ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

Central News – November 2026

Membership information, updates and engagement

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Recruitment to the Board of Trustees

RBL is recruiting two appointed Trustees, with the process being managed by external consultants Saxton Bampfylde. For further information, please view the recruitment advertisement here. The closing date for applications is 12pm (midday) on 16 November 2026.

Are you taking part in Poppy Appeal 2026?

If you are, **thank you!** Every volunteer makes a difference and together we can make this year's Poppy Appeal our best yet.

The Poppy Appeal team has put together some handy reminders for those collecting for Poppy Appeal 2026:

- Please ensure that every tin has the **purple 2026 tin seal**. No other seal is compliant.
- Ensure that everyone collecting has a **red Poppy Appeal lanyard**; if one is not to hand, collectors must have the 2026 collector ID as a minimum.
- In the event of any issues, we kindly ask you to never complain to any of the supermarkets about collecting at their stores. Always talk to your Poppy Appeal Manager (PAM) who will liaise with the RBL Corporate team on anything you wish to raise, as we cannot risk jeopardising these brilliant relationships.
- Please keep safe! This year, there is safety information on the lanyard cards and in a one-page safeguarding information document.

Thank you so much for your support with this year's Poppy Appeal! Should you have questions about the above guidance or this year's Poppy Appeal, please contact your PAM.

Charity Fraud Awareness Week 2026

The Royal British Legion is proud to support Charity Fraud Awareness Week 2026. With this year's campaign taking place during the Poppy Appeal, it’s a timely reminder that protecting the money, data and resources entrusted to us is everyone's responsibility.

Every year, supporters raise vital funds through donations, fundraising and volunteering. While the vast majority act with honesty and integrity, charities can still be targeted by fraud, theft and cybercrime, particularly during busy fundraising periods.

Every pound lost to fraud and theft is a pound that cannot be used to support the Armed Forces community. Please stay vigilant and question anything that doesn't feel right. If you suspect fraud or theft, please report it promptly to your Membership Engagement Officer, or contact:

- **Helen Gower, Head of Internal Audit -** hgower@britishlegion.org.uk
- OR **Kate Wildman, Audit Compliance & Investigations Manager -** kwildman@britishlegion.org.uk

You can also report concerns confidentially through our whistleblowing service: www.britishlegion.ethicspoint.com or 0800 088 5862. Thank you for your continued support. Together we can protect the funds raised for those who need us the most.

Annual Conference 2027

Save the date and join us at **Annual Conference, 7–9 May 2027 at Telford International Centre**, **Shropshire**.

In addition to exciting keynote addresses and updates, Annual Conference offers opportunities to take part, connect and remember. It also offers the ideal opportunity to speak one-to-one with staff from across the RBL, and get answers to your branch, county or general membership questions.

Whether you can attend in person or online, let's make Annual Conference 2027 an event to remember! Find out more in the October Special Circular, or on the Annual Conference webpage. Registration opens on 27 January 2027 and closes at 12pm (midday) on 7 April 2027.

Festival of Remembrance 2026

If you have purchased tickets for this year's Festival of Remembrance, these will be posted to the address on your booking approximately 10 days before the event.

If they have not arrived by Friday 6 November, please contact festival@britishlegion.org.uk so we can arrange collection from the box office. More information and FAQs are available on our website.

Branch and county website online training

Are you looking for help with your formation's RBL website? Our short YouTube training videos cover the basics, with guidance on content, structure and troubleshooting.

Whether you're new to managing a website or would welcome a refresher, take a look at the series.

If you would like to set up an official RBL website or add a new website manager to your existing branch website, please contact your regional email inbox or your Membership Engagement Officer.

Hospital washbags pilot launched




We are delighted to announce the launch of a new pilot providing emergency washbags for members of the Armed Forces community who are admitted to an NHS hospital without access to essential personal care items. Working closely with local NHS Trusts, the initiative will help promote dignity, comfort and wellbeing for serving personnel, veterans and their families facing challenging circumstances, while also connecting them with wider support available through the Legion.

The pilot is being delivered in partnership with Derbyshire, South Yorkshire and Dorset Counties, whose generous support has funded the washbags for their local communities. As well as providing immediate practical help, the initiative will strengthen partnerships with local NHS Trusts and help us better understand the needs of the Armed Forces community and use these insights to shape future support and services. Counties interested in joining a future phase of the pilot next spring are encouraged to get in touch by contacting MembershipServices@britishlegion.org.uk.

RBL musicians and singers special interest group

Do you play an instrument or enjoy singing? Connect with fellow members who share your love of music through our new Musicians and Singers special interest group. Part of our Hobbies & Interests groups, it's open to all RBL members, whether you're an experienced musician or simply enjoy singing or playing for fun. To join, please apply via our website.

October Members' Town Hall

What gives people a reason to join the Legion — and an even better reason to stay? Watch the October 2026 Members' Town Hall for ideas on making membership welcoming, rewarding and connected to the community.

In a hurry? The quick-reference times below provide a guide on where you can find the subject you particularly want to catch up on:

1:16 Welcome and introduction to the Town Hall – Nina Villa.

4:47 Outreach to serving personnel, youth engagement and the Household Division Partnership – Jon Summerson.

9:44 RBL strategy, "gain and retain to sustain", reviewing the membership offer and building belonging – Sarah Pittaway.

18:17 From Skegness Branch, successful branch recruitment and retention, community visibility, social media, welcoming members and flexible volunteering – Tracy Turner.

33:16 Q&A including topics such as:

- Recruiting and retaining members, youth engagement and military connections.
- Veterans' breakfast clubs, community events and local partnerships.
- Membership benefits, member emails and Legion magazine updates.
- Supporting smaller branches, sharing resources and flexible Branch Community Support.
- Branch properties, community hubs and the National Memorial Arboretum.
- The Household Division partnership and community grants.
- Membership Handbook, cashless payments and more.

Fireside Chats – catch up on demand

Catch up with our latest Fireside Chats and hear personal stories from across the Armed Forces community. Browse the recordings using this link. Episode Four is available now, with Episodes Five and Six coming soon.

- **Episode Four** – Royal Navy veteran Jason Smith sits down for an open conversation about the realities of modern military service and life after the Armed Forces.
- **Episode Five –** Debbie Robinson shares her honest reflections on the realities of being an Army spouse and mother after more than three decades supporting life in both the Regular Army and the Reserves. *(Recording available soon.)*
- **Episode Six** – former England football captain Terry Butcher shares the story of his son, Captain Chris Butcher, who served in the British Army, and who died from a tragic abnormal enlargement of the heart of uncertain cause, combined with the effect of drugs against a background of PTSD. *(Recording available soon.)*

Information and quick links

- Suggestions and ideas submission form
- Link to join the RBL special interest groups
- **Contact Centre Tel (UK):** 0808 802 8080 **Overseas:** +44 20 3376 8080
- **Email:** info@britishlegion.org.uk

Thank you for reading! The next edition of Central News is planned for Tuesday 1 December 2026.