarations. As long as the correct procedures are followed we can re-claim the Gift Aid on these donations at 25% which means that we can generate additional revenues just by having a donation gift aided.

7.2.2. Branches and Counties/Districts are also keen to apply Gift Aid to donations they receive. There is, however, a lot of confusion about this and when formations do not follow the correct procedure, we are unable to make any claims. The Legion can only claim Gift Aid on donations from supporters if the following principles have been followed.

7.3. Processing of Gift Aided donations

7.3.1. There is a well-defined process in place that PAOs use to process and bank Gift Aided donations to the Poppy Appeal. All branches need to adhere to this protocol to ensure that the processes as defined and agreed with HMRC are adhered to.

7.3.2. Additional Gift Aided donations outside of the Poppy Appeal must be banked either by being sent directly to the Poppy Appeal in Aylesford or ideally by adhering to the standard banking practices as set out by the Poppy Appeal processes and being banked by the PAO.

7.3.3. If members do not wish to involve the PAO in the processing of Gift Aided donations then all cheques should be sent to Finance and Planning Manager at the Poppy Appeal in Aylesford , accompanied by the original, signed Gift Aid declarations. Cheques should ideally not be paid direct into a branch account, as HMRC require proof that a specific banked amount is tied to a specific Gift Aided form.

7.3.4. Cheques must be made out either to The Royal British Legion or to the Poppy Appeal and should not be banked locally unless the correct Poppy Appeal processes are adhered to.

7.3.5. Any Gift Aided donations cannot be paid into branch funds as branches cannot claim Gift Aid directly nor can they set up an individual relationship with HMRC. The relationship between HMRC and the Legion is set up and managed centrally by the team at Haig House.

7.3.6. Donations cannot be made directly in return for a product or service. However, a donation given in return for a badge, a Remembrance Cross or similar is acceptable.

7.3.7. All Gift Aid processing, claims and correspondence with HMRC must be actioned through the existing Poppy Appeal processes. This is a multi million pound revenue stream for the organisation. However, it is tightly regulated and therefore all documentation must adhere to strict HMRC guidelines, which is why this revenue must be channelled through our agreed methods.

7.4. Declaration forms

7.4.1. Declaration forms must be current; otherwise they are not accepted by HMRC. Up-to-date forms can be obtained from Finance and Planning Manager at the Poppy Appeal in Aylesford by telephone 01622 795 810 or by email at srayfield@britishlegion.org.uk

7.4.2. People who sign Gift Aid declarations must be eligible tax payers:

7.4.3. The individual is paying or will be paying an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities (or Community Amateur Sports Clubs) will reclaim on the individual's gifts for that tax year. Other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify.

7.4.4. The charity must be notified if the individual wishes to cancel the declaration, changes their name or home address or no longer pays sufficient tax on income and/or capital gains.

7.4.5. If an individual pays Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and wants to receive the additional tax relief, they must include all Gift Aid donations on a Self Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust their tax code.

8. Legacies

8.1. When a payment of a legacy to The Legion has been received the Branch must notify the Legacy Team, forwarding all relevant information for administration in accordance with the terms of the Will.

8.2. If the bequest is less than £5,000, a cheque will be forwarded to the Branch by the Legacy Department.

8.3. If the total bequest is more than £5,000, a trust account will be set up in the name of the Branch by the Finance Department at Head Office

8.4. If the Branch has a project or scheme and wishes to utilise all or part of the monies held in a trust account the Branch should in the first instance, apply to their respective County/District Office or if not in a County/District through the Membership Support Administrator at Head Office who will be able to assist.

9. Grants

9.1. Branches applying for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Awards for All or similar organisations should contact their Area Office to get initial approval. Approval, or otherwise, should be outlined by the Area Manager in an e-mail to the branch. Once the branch has completed the formal application form this must be presented to Head Office for the Head of Fundraising to countersign. The completed and signed application form can then be submitted. Branches must not submit any grant applications without prior agreement from the Area Manager.

9.2. If the application is successful, any funds received by the branch from external organisations must be ring fenced within the accounts and the associated expenditure must be accounted for as restricted.

9.3. This procedure does not apply for the HLF WW1 Centenary grants programme.

9.4.

10. Branch Property Trusts (BPTs)

10.1. A Branch Property Trust (BPT) relates to a property that is held in connection with a branch and used for the charitable purpose of the Legion. BPTs have been acquired gradually since the 1920s and each one is held on its own individual trust which is set out in a trust deed or conveyance. In most cases the purposes of such trusts are narrower than those of the Legion or the branch.

10.2. BPTs can generate income in two different ways:

10.2.1. Rental income received by letting out a property to tenants. Interest that is earned on proceeds of sale and other BPT-related investments.

10.2.2. Branches receive around £2m a year from centrally collected rental income and interest from BPT related investments and locally collected hire arrangements provides additional income. This income can only be spent within the purposes of the relevant BPT.

10.3. In September 2013 there were approximately 775 BPTs, made up of:

10.3.1. Around 525 properties: Some properties are rented out to Legion Clubs or others on a commercial basis. Sometimes the branch continues to use part of the property, and sometimes it will use the rent it receives to lease new premises more suitable to their needs.

10.3.2. Around 330 branch Property Trust Funds where a property has been sold and the proceeds of sale are held on the same trusts as the original property.

10.4. Responsibility for Branch Property Trusts

10.4.1. The Legion is corporate trustee for most BPTs and therefore has a legal duty to act in the best interests of each one.

10.4.2. BPTs are not branch assets, but they are connected to branches in the sense that they usually need to be used to benefit people living in a similar geographical location. For this reason the Legion has, in the past, delegated the task of managing local BPTs on a day-to-day basis to Branch Committees. Rental income from BPTs is currently coordinated and collected centrally by the Legion as the landlord.

10.5. Further information and documentation

10.5.1. If you have any information about your local BPT that might help build a clearer picture of how that BPT can be used, perhaps a copy of a trust deed or conveyance relating to the BPT, or a copy of the public notice that was given when it was sold, please contact the Programme team to let them know.

10.5.2. In the first instance, if you have any queries or concerns please talk these through with your local Membership Support Officer. If you then still have any

outstanding queries you can submit these to a dedicated email address
bpt@britishlegion.org.uk

1. The Royal Charter requires the Board of Trustees, or person(s) appointed by them, to investigate complaints.
2. The Complaints Procedures set out the framework of procedures prescribed by the Membership Council upon which all Legion membership investigations are to be based. The Complaints Procedures should be read in conjunction with the Royal Charter.
3. Copies of the Complaints Procedures can be obtained from the Area Office or from the Membership Management Adviser at Head Office.
4. Any queries or questions of interpretation with regard to the contents of the Complaints Procedures are to be referred to the Membership Management Adviser at Head Office.

1. General

- 1.1. There is a common misconception that a Legion branch and club are one and the same entity. This is not the case. The branch, as a branch of the Charity, has no part to play in the supply of alcohol and cannot trade. The club is a mutually trading, financial entity registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. A club operates under the control of a Committee elected by its members within its own rules approved by the Legion and the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) with whom it is registered, and it is licensed by the Legion to use the Legion's name and logo. As a result the Legion has no control over the internal management of a club and any advice which it may give through the Regional Club Relationship Manager (RCRM) or otherwise can be taken or ignored as the Club Committee thinks fit.
- 1.2. The licence to use the Legion's name (the Legion Licence) is issued by the County/District Committee following application by the club using form C4/5 and it is open to the County/District Committee to refuse, to issue or to issue a licence with conditions. When deciding which course of action to take the County/District Committee should bear in mind that the purpose of the licence is to protect the Legion's good name and brand. It must not be withdrawn or renewal refused without good reason and such reason must be related only to the purpose of the licence.
- 1.3. Since the consequences of loss of the licence may include the forfeiture of the lease to the property occupied by the club (if leased from the Legion) and the closure of the club with consequent staff redundancies and financial loss to the club, members and trade suppliers, the County/District Committee's decision should not be taken lightly and could be open to legal challenge.

2. Management

- 2.1. Since the club and Legion branch are separate entities it is best practice to keep their Committees completely separate; to do otherwise risks a conflict of interest but it is not disallowed to do so, however, Branch Officers must not also serve as Club Officers and vice versa. It may be the case that a branch and club community has severe difficulty in finding sufficient people who are prepared to stand for election to each Committee. Only in exceptional cases should a member sit on both Branch and Club Committees and then only with the knowledge and formal consent of the County/District Committee. It would be proper and necessary for such members who have dual roles to declare their interest and withdraw from that part of a meeting of the Branch Committee when decisions affecting the commercial relationship between the branch and club are to be made and for their absence from the Branch Committee for a specific Agenda item to be minuted.

3. Conflict of Interest

- 3.1. A common example of conflict between branch and club occurs when the branch owns a property that is leased to the club. The branch has a duty to ensure that a proper rent is charged in accordance with charity law and that rent is received when due. This may result in a breakdown of relations between branch and club, especially if the club is experiencing financial difficulty. A branch is not permitted to give credit to a club by deferring payment of rent, by carrying any charge which is properly the liability of the club or by making any loan to a club without the express consent of the Board of Trustees. Such consent will not be given without a persuasive business case.

3.2. Since branches are part of a charitable organisation and the operation of a members' club is not a charitable activity the use of branch funds to subsidise clubs is unlawful and could result in the members of the Branch Committee becoming personally liable for restitution of the money involved to the Charity. It follows that the mixing of branch and club funds is strictly prohibited.

4. Mutual Support

4.1. There is immense scope for mutual support between both branch and club. Wherever possible, and in keeping with the rules, each Committee should endeavour to assist the other towards closer relations.

4.2. The branch may assist the club by:

4.2.1. Providing the property, for which it must charge a proper rent based on valuation in accordance with charity law.

4.2.2. Encouraging branch members to join the club.

4.2.3. Encouraging recruitment drives to increase membership.

4.2.4. Producing occasional branch reports to the club.

4.2.5. Maintaining the two-way flow of communication between branch and club. The Ian Hamilton Cup is awarded annually to the club showing progress in comradeship and management (application required).

4.3. The club can assist the branch by:

4.3.1. Providing access to storage areas and other facilities for the purpose of Legion activities or the Poppy Appeal. The Bucher Trophy is awarded annually to the club with the highest contribution per member to the Poppy Appeal (application required).

4.3.2. Allowing the branch to utilise a room for branch administration.

4.3.3. Providing space for a branch notice board.

4.3.4. Maintaining the two-way flow of communication between the club and the branch.

4.3.5. Promoting the Legion. In order to join a Legion club, an individual must first join a Legion branch. However, more often than not the prospective club member is unaware of this requirement. It is therefore imperative that clubs endeavour to promote the Legion at every opportunity and provide regular updates on branch, County/District and National activities.

1. General Provisions

- 1.1. Branches must consult their County/District Youth Officer before they consider becoming involved with any youth activity.

2. Branch Affiliation

- 2.1. The purpose of a Legion branch affiliating with a local youth organisation, or local Armed Services Youth Detachment, is to promote mutual support and encouragement to each other's aims and objectives within the local community. Youth organisations could assist with the Poppy Appeal; the affiliated branch may assist the youth organisation in their fundraising but must not do so in the Legion's name. Uniformed youth organisations may purchase 'Affiliated Unit' cloth badges from the Membership Governance Administrator to sew onto their uniforms.
- 2.2. Branches may affiliate with any local youth organisation, such as St John Ambulance, the Scout or Guide Association, Boys' Brigade or Youth Club. It is of critical importance that the organisation has a properly trained and registered youth leader.
- 2.3. Young people in the affiliated Youth Organisation do not need to sign up as Youth Members of the Legion.
- 2.4. A register of affiliations is kept at Head Office.

3. Youth Membership

- 3.1. Young people supporting the aims and objects of the Legion may join the Legion as Youth Members.
- 3.2. The application process for Youth Members is the same as for any other form of membership. Members between the ages of 12 (twelve) and 17 (seventeen) are registered as Youth Members on the database.
- 3.3. Youth members pay a one off joining fee. On reaching the age of 17 (seventeen) they cease to be youth members and, if they wish to remain members, they must complete the standard application form.

1. An active branch is often a successful branch. Members who enjoy their meetings will support the Legion and will make a greater and more willing contribution to the Charity's work.
2. A branch without its own premises needs a regular meeting place. The location should be convenient to the majority of the members, accessible by public transport if possible and with car parking facilities. Costs will be a consideration in choosing a location.
3. Throughout the year a branch must carry out its welfare and fundraising responsibilities, but should also devote some time to supporting other activities, e.g. training evenings.
4. Branches should meet at least quarterly. Branch General Meetings may be combined with a social activity, e.g. the invitation of a guest speaker or a museum visit. Guest speakers can be sought from inside or outside the Legion. Care must, however, be taken to avoid conflict with the Legion's charitable status. Events of a political nature should not be held and speakers from other charities who may see the occasion as a fundraising opportunity should not be invited.
5. It is important that guests of the branch are properly looked after, particularly if they are from another organisation. Members should be asked beforehand to take care of guests, though, the Chairman will usually act as host, assisted by other Branch Officers. The branch should brief a guest as to exactly what is required of him/her at the activity, what the procedure will be and whether he/she will be asked to speak.
6. Branches should also try to organise Open Days for members of the general public. Such Open Days provide the opportunity for increasing membership and for fundraising.
7. Organised events specifically in connection with the Poppy Appeal (such as Poppy Appeal Ball), fundraising for the branch or a branch function (such as an Anniversary Dinner or a ceremonial occasion) should be treated as part of the normal business of the branch and should be discussed and agreed at Branch Committee meetings. They must not be run at a loss, as to do so would incur expenditure that does not qualify as charitable. Any surplus should be donated either to the Poppy Appeal or used for branch activities if not raised specifically for the Poppy Appeal. All the receipts and payments in respect of those events should be accounted for in the branch accounts or on the receipts and payments form.
8. All other social events, which would not be part of the normal business of the branch, should not be matters discussed and agreed by Branch Committees but could be discussed and agreed at branch membership meetings. These events should not be subsidised by the branch, as such subsidy would not be charitable expenditure. None of the income received or expenditure incurred on these events should pass through the branch's accounts other than the specific amounts of any donated surpluses from the events which should be shown as monetary gifts and donations.
9. Branch members can participate in sports competitions with other Legion branches at County/District and Regional level. There are competitions for bowls, snooker and darts. Sports activities have to be completely self funding.
10. Legion sports activities are covered by public liability insurance. However, those taking part are not themselves covered for accident or injury.

1. General

- 1.1. The Poppy Appeal, which provides a large part the Legion's benevolent income, depends on the involvement of branches. The Charter requires branches to give active support to the organisation of the Poppy Appeal. It is, however, a year-round activity and is not confined to Remembrancetide in November.
- 1.2. In addition to organising street and house-to-house collections in their area in November, branches should attempt to raise funds throughout the year.
- 1.3. Comprehensive instructions on the organisation of the Poppy Appeal are contained in *Poppy Appeal Guide to Organisers*. This document outlines branch responsibilities for fundraising.

2. Remembrancetide

- 2.1. Each branch is to organise the Poppy Appeal within its area of responsibility. The County/District Poppy Appeal Coordinator offers guidance and assistance to branches within the County/District. Success is dependent upon adequate preparation started well in advance. At the first Branch Committee meeting following the AGM a Branch Fundraising Committee may be created and a Poppy Appeal Organiser (PAO) appointed. PAOs do not have to be Legion members.
- 2.2. The Branch Fundraising Committee's work involves:
 - 2.2.1. Checking that the branch Poppy Appeal boundaries reflect the branch's capabilities, that the boundaries are agreed with neighbouring branches and that they are registered with the Area Office.
 - 2.2.2. Providing a PAO or local representative for each village or local community within the branch area.
 - 2.2.3. Assessing the opportunities for static collection points which may be 'manned' or 'unmanned'.
 - 2.2.4. Ensuring that the branch PAO has an up-to-date copy of the *Poppy Appeal Guide to Organisers* and that those who wish to be involved in the Poppy Appeal are properly briefed.
 - 2.2.5. Ensuring that the branch PAO has adequate supplies of and storage facilities for Poppy Appeal material. Many local PAOs receive their supplies direct from Poppy Appeal at Aylesford but the branch may need to maintain a reserve.
 - 2.2.6. Ensuring that security arrangements for money collected are adequate.

3. Rest of the Year

- 3.1. Raising funds for the Poppy Appeal continues throughout the year. Branches should hold fundraising events outside Remembrancetide. These can also be social events which both members and non-members can enjoy.
- 3.2. Any event in which a branch is involved, although it may not have a fundraising aim, should be exploited by the branch PAO for fundraising.
- 3.3. It is important that, when running an event, the branch is quite clear that it is not permitted to trade. All it may do is ask for donations. The distinction is important as charities are not allowed to trade without being subject to VAT regulations.

4. Other Forms of Fundraising

4.1. Branches should persuade their members, and anyone else who is likely to support the Legion's work for the service and ex-service community, to donate money to the charity. The following should be considered:

4.1.1. **Legacies.** A person may make provision in his/her will to leave the Legion a sum of money, a specific item or a percentage of their residuary estate. Information and guidance may be obtained from the Legacy Team.

4.1.2. **Gift Aid.** A person may donate regularly to the Legion, usually on an annual basis. If that person is a standard rate (or higher) tax payer the sum given may be increased by the tax if the donation is made in the form of a gift.

5. Fundraising for Other Purposes

5.1. A branch may wish to raise money for purposes other than the Legion. Such fundraising is governed by special considerations:

5.1.1. If a branch wishes to raise money for, say, a local children's hospital or other worthy cause it may NOT do so in the Legion's name or in any way which leads donors to suppose that they are giving money to the Legion (e.g. using the Legion logo or Legion stationery). Individual members may raise money but it must be clear that they are doing so on their own behalf and not on behalf of the Legion. Legion branch funds may NOT be used to make such donations.

5.1.2. Branches must bear in mind that any funds raised during the closed period 14 October - 14 November must be credited to the Poppy Appeal.

5.1.3. If funds are raised for the running of the branch, Poppy branded tins and/or buckets cannot be used. This is because Poppy branding may suggest fundraising for the Poppy Appeal and create confusion over how the funds raised will be spent.

5.2. If a branch is in any doubt as to the purposes for which money may be raised the Area Manager should be consulted.

6. Joint Fundraising Activities

6.1. If an event is promoted as a Legion event, then all income must be credited to the Legion.

6.2. If an event is promoted jointly with one or more other organisations, then Legion people only collect for the Legion. If Legion members collect for another charity, nothing must be worn or carried to identify them as Legion and they therefore act as members of the public, not a representative of the Legion. Other charities collect for themselves, with clear labeling on buckets and the people concerned. As a result, income will not be equally split between each organisation.

6.3. Collectors must not carry two differently branded buckets.

6.4. If it is a ticketed event for which there is a charge, then the proceeds can be equally distributed among the joint promoters, providing there is an appropriate statement on the face of the ticket.

7. Online Giving

7.1. When members or branches set up online donation sites/pages to raise funds for the Royal British Legion they must clearly specify where the income will go. Otherwise donors might assume that all the donations will be given to the Poppy Appeal. However, if a branch sets up an online giving page to fundraise for an event managed by the Head Office Events teams, all sponsorship (whether online or offline) must be sent to the Events teams directly, and is not to be allocated to the branch in any circumstance.

1. Branch Welfare Committee or Welfare Representative

- 1.1. Every branch is required to appoint a Branch Welfare Committee or a Branch Welfare Representative in accordance with the Royal Charter. The Members of the Welfare Committee are appointed annually by the Branch Committee at its first meeting following the Branch AGM, and the Committee Members then appoint their own Officers. Where a branch is unable to appoint a Welfare Committee it is to appoint a Branch Welfare Representative.
- 1.2. The role of the Branch Welfare Committee or Representative is to promote the objects of the Legion within their area of responsibility. The Branch Welfare Committee can include members of the Women's Section or other persons with appropriate experience and qualifications who are not Legion members (e.g. SSAFA Forces Help, Citizens Advice Bureau or accredited caseworkers). External, invited representatives on the Branch Welfare Committee have the right to vote and to hold chair on the Committee.
- 1.3. The Branch Welfare Committee or Representative is responsible to the Branch Committee for the welfare activities of the branch. The Branch Welfare representative or anyone appointed to a welfare committee must be familiar with the operating model of the Legion and have an understanding of the Legion's welfare delivery systems and structure. The Area Manager will be able to advise which welfare courses are available locally in order for Branch Welfare Committee members or Welfare Representatives to receive the appropriate training.
- 1.4. It is essential for all members of the Branch Welfare Committee or the Branch Welfare Representative to follow strict confidential working practices.

2. General Provisions

- 2.1. The Branch Welfare Committee or Branch Welfare Representative exercises the responsibilities for welfare within the branch. Members hearing of cases which may require Legion assistance must bring those to the notice of the Welfare Committee or Representative so that appropriate referrals can be made. Referrals for Welfare support must be made via the Contact Centre or the local Advice and Information Centre. It is only by keeping in touch with the Serving or ex-Service community that the branch can ensure that no case will be overlooked. The Branch Chairman, Welfare Committee Chairman or Branch Welfare Representative should remind members of their responsibilities in this respect at the Branch AGM.
- 2.2. The authority for welfare matters is the Poppy Support Handbook which should be studied carefully by all involved in branch welfare activities. Welfare volunteers are granted access to the Poppy Support Handbook, which is available via a password protected portal on the Legion web site, upon completing training.

3. Branch Welfare Casework and Visiting

- 3.1. Branch welfare involvement with the serving and ex-Service community might include carrying out volunteer casework, visiting beneficiaries or providing advice and information on behalf of the Legion. There is a limited demand for caseworkers, but other roles are available within every Area.
- 3.2. To be an authorized Caseworker or Visitor volunteer for the Legion, members must meet strict training and screening requirements which are necessary to protect the organisation, our volunteers, members and beneficiaries. There is also an Information

Volunteer role working alongside the Caseworkers and Visitors. Anybody applying for these roles must meet the criteria in the role description and undergo the recruitment, induction and training programme coordinated through the Area Offices.

- 3.3. Branches are encouraged to get involved in the Legion's welfare activities at every opportunity. However, anyone carrying out Legion welfare work must attend a Legion training course approved by the Legion's Volunteer Support Unit before doing so. This is so that welfare work can be carried out in line with the Legion's policies and procedures and in compliance with the law.

4. County/District Welfare Advisory Committee

- 4.1. The County/District Welfare Advisory Committee (CWAC) is responsible for the provision of advice regarding the delivery of local welfare services and implementing local strategies for improving support within the local serving and ex-Service community.
- 4.2. The CWAC works very closely with the Area Manager and other Area staff, who can provide professional advice and support. Any branch having difficulty with managing its welfare work should seek assistance from the Area Manager. Branches are also encouraged to make annual contributions to the County/District Welfare Fund which is used for local welfare cases throughout the year.

5. Branch Funds

- 5.1. Some branches may be under the impression that branch funds can be used for any welfare purpose they wish. This is not the case. Branch funds are Legion charitable funds and their expenditure is controlled by the Royal Charter and Charity law. The Board of Trustees is responsible for their correct use. Branch funds must be used in line with the Royal Charter and must follow the same policies and procedures as County and Central Funds.
- 5.2. Branches may make donations to Legion welfare activities or services, such as new equipment for a Poppy Home, activities for Poppy Break Centres or a new van for the Poppy Calls service. However, only with prior approval from Head Office can a branch make a donation to another charity or serving unit. Branches should contact the External Grants Officer in the Welfare Division for advice on the process to propose a donation to other charities or a serving unit.

6. Welfare for Branch Officers or Committee Members

- 6.1. A situation may arise where a Branch Officer or member of the Branch Welfare Committee is in need of Legion benevolence. In such cases, the case should be referred to the Contact Centre; this is done to ensure confidentiality.

1. The Legion is the Nation's custodian of Remembrance, ensuring that people remember those who have given their lives for the freedom we enjoy today. The Poppy has become the symbol of Remembrance worn during the weeks leading to Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day, though they may be worn all year round if desired
2. The national day of Remembrance is the second Sunday in November. Remembrance Services are the responsibility of the local authorities and branches should always support the Service of Remembrance, taking care to avoid conflict between their own activities and the arrangements for the rest of the community.
3. Where there are no local arrangements the branch should approach the church authorities with a request to hold a Service of Remembrance. The form of the service is a matter for the church authorities. Guidance and suggested Orders of Service can be found in the *Ceremonial Handbook*, which is available digitally through the Area Office.
4. A wreath may be laid at the local war memorial either in addition to, or instead of, laying a wreath in a church. The laying of wreaths at war memorials may form part of a short religious service or be a separate Legion-arranged ceremony. It should follow a simple but dignified procedure appropriate to local circumstances.
5. The Legion also believes that a Two Minutes Silence should be observed by everyone who is able to do so at 11 am on 11 November. Any special instructions will be issued by Head Office but branches will need to make their own arrangements, in whatever way appears the most suitable, for their members to observe the silence.
6. Expenses for the organisation of memorial services or parades may NOT be charged against the Poppy Appeal.
7. The National Festival of Remembrance takes place annually at the Royal Albert Hall (RAH) in London on the Saturday before Remembrance Sunday. There is one presentation in the afternoon and one in the evening. Tickets for the afternoon presentation are sold from the RAH box office and are exclusive to Legion members for a limited period of time. Tickets for the evening presentation are issued exclusively to Legion members and official guests. Details are contained in the Special Circular issued by Head Office annually.
8. War memorials are the responsibility of the local authorities. Neither the Poppy Appeal nor any other Legion fund may be used in connection with war memorials, unless the memorial is owned by the branch. If action is needed to improve the condition of a local war memorial the local authority should be approached. Local authorities can spend funds to maintain, repair, protect or adapt a memorial to serve as a memorial to subsequent conflicts.
9. Services, parades and rallies provide an opportunity for branches to put the Legion in the public eye. It is essential that such events are properly planned and executed. Branches involved in events should appoint a suitable parade marshal or ceremonial officer. If a branch does not have a ceremonial officer, advice can be sought from the County/District Parade Marshal. The Branch Standard will normally be central to ceremonial events as the rallying point of the branch and the constant symbolic reminder to members of the Legion's motto "Service not Self".
10. Further guidance on ceremonial matters can be found in the *Ceremonial Handbook*.

1. General Provisions

- 1.1. An active and supportive membership is important to the future of the Legion. Without new members the branch will wither and die and the Legion's work will be less effective.
- 1.2. An active membership can significantly contribute to the effectiveness of the charitable support to the Legion's work. But the membership can be maintained only if branches recruit. Although Head Office, County/District and Groups will assist, it is up to the branch itself to actively recruit members and volunteers who support the work of the Legion.
- 1.3. The *County/District Recruiting Officer's Handbook* provides detailed information on recruiting.

2. Who may join?

- 2.1. Membership is open to anyone, other than conscientious objectors, from the age of 17 years who accept the objects of the Legion and who commit themselves to take an active part in promoting them. Youth membership is open to those aged over 12 but under 17 years who accept and support the objects.

3. Club membership

- 3.1. Many people join the Legion to make use of club amenities. Club membership is a matter for the individual club concerned, but only those who are members of the Legion may be considered for membership of a club.

4. How someone joins

- 4.1. The Branch Committee admits a person to membership of the Legion through the branch and has full discretion over admission to membership of their branch. Applications may not be rejected unreasonably. If rejected, the County/District Committee must be given the reason in writing.

5. Recruiting

- 5.1. The branch should appoint a Branch Recruiting Officer who may be supported by other members to form a 'recruiting group'. On appointment the Branch Recruiting Officer should contact the Principal County/District Recruiting Officer (PC/DRO) for guidance. A new Branch Recruiting Officer should if possible attend a County/District Recruiting Seminar and perhaps a one-day Recruiting Advisers' Course.
- 5.2. All recruiting is based on the following approach whether it is one-to-one or a national campaign.
 - 5.2.1. **Contact** those, ex-Service or not, who sympathise with the objects of the Legion.
 - 5.2.2. **Inform** them of what the Legion does since, despite the Head Office-run Service briefing programme and other publicity, many will have misconceptions.
 - 5.2.3. **Invite** them to join.
- 5.3. The most difficult of these tasks is to contact individuals in the first place and a branch should have a recruiting plan which is reviewed annually. The following may form the basis of such a plan:

- 5.3.1. Organise a branch recruiting evening to identify ex-Service personnel and others in the area who sympathise with the Legion's cause and to decide how to approach them. At the same meeting branch members may each be asked to recruit one person.
- 5.3.2. Organise Branch Open Day, well advertised locally, for which support may be obtained from the PCRO and the RPMO.
- 5.3.3. Put up a display in local premises based on the material which is available from the publications catalogue and can be ordered from Aylesford..
- 5.3.4. Use advertising in the local press.
- 5.3.5. Give Legion talks to local groups such as Rotary Clubs, women's and youth organisations and others, bearing in mind the need to cover all age ranges and walks of life.

6. Retention

- 6.1. Retention is just as important as recruiting. The Legion has a very high turnover of members; current statistics show that 50% of members lapse within two years of joining.. It is a shame to put a lot of effort into recruiting members only to lose them after one or two years.
- 6.2. A well run and active branch which involves its members (and particularly the new members) should have little difficulty in keeping them. But a large proportion of those who leave do so because they simply do not see sufficient merit in remaining or are not reminded to renew their subscription. It is therefore important that a branch has an efficient method of subscription renewal. Strategies include:
 - 6.2.1. The payment of subscriptions by Direct Debit (DDSP). This is a very simple and efficient way of collecting subscriptions which ensures renewal of membership. Full details are included in the annual renewal documentation sent to each member.
 - 6.2.2. A system of postal reminders (but this can add to branch costs) or e-mail reminders.
 - 6.2.3. The appointment of subscription wardens who are responsible for renewals in a particular area.
- 6.3. Where the branch has a club associated with it every effort should be made to inform and remind those members mainly involved in club activities about the Legion's work. This may be done formally by briefings and informally by discussions with members or by notice board displays.

7. Staff Support

7.1. Regional Publicity and Membership Officers (RPMOs)

- 7.1.1. There are three RPMOs, one per Region, and one National PMO. They provide staff recruiting advice and support to Counties/Districts in their Region. As they each have a very big area to cover and are also responsible for briefing Service units and for spreading the word about the Legion's work in the wider community, recruiting support is usually given to branches through the PC/DRO.

The RPMO will, however, always try to advise a branch if approached. The RPMO can be contacted through the Membership Support Officer.

7.2. Branches in danger of closure

7.2.1. Should a branch believe that it is in danger of closure either through lack of members, or because members are elderly and unable to take up Committee positions, it should immediately contact the Membership Support Officer. The earlier that this can be done the greater the opportunity for the County/District to advise on the action necessary to save the branch.

8. New Members

- 8.1. It is most important that new members are properly looked after by the branch. They may have high expectations, and if they become disillusioned not only will the branch lose the member but the disaffection may spread to others.
- 8.2. New members should be given a briefing on the Legion and its work soon after joining. It is important that this briefing be given by a member who is well versed in the work of the Legion as a whole and in that of the branch. It is particularly important that the new member be given an explanation as to how his/her own efforts and enthusiasm for the work of the Legion can best be employed. The RPMOs and PC/DROs can advise if required.
- 8.3. If possible, new members should at an early stage be involved in a minor capacity in the work of their branch, perhaps assisting the Fundraising Committee. If interest is aroused it may lead to more active participation in the future and perhaps an interest in holding Branch Office. If interest is lost the member may be lost.
- 8.4. Above all, Branch Officers and Committee Members must take an interest in new members. New members must feel that interest in them is being taken by their branch. Some branches may like to appoint an experienced member to look after new members in the early stages of their membership.

1. Formation Meeting

1.1. A meeting is to take place of 15 members or potential members, who are 17 (seventeen) years or over, who wish to form a branch of The Royal British Legion. The meeting is to be attended by a representative of the County/District Committee.

1.2. The Meeting is to pass the following resolution:

“That this meeting hereby accepts the Objects of the Royal Charter, the Schedule of Rules and the Governing Regulations of The Royal British Legion and formally establishes a branch.”

1.3. The County/District representative will provide the new branch with a copy of the Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook, the model Bye-Laws and instructions on gaining access to the Legion website where all policies and procedures are published. The County/District Representative will assist in running the meeting and explain the implications of the Royal Charter.

2. Establishing a Committee

2.1. Following the resolution the Branch Officers and Committee are elected. The details of the Branch Committee are to be entered on a Form MS9 and the form is to be sent to the Membership Support Officer. The MS9 must show the branch title and branch contact details.

2.2. The branch formation must first be approved at a County/District Committee meeting.

2.3. After approval at the County/District Committee, the Membership Support Officer is to send form MS9 to the Secretary to the Membership Council at Head Office.

2.4. The branch will be formed officially only when it is approved by the Membership Council. Approval is reported in the Minutes of the Membership Council meeting.

2.5. The Membership Services team will allocate a branch number after MC approval and enter the branch on the Legion's Membership database.

3. Membership

3.1. Immediately following the resolution, those of the 15 persons who are not Legion members must complete a membership application form (Form MS4). Forms MS4 will be provided by the County/District representative.

4. Establishing an Area of Responsibility

4.1. The County/District representative will provide the new branch with its area of responsibility defining the branches with which the boundaries of the new branch interface.

4.2. Where there are already active branches operating in the area, the County/District Committee may not approve the formation of a new branch.

1. Formation Meeting

1.1. A meeting is to take place of 15 members or potential members, who are 17 (seventeen) years or over, who wish to form a branch of The Royal British Legion. The meeting is to be attended by a representative of the District Committee. If the branch is to operate outside an Overseas District, in the first instance the potential members must establish with the relevant authority within the country that a branch of a British Charity may be formed there.

1.2. The Meeting is to pass the following resolution:

“That this meeting hereby accepts the Objects of the Royal Charter, the Schedule of Rules and the Governing Regulations of The Royal British Legion and formally establishes a branch”.

1.3. The District representative will provide the new branch with a copy of the Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook, the Branch Model Bye-Laws, the Legion Complaints Procedures and instructions on gaining access to the Legion website. The District Representative will assist in running the meeting and explain the implications of the Royal Charter.

2. Establishing a Committee

2.1. Following the resolution, the Branch Officers and Committee are elected. The details of the Branch Committee are to be entered on a Form MS9 and the form is to be sent to the District Secretary or the Membership Support Officer (Overseas). The MS9 must show the Branch title and Branch contact details.

2.2. The District Committee must first approve the formation of the new branch.

2.3. After approval at the District Committee meeting, the District Secretary is to send form MS9 to the Secretary to the Membership Council at Head Office.

2.4. The branch will be formed officially only when it is approved by the Membership Council. Approval is reported in the Minutes of the Membership Council meeting.

2.5. The Membership Services team will allocate a branch number after MC approval and enter the branch on the Legion’s Membership database.

3. Membership

3.1. Immediately following the resolution, those of the 15 persons who are not Legion members must complete a membership application form (Form MS4). Forms MS4 will be provided by the District representative.

4. Establishing an Area of Responsibility

4.1. The District representative will provide the new branch with its area of responsibility defining the branches with which the boundaries of the new branch interface.

5. Operating Outside an Overseas District

5.1. Branches operating outside an Overseas District should seek advice from the Membership Support Officer (Overseas) at Head Office.

1. Communication and information resources

- 1.1. Overseas branches must follow the policies and procedures as stipulated in the Royal Charter and the Membership Handbook.
- 1.2. Branches can obtain electronic copies of the Membership Handbook and other policy and procedural documents through their District Secretary or the Membership Support Officer (Overseas) or on the Legion website
- 1.3. The Membership Support Officer (Overseas) is the main point of contact for the overseas branches.

2. Meetings

- 2.1. Due to the large distances involved in running an Overseas District, consideration must be given to alternative meeting methods including Skype, teleconferencing and e-mail contact.

3. Branch Boundaries and Poppy Appeal income**3.1. BRANCHES OUTSIDE OF A DISTRICT**

Having assembled figures from your branch account return and Poppy Appeal Statement of Account, the Form SC22 should now be signed at the bottom of page 1 and sent to the Membership Support Administrator (Overseas) at Head Office, together with a copy of page 3 of the Branch Accounts form detailing Direct Welfare Payments to support the retention requests. Without page 3 of the Branch Accounts form, the retention request cannot be processed and authorisation cannot be given.

3.2. BRANCHES WITHIN A DISTRICT

Having assembled figures from your branch account return and Poppy Appeal Statement of Account, the Form SC22a should now be signed at the bottom of page 1 and sent to the District Secretary, together with a copy of your Branch's Branch Account return and a copy (original to be sent to Aylesford) of the Poppy Appeal Statement of Account.

- 3.3. The completed **original** Poppy Appeal Statement of Account must be sent to Poppy Appeal in Aylesford after the annual Poppy Appeal.
- 3.4. Welfare boundaries need to be agreed with the Operations Directorate.

4. Branch Finances (Chapter 4.1.9)

- 4.1. Overseas branches may use the Branch Funds Initiative at Head Office for large deposit accounts.

5. Events

- 5.1. Overseas branches may qualify for central grants to organise events For advice on events and how to apply for funding, please contact the Membership Support Officer (Overseas).

6. Subscriptions

- 6.1. A fixed exchange rate is set at the beginning of each Corporate Financial Year for the bulk payment of affiliation fees.

7. Training

- 7.1. Membership training is available for Branch Committee members and members. Details for training can be obtained through the Membership Training team at Head Office.
- 7.2. As a general rule, Overseas members will not be invited to attend training sessions in the UK. Training will as much as possible be delivered locally to save on travel expenses.

8. Complaints

- 8.1. Branches and Districts must strive to resolve complaints from members at a local level; matters must only be escalated to the Legion Complaints Committee if no resolution at local level is possible, as Investigation Panels are costly to convene.

9. Property

- 9.1. The Branch is to inform the Membership Support Officer (Overseas) at Head Office who will liaise with the Commercial Directorate and advise on the appropriate action to take.

10. Overseas Clubs/Bars

- 10.1. Overseas Branches shall not use the name of the "The Royal British Legion" nor use RBL Branch accounts in connection with any bar/club used by the Branch. Neither shall they use the name of The Royal British Legion in connection with any financial accounts connected with bars/clubs.
- 10.2. No agreement/contract for a bar/club or its employees may be entered into using the name of The Royal British Legion by an Overseas Branch.

11. Law

- 11.1. Branches operating outside an Overseas District must ensure that they do not undertake any activity that is in conflict with local law, whether or not that activity is mentioned by the Royal Charter or this Handbook or any other policy document relevant to them. If there is a conflict then the law of the country where the branch is located must prevail.

1. A Sub-Branch

- 1.1. A branch which is unable to continue as a branch through lack of branch Officers or members may become a sub-branch of another Legion branch rather than close or amalgamate.
- 1.2. The formation of a sub-branch should be a temporary measure. Sub-branches should only be formed where there is a realistic prospect of the branch returning to full branch status.
- 1.3. The failing branch is first to obtain approval for becoming a sub-branch from the potential parent branch.
- 1.4. The failing branch and the parent branch are then to obtain approval for the change of status by each holding a Branch General Meeting at which the decision is endorsed by majority vote.

2. Approval by the County/District Committee

- 2.1. The application to become a sub-branch is to be put by the failing branch to the County/District Committee for approval. The application is to be accompanied by certified true copies of both Branch General Meetings approving the change of status.
- 2.2. If the County/District Committee supports the change of status, form MS5-B should be completed to reflect the completion of the actions listed below. The form MS5-B, once completed in its entirety, is to be forwarded to the Secretary to the Membership Council at Head Office.
- 2.3. The change of status is approved formally only when approved by the Membership Council. Once approved, the Membership database will be updated with the branch change of status.

3. Subsequent Actions

- 3.1. The sub-branch is wholly administered by the parent branch.
- 3.2. The sub-branch will retain its branch number and 'sub-branch' will be incorporated into its title. It may parade its Standard.
 - 3.3. The sub-branch must close all bank accounts and hand over the funds to the parent branch. The sub-branch account will be held by the parent branch but in a separate column. The parent Branch treasurer must include the sub-branch accounts when submitting the year end branch accounts. The sub-branch funds may be used for charitable purposes in the sub-branch area.
- 3.3. The sub-branch may be represented on the parent Branch Committee but sub-branch members may not be officers of the parent branch
- 3.4. The parent Branch Trustees are the Trustees of the sub-branch's assets.
- 3.5. The sub-branch has no rights of representation at the Annual Meeting of County/District Conference or at Annual Conference.

4. Timescale

- 4.1. If a sub-branch has not been able to return to full branch status within three years, the County/District Committee must review the status of the branch and transfer the remaining members to the parent branch, a neighbouring branch or another suitable branch, or amalgamate the branch with the parent branch.

1. Amalgamation with another branch

- 1.1. A branch which is unable to continue through lack of Branch Officers or members may amalgamate with another Legion branch.
- 1.2. The failing branch must obtain approval for the amalgamation from the potential receiving or parent branch.
- 1.3. The failing branch and the receiving branch are to obtain approval for the amalgamation by each holding a Branch General Meeting at which the decision is endorsed by majority vote.

2. Approval by the County/District Committee

- 2.1. The application to amalgamate is to be put by the failing branch to the County/District Committee for approval. The application is to be accompanied by certified true copies of both Branch General Meetings approving the amalgamation.
- 2.2. If the County/District Committee supports the amalgamation Form MS5-C should be completed to reflect the completion of the actions listed below. The Form MS5-C, once completed in its entirety, is to be forwarded to the Secretary to the Membership Council at Head Office.
- 2.3. The branch will be amalgamated officially only when it is approved by the Membership Council. Once approved, the Membership database will be amended to register the amalgamation.

3. Subsequent Actions

- 3.1. The failing branch provides the Membership Support Officer with an audited/examined statement of the branch's account effective as at the date of amalgamation.
- 3.2. The financial assets of the failing branch are then transferred to the receiving branch. Once transferred these monies become part of the receiving or parent branch's funds. Any restricted funds must be ring fenced in the receiving branch's accounts.
- 3.3. The Standard of the failing branch is to be laid-up in the parish church. Once laid up it may not be paraded.

1. A Sub-branch

- 1.1. A sub-branch which becomes able to fulfil the responsibilities of a full branch may apply to return to full branch status.
- 1.2. The sub-branch will seek approval to become a full branch by holding a Branch General Meeting at which the decision is endorsed by majority vote.

2. Approval by the County/District Committee

- 2.1. The application to return to full branch status is to be put by the sub-branch to the County/District Committee for approval. The application is to be accompanied by a certified true copy of the Branch General Meeting approving the change of status.
- 2.2. If the County/District Committee supports the change of status Form MS5-B should be completed to reflect the completion of the actions listed below. The Form MS5-B, once completed in its entirety, is to be forwarded to the Secretary to the Membership Council at Head Office.
- 2.3. The return to full branch status is to be approved by the Membership Council. The change of status is approved formally only when published in the Membership Council's Minutes. After MC approval, the Membership database will be updated to register the branch change of status.
- 2.4. If a sub-branch cannot return to full branch status within three years, the County/District Committee must investigate options to transfer the members and amalgamate or close the sub-branch.

3. Subsequent Action

- 3.1. Responsibility for administration returns to the branch from the former parent branch.
- 3.2. 'Sub-branch' will be removed from its title.
- 3.3. The branch account will be returned by the former parent branch.
- 3.4. The branch must form and elect a Committee.
- 3.5. Trusteeship of the branch's assets reverts to the branch.
- 3.6. The branch right of representation at the Annual Meeting of County/District Conference and at Annual Conference is reinstated.

1. Closure

- 1.1. A branch that is unable to continue as a branch through lack of Branch Officers or members may close.
- 1.2. The failing branch is to inform the County/District Committee of its intention to close following a Branch General Meeting at which the decision is endorsed by majority vote.
- 1.3. If the branch is unable to make such a decision at a Branch General Meeting, e.g. due to lack of members or Committee members, The County/District Committee can recommend the branch closure directly to the Membership Council.
- 1.4. Closure is a last resort when all other avenues, including amalgamation and formation of a sub-branch, have been explored and exhausted.

2. Approval by the County/District Committee

- 2.1. The application to close is to be put by the closing branch to the County/District Committee for approval. The application is to be accompanied by a certified copy of the Minutes of the Branch General Meeting.
- 2.2. When the County/District Committee has approved the branch closure, a form MS5-A must be completed to reflect the completion of the actions listed below.
- 2.3. The form MS5-A, once completed in its entirety, is to be forwarded to the Secretary to the Membership Council at Head Office.
- 2.4. The branch will be closed officially when it is approved by the Membership Council. After MC approval, the Membership database will be updated to register the closure.

3. Subsequent Actions by the County/District

- 3.1. Transfer the remaining branch members to a branch of their choice.
- 3.2. Transfer the remaining funds to Head Office and close the branch bank account. The members may vote to transfer the funds to the Poppy Appeal or another Legion cause.
- 3.3. Obtain a bank statement showing the closing transactions.
- 3.4. The total funds transferred to Head Office will be maintained in a restricted fund for 3 years during which time they can be reclaimed if the branch reforms.
- 3.5. Retain the Branch Minute Book. Forward any Trust or Title Deeds to the Head of Legal at Head Office.
- 3.6. The Standard of the closed branch is to be laid-up in the parish church. Once laid up it may not be paraded.
- 3.7. Branches will not be closed on the database until all outstanding payments have been finalised.

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

.....County/District

To: The Membership Council Secretary

Date:.....

CLOSURE

1. At a meeting of the County/District Committee on.....it was agreed to recommend:

- Closure ofBranch,(Branch Code)

2. The County/District Committee has explored other options but there is no prospect of maintaining this branch at its present status.

3. The County/District Recruiting Officer (CRO) attempted to revive the branch.

4. The Branch Minutes are attached to confirm the Branch(es) wish to proceed.

5. The reasons for closure are:

.....

6. The branch strength is now.....members/Life members.

7. Arrangements have been made for remaining branch members to transfer to:

.....Branch.

8. The Branch has a Legion Club relationship.

--

The Club will now be affiliated to theBranch for administration purposes

9. *For welfare work the branch area has been added to that covered byBranch, or has been divided among the following Branches:

Branch Code:

.....

10. *The Branch Standard is to be laid up in.....

11. The following arrangements have been made for the continuation of the Poppy Appeal:

.....

12. Finance

Asset Total:		Restricted/Ring-fenced Funds (please detail below)	
Assets have been transferred to:			
Head Office			
County Welfare Fund		Bank Statements Attached	
Poppy Appeal		Branch Property Trust	
Not Transferred/Other (please provide reason and last known location)			

13. Additional Comments:

County/District Chairman – signed:..... print name:.....

Membership Support Officer– signed:..... print name:.....

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

.....County/District

To: The Membership Council Secretary

Date:.....

FORMATION OF A SUB-BRANCH/RETURN TO FULL BRANCH STATUS

1. At a meeting of the County/District Committee on.....it was agreed to recommend that:

- *..... Branch, (Branch Code), a sub-Branch of Branch, (Branch Code), return to full branch status.
- *..... Branch, (Branch Code) form a sub-Branch of Branch, (Branch Code)

2. The County/District Committee has examined the circumstances of Branch and has decided that:

- *the Branch is capable of taking on the responsibilities of a full branch.
- *there is no prospect of maintaining this branch at its present status.

3. The reasons for *formation of a sub-branch/return to full branch status are:

.....

4. The branch strength is members/Life members. If the Branch has less than 15 members, please state the current viability of the Branch:

.....

5. Responsibility for service and welfare work will be with:

.....

6. Responsibility for Poppy Appeal will be with:

.....

7. Finance

Asset Total:		Restricted/Ring-fenced Funds (please detail below)	
Assets have been transferred to:			
Parent Branch		Bank Statements Attached	
New Bank account (if returning to full status)		Branch Property Trust	
Not Transferred/Other: (please provide reason and last known location)			

County/District Chairman – signed:..... print name:.....

Membership Support Officer – signed:..... print name:.....

*Delete as applicable.

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

.....County/District

To: The Membership Council Secretary

Date:.....

AMALGAMATION

1. At a meeting of the County/District Committee on.....it was agreed to recommend:
 - Amalgamation of Branch, (Branch Code)
with..... Branch, (Branch Code).
2. The County/District Committee has explored other options but there is no prospect of maintaining this branch at its present status.
3. The County/District Recruiting Officer (CRO) attempted to revive the branch.
4. The Branch Minutes are attached to confirm the Branch(es) wish to proceed.
5. The County has received a request for the name change of the Amalgamated Branch
 - The amalgamated branch will be called Branch
6. The reasons for amalgamation is:
.....
7. The branch strength is now.....members/Life members.
8. The Branch has a Legion Club relationship.
The Club will now be affiliated to theBranch for administration purposes
9. *For welfare work the branch area has been added to that covered byBranch, or has been divided among the following Branches:
Branch Code:
.....
.....
10. The Branch Standard is to be laid up in.....
11. The following arrangements have been made for the continuation of the Poppy Appeal:
.....

12. Finance

Asset Total:		Restricted/Ring-fenced Funds (please detail below)	
Transferred to Amalgamated Branch			
Bank Statements Attached		Branch Property Trust	
Not Transferred/Other (please provide reason and last known location)			

13. Additional Comments:

County/District Chairman – signed:..... print name:.....

Membership Support Officer– signed:..... print name:.....

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

FORMATION OF A BRANCH

We request that the following branch be registered with The Royal British Legion.

..... Branch
Branch Code (to be allocated by Head Office)

<p>At a meeting of members of The Royal British Legion held</p> <p>at.....</p> <p>on theday of.....20.....</p> <p>the following resolution was adopted:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>RESOLVED</u></p> <p><i>“That this meeting hereby accepts the Objects of the Royal Charter of The Royal British Legion and formally establishes a branch. The branch will adhere to the Royal Charter, the Membership Handbook and all policies and procedures relevant to the formation.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Minutes of the Meeting are attached</p>

Branch Officers were elected as follows:
Chairman.....
Vice-Chairman.....
Treasurer.....
Secretary.....
Headquarters of branch.....
.....
Address for Correspondence.....
.....
Phone Number..... e-mail.....
Signed.....Secretary
<i>(Print Name and Sign)</i>

Note: The completed form should be sent to the Membership Support Officer.