



Central News – September 2026

Membership information, updates and engagement

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Important dates

4 September 2026	Membership fee increases from £22 to £24
15 September 2026	Fireside Chat: The story behind Scotty's Little Soldiers

RBL's position on coloured poppies

The Legion's red poppy is a universal symbol of Remembrance and hope, including hope for a peaceful world. Importantly, funds raised by the red poppy support our Armed Forces, veterans and their families in their times of need. Legion red poppy wreaths are also available through the Poppy Appeal for anyone wishing to take part in an Act of Remembrance.

The RBL respects the rights and freedoms of groups and individuals to make their own decisions on how to observe Remembrance, and we understand that some people may wish to lay a different coloured poppy wreath or wear a different coloured poppy at Remembrance. We would ask that everyone considers using the red poppy alongside it as an act of respect for the service and sacrifice of Britain's Armed Forces, veterans, and their families, and we encourage those organising Remembrance services to discuss this with all groups.

Remembrance parade guidance

In partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA) and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), RBL has contributed to a joint letter offering guidance on the expectations around the organisation of Remembrance parades. This letter is shared by the LGA and NALC with their member councils in England and Wales to help ensure that events are delivered safely, successfully, and with consistency. [Find the letter on the LGA website.](#)

Compliant branch definition

The Rules supplemental to the Royal Charter have been updated to clearly define what RBL branches must do to be categorised as compliant, including on time submission of their annual accounts and MS1 form.

Find the latest version of the Royal Charter and Rules [on our website](#). Should you have any questions please contact membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk.

Membership fee increase

As a reminder, the £2 membership fee increase for 2026 comes into effect on Friday, 4 September 2026. Any branches who list the membership fee or FAQs on their website should ensure that the stated fee is updated from 4 September 2026.

New members and those renewing from that date will pay £24. The change will take place automatically at renewal. Please note: our payment provider is Charles Novacroft and this may appear on the member's statement.

The fee increase follows the Motion passed at Annual Conference 2024. This will help us provide the best service to our valued members and ensure that membership remains at the very heart of our charity. If you or local members would like to know more about the fee increase, please visit rbl.org.uk/membershipfees.

New Membership special interest group

Following the success of our RBL Gamers Group, we're delighted to launch a new online Special Interest Group for members – the Hobbies and Interests group.

Like the online Gamers Group, the Hobbies and Interests group will serve as a hub for members to connect and enjoy camaraderie online. Whether you're interested in walking, cycling, military history, cooking, a book club, health and fitness, art, film and much more, we invite you to join in and connect with members across the world.

Our online groups help bring like-minded people together as well as help to alleviate isolation and foster friendships across distance. Please visit our webpage for more information on how to join – rbl.org.uk/specialinterestgroups.

Fireside Chat – Episode Three

The Story Behind Scotty's Little Soldiers: Tuesday 15 September 12.00pm–1.00pm

Join us in two weeks' time to hear Nikki Scott, Founder of Scotty's Little Soldiers, in conversation with RBL's Jon Summerson.

In this deeply moving and inspiring episode, Nikki reflects on the devastating moment when she received the news of the death of her husband, Corporal Lee Scott, who was killed in Afghanistan in 2009, and on the challenge of explaining his loss to their young children, and the lasting impact military bereavement had on her family.

Determined to ensure that other bereaved military children never felt alone, Nikki transformed her grief into purpose by founding Scotty's Little Soldiers. Now a nationally recognised charity, it provides practical, emotional and social support to thousands of bereaved military children and young people across the UK.

This is a conversation about the impact of service on military families; it is about love, loss, resilience

and the extraordinary impact one person can have when they turn personal tragedy into a force for good.

[Join using this link](#) at 12.00pm, 15 September. Can't make it? Look out for the recording in October's Central News. Catch up on previous Fireside Chats and other membership events [using this link](#).

October's Town Hall to focus on recruitment and retention

Save the date for our next Members' Town Hall. On Saturday, 17 October at 10.30am, we'll be discussing best practice in branch recruitment and retention.

This interactive session will aim to encourage conversation and inspire good ideas. Attendees will also be able to hear from branches that have experienced success in recruitment and retention, and will be able to share their own successes or ask questions.

As usual, there will also be time for discussion. [Use this link to join on the day](#). Missed our previous Town Halls? Catch up on them and other virtual membership events [using this link](#).

A ceremony of remembrance brings communities together in Dublin



More than 125 wreaths were laid in a moving service held in July

More than 125 wreaths were laid in July at Dublin's National War Memorial Gardens, in a moving service to remember the sacrifice of Irish and Northern Irish men and women in both world wars.

Jointly organised by RBL's Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland Districts, this year's all-Ireland service held particular significance as it commemorated the 110th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme, in which approximately 4,500 Irish soldiers lost their lives. Estimates suggest that between 40,000 and 60,000 Irish men and women lost their lives during the two World Wars.

Dignitaries and representatives from across the island of Ireland, including the Irish Minister of State, Robert Troy, the Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland, Emma Little-Pengelly, the Lord Mayors of Dublin and Belfast, and representatives of the Irish Defence Forces and An Garda Síochána, were in attendance.

Musical tributes were performed by the 2 Brigade Band of the Irish Defence Forces, the Band of the 2nd Battalion, Royal Irish Regiment, and The Brook Singers.

Membership grants make a difference for Armed Forces Day



An RBL grant helped the branch provide refreshments on Armed Forces Day

This year, Staple Hill and District Branch used an RBL grant to provide refreshments to veterans, serving personnel and their families at South Gloucestershire Armed Forces Day. Ian Campbell, Branch Chair, told us why the grant made a difference and why other branches should think of applying.

Q. How did the availability of a grant make a difference to your branch's ability to deliver the activity?

A. "The grant made it possible for us to provide refreshments for more than 170 veterans, serving personnel and their families at South Gloucestershire Armed Forces Day. It meant we could offer a welcoming place for people to sit, have a chat and enjoy the day together, while our branch volunteers had the opportunity to meet and support members of our local Armed Forces community."

Q. Were there any obstacles that the branch had to overcome to arrange the activity?

A. "Providing refreshments for such a large number of people was a big undertaking, and there was plenty of planning and organising needed behind the scenes. Thankfully, our volunteers worked together to make sure everything was ready on the day, and seeing everyone enjoying themselves made all the effort worthwhile."

Q. What were the highlights?

A. "One of the real highlights was seeing veterans unexpectedly reconnect with friends they hadn't seen since the previous Armed Forces Day. It was equally lovely to see people meeting our branch members for the first time, getting to know one another and building new friendships, which is exactly what days like this are all about."

Q. Did the activity create any interest or membership recruitment for the branch?

A. "The event gave us a great opportunity to talk to people about our branch and the support we provide to the local Armed Forces community. We had some really positive conversations and made new connections, and we're hopeful that these will lead to people getting involved with the branch and perhaps becoming members in the future."

Q. What tips would you give to a branch that has not organised this type of activity before?

A. "Our advice would be to plan ahead, get your volunteers involved and don't be afraid to ask for help. We would also encourage other branches to look at the grant funding available and put in an application, don't assume you won't be successful. The funding gave us the opportunity to do something really worthwhile for our local Armed Forces community. It was fantastic to see the Royal British Legion help to bring people together, helping old friends reconnect and giving others the

chance to get to know their local branch.”

Useful information

- [Suggestions / ideas submission form](#)
- [Templates for *branch to new member* welcome emails](#)
- [Link to join the RBL Gamers Group](#)
- **Contact Centre Tel (UK):** 0808 802 8080 **Overseas:** +44 (0)20 3376 8080
- **Email:** info@britishlegion.org.uk

Thank you for reading! The next edition of Central News is due to be published Tuesday 6 October.