



Celebrating together

Taking part in our Centenary

rbl.org.uk

Registered charity number: 219279



100
YEARS OF SUPPORTING THE ARMED
FORCES COMMUNITY



The Royal British Legion's Centenary: Celebrating together

In the Royal British Legion's Centenary year, we're asking you to bring your community together to celebrate 100 years of the RBL providing lifelong support to the Armed Forces community and remembering all those who served.

With your help, we can unite individuals, communities and nations across the UK and around the world in celebration of our centenary and inspire a new generation to continue our work.

This is our chance to thank all our dedicated volunteers, members and supporters who helped create the RBL's proud history over the last century and keep our legacy alive today.

Right now, we continue to work tirelessly to help those most affected by the pandemic; people facing loneliness or isolation, homelessness, financial crisis and struggling to feed their children.

In this brochure you will find everything you need to hold your own event to celebrate our Centenary, bring your community together in a Covid-safe way and, if you wish, raise some money for the Poppy Appeal.

With the Poppy Appeal 2020 impacted by national lockdowns, your support is more vital than ever to ensure we can continue to respond to these growing needs amongst our Armed Forces community.

After a challenging year of isolating away from family, friends and colleagues, let's take this opportunity to come together to celebrate the Royal British Legion's 100th anniversary in every city, town and village across the land.



A short history of the Royal British Legion

The RBL was formed in the aftermath of the First World War to fight for the rights of those who had given so much and come back to so little. For 100 years we have stood alongside the Armed Forces community, challenging injustices and ensuring all who serve and sacrifice on our behalf get the fair treatment and recognition they deserve. As this timeline shows, the RBL has a proud history of improving the rights and welfare of serving and ex-serving personnel and their families, work which continues today.

1921

The British Legion is formed

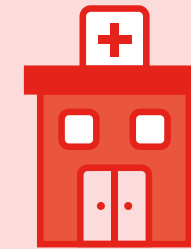
1921

The first Poppy Appeal and Remembrance Day



1925

The Legion acquires Preston Hall and turns it into a TB hospital for veterans in an age before the NHS



1927

The first Festival of Remembrance

1938

The Poppy Appeal raises **£600,000** (£40m today)

1965

The British Legion launches a recruitment drive to increase membership and mobilise the campaigning voice of the community



1950

The British Legion has 5,500 Membership Branches and has given out 5,000 loans in five years to veterans setting up businesses

1949

The War Pensions Act is passed after campaigning by the British Legion



1946

The Women's Section sets up a children's home for boys and girls who have lost both parents in the war or can't be brought up by their families

1944

The British Legion petitions the Government to pass the Disabled Pensions (Employment) Act, helping thousands of injured veterans back into work

1971

The British Legion becomes the Royal British Legion on its

50th anniversary

1979

After six years of RBL campaigning the Government agree to include more than just the dead of the World Wars in the Act of Remembrance

1983

Public support for the Poppy Appeal surges in the wake of the Falklands War



1991

The RBL send out Christmas Parcels to all British troops deployed in the 1st Gulf War



2001

The National Memorial Arboretum is unveiled as the Nation's centre of Remembrance

2021

RBL celebrates a century of supporting the Armed Forces community



2020

The RBL succeeds in getting a veteran question added to the census



2011

The RBL's 'Honour the Covenant' campaign sees the Armed Forces Covenant placed into legislation for the first time ever

2009-2011

During the height of the War in Afghanistan, the RBL establish the Battle Back Centre, providing sports based rehabilitation for serving and ex-serving personnel and open the RBL Centre for Blast Injury Studies





Celebrating together

Themed events for your community

We are excited to hear that many of you have already started planning activities with your branches, faith groups, social and sporting clubs. Whoever you choose to bring together to celebrate, we have ideas from both our members and volunteers on how they are marking the Royal British Legion's Centenary. There is something for everyone, helping you to tell our story and have fun whilst bringing together communities across the nation.

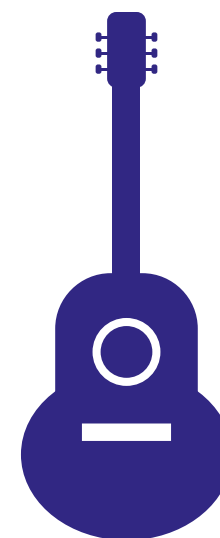
Contact your Membership Support Officer or Community Fundraiser for support, advice and items to help with your activities. If you are unsure who to speak to, call us on **0345 845 1945** or email supportercare@britishlegion.org.uk



Celebrate with your community

RBL Community Party

The joy of summer is upon us and it's time to get the community together for a good old-fashioned party! Invite local bands to liven up the event and get everyone in the carnival spirit for a real RBL 100 birthday party.



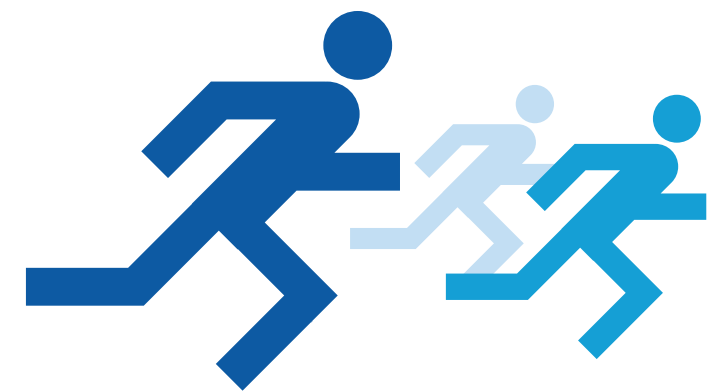
Concerts and Music Events

Branches and volunteers are already planning concerts and music events. Why not host an event with different music through the century from 1921 to 2021? You could invite community choirs, orchestras, and local artists to take part and showcase their talent.

Those that might not want to take front and centre stage can avoid the limelight by volunteering on the day, putting the event together and advertising locally – or encouraging donations in exchange for tickets sales.

Party in the Park

Hold a fete or fair with local traders and activities for your whole community. Ask permission from the local authority to use a public park or space with existing facilities to bring your community, families and groups together to celebrate RBL 100.



Social Sports Day

Sports and social clubs are reopening after 12 months of closures and restrictions. Ask your local golf or leisure club if they would open their centre to host a golf day or an event for the local community to celebrate RBL 100. A great way to bring communities together in an active and social setting.

Pub Quiz

Ask your local RBL club, pub, café or restaurant if you could host a Centenary themed pub quiz. Test your knowledge with questions from the past 100 years and offer a prize to the best team. Phones in the middle of the table and no looking up the answers or 'phone a friend'!

Commemorate with your community



Memorial Walk

Hold an organised walk to, or between local war memorials. Speak with your council or local authority about inviting your community, local dignitaries and organisations to join you. You can make this a challenging 100km relay team walk, or a shorter group walk - or both!

Memorial Service

Hold a service at your local place of worship or memorial and invite members of the community to join. Retell local stories and readings, sharing how the Royal British Legion has impacted your community over the past 100 years.



Centenary activity and Covid-19

Whilst taking part in fundraising or other celebratory activities to mark the Royal British Legion's Centenary, the safety of the public, our volunteers and members, and our staff must be a priority at all times.

All activity must adhere to the relevant government guidelines which are updated on a regular basis. Please check the latest national guidelines at www.gov.uk/coronavirus. Additionally, any local restrictions must be adhered to; please check your local authority website for up to date information.

Keeping up to date with national and local guidance will mean your event is safe and protects your community against the spread of coronavirus. Staying safe by practicing social distancing, providing adequate hand washing facilities and promoting the wearing of face coverings are some of the measures that will keep you, your loved ones and your community protected.

If you're not sure don't hesitate to call your Membership Support Officer or Community Fundraiser for advice. If you are unsure who that is call us on **0345 845 1945** or email supportercare@britishlegion.org.uk and our expert team will provide the help and support you need. We all hope that we will be able to celebrate with our friends, families and communities in person this year. However, if restrictions change you may need to consider how you can celebrate virtually. With a bit of creative thinking, lots of your event ideas and activities can still go ahead.

Fundraising while you celebrate

If you wish to fundraise while you celebrate...

It is easy to start fundraising online for the Royal British Legion. We are registered with most online fundraising platforms including **Just Giving**. When setting up your page search for "Celebrating Together" so we can identify your activity. Please make sure you let your Community Fundraiser, Fundraising Assistant at Aylesford or Membership Support Officer know about any page you set up for this activity so we can acknowledge money you raise for RBL 100 and thank you for your donation.

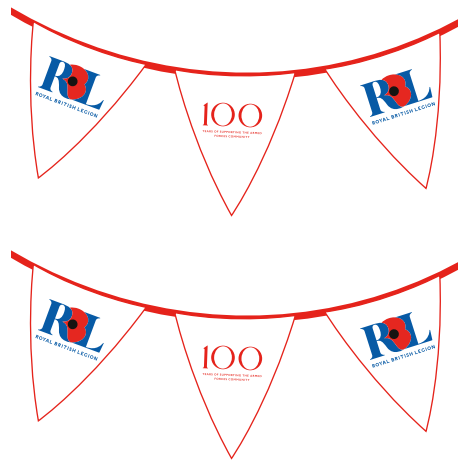
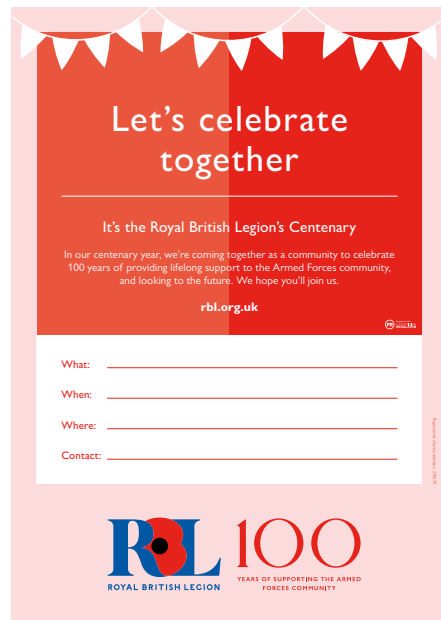
Make your page stand out by using these tips:

- Upload a profile picture – photographs are a great way to personalise your page. Plus, fundraising pages with a profile picture tend to raise 14% more on average.
- Set a target - this is a great way to motivate yourself and encourage your supporters.
- Tell your story - why are you fundraising for the Royal British Legion? Sharing a personal story with your donors can really help encourage support.
- Share – make sure as many people as possible know about your fundraising by sending out the link to your page.
- Give updates - keep your supporters updated on the preparation for your event, how close you are to target, and don't forget to say thank you for their support so far.

If you would like any assistance, please contact your Community Fundraiser, Fundraising Assistant at Aylesford or Membership Support Officer. They will be happy to help and offer advice.



Promoting your event

A sponsorship form template. It has a header with the RBL 100 logo and the text "Sponsorship form". Below the header is a table for "Event or activity" with columns for "First name", "Surname", "Email", and "Postcode". Below this is a table for "Full name", "Home address", "Postcode", "Amount", and "Gift Aid". The "Amount" column has a pre-filled value of "£500.00". The "Gift Aid" column has a pre-filled value of "Yes". Below the table is a section for "Gift Aid" and "Data Protection" with checkboxes and text. The RBL 100 logo is at the bottom right.

We want to help you make the most of your RBL 100 event. In order to help you raise the profile of your event, we are creating some resources for you to use. These include:

Invitations

Posters

Flyers

Social media templates

Digital banners

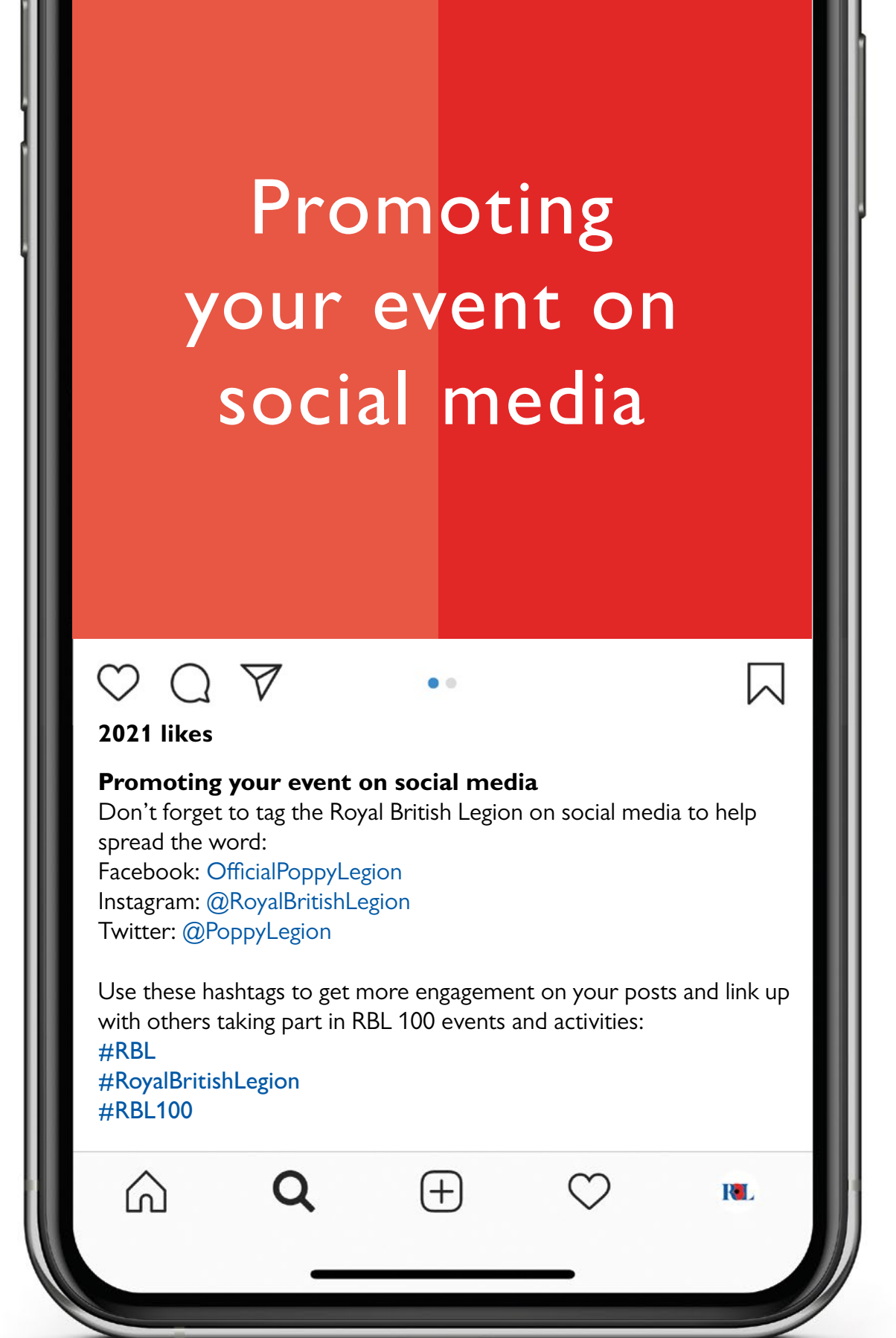
Downloadable bunting

Sponsorship forms

Wreath centre

You can boost your communications and promotional materials by using content from this brochure, such as the history of the RBL, ways we support the Armed Forces community and how we tackle social isolation.

Promoting your event on social media



If you require any assistance in organising or promoting your event or would like to access the promotional resources, please speak to your Community Fundraiser, Fundraising Assistant at Aylesford or your Membership Support Officer. Or if you are unsure who to contact, call Supporter Care on **0345 845 1945** or email **supportercare@britishlegion.org.uk**

Together, we support our Armed Forces community



However you choose to get involved in our Centenary, you will be helping us to provide life-changing and life-saving support for our Armed Forces community and inspire a new generation to continue our work in the 21st century and beyond.

100 years after we were founded, the RBL sits at the heart of a national network providing lifelong support to serving and ex-serving personnel and their families. From expert advice, to sports and arts-based rehabilitation and the transition to civilian life — we are by their side every step of the way.

During the pandemic, we have helped growing numbers of people facing loneliness, isolation, homelessness and financial crisis, with some struggling to feed their families. Our dedicated staff, members and volunteers are working tirelessly to ensure that those who have served are looked after no matter what hardships and challenges they face.

Founded as a campaigning organisation, the RBL continues to fight for fair treatment of those who have given so much for their country. We have successfully campaigned to improve the health, finances and wellbeing of the Armed Forces, veterans and their families and will continue to do so in the years to come.

As we mark our Centenary, we remain dedicated to our mission of creating better futures for those who have served and their families. Many of today's Armed Forces community are struggling in the face of losses, hardships and challenges. It is our turn to be here for them, whenever and however they need us.

For 100 years the RBL has been a symbol of hope for the Armed Forces community. We take pride in our heritage on which we have built the RBL of today; an organisation fit for the future and ready to continue its work for another 100 years and beyond.



How RBL
helps tackle
social
isolation:

Julian's story

Ex-Army medic Julian Groves suffers with service-related PTSD which has led to bouts of depression and anxiety. Julian finds socialising difficult, and last year began to feel isolated as a result of the lockdown restrictions. He turned to the RBL for help, signing up to our Telephone Buddy scheme which enabled him to start interacting with people again.

“The problem started after the first lockdown when people were going back to normal. I was thinking ‘hang on this isn’t right I should be getting out’, but I wasn’t socialising – and my anxiety levels started going up.”

Julian joined the Army when he was 16, serving in the Light Infantry and the Royal Army Medical Corps in Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Germany and Norway. After leaving service he found it hard to adapt to civilian life. His PTSD made it difficult for him to settle or find a job that was right for him.

“When people leave the Armed Forces, they can’t relate to civvy street because it’s completely different to what you’re used to. You’re on your own with no one else to share the experiences with. That contributed to my mental health going downhill even more. It was just so difficult just trying to fit in – like a round peg in a square hole.”
In 2013 Julian had a breakdown and reached out to the RBL. We helped him access veteran-specific mental health support, where he was diagnosed with PTSD. We are also supporting him with an ongoing War Pension tribunal. It was through this contact with the RBL that he discovered the Telephone Buddy scheme. Julian has since been receiving weekly phone calls from an RBL member which have helped to reduce his sense of isolation.

“The Telephone Buddy scheme has been an absolute lifeline for me. It’s like being back in the Forces, no matter how tough things are, everyone rallies around each other and makes sure everyone is looked after.”



FAQs

When is the Royal British Legion's Centenary and when can I celebrate or hold an event?

The RBL's official Centenary is on the 15th May 2021, although you can hold celebrations throughout the summer, during the Poppy Appeal and into next year. Once lockdown has lifted we are encouraging volunteers and members to mobilise their communities, and in keeping with the spirit of the nation, celebrate at a time most suitable to you.

Please note that because the Poppy Appeal is such a busy time for staff, members and volunteers across the RBL, if you are planning a large event during October/November and need support or guidance, you should leave plenty of time to discuss this with your local Membership Support Officer or Community Fundraiser.

When will lockdown end and will I still have to socially distance after restrictions have been lifted?

At the time of writing, all legally enforceable restrictions will be lifted on 21st June 2021, subject to government guidance and monitoring of the Covid-19 pandemic. This may change and we advise everyone to keep up to date with current restrictions by visiting the government website: [gov.co.uk/coronavirus](https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus). If you are planning an event, speak with your Community Fundraiser or Membership Support Officer who will issue guidance if restrictions are still imposed for your planned event.

I am planning on fundraising at my event. Is there any RBL 100 merchandise or equipment I can have?

Yes — your local Poppy Appeal Organiser, Community Fundraiser or Membership Support Officer can support you by providing stock or equipment if you plan on raising money for the Poppy Appeal.

We have a limited supply of RBL 100 pin badges for a suggested donation of £4 per pin and have a supply of contactless collection devices to take card payments and contactless payments for donations. We have other supporting templates and equipment like downloadable bunting and downloadable posters you can use.

I would like a RBL 100 pin badge but I do not want to fundraise. Where can I buy one?

The RBL Poppy Shop will be selling RBL 100 pin badges for a set retail price of £3.99. These can be ordered in restricted quantities online or over the phone. Visit poppyshop.org.uk for more information.

Do I have to raise money for the Poppy Appeal or can I raise funds just for my branch?

The Coronavirus pandemic has had a large impact on what

we were able to raise during the 2020 Poppy Appeal, with lockdown shortening the Poppy Appeal across the country by over a week. You can raise funds for your branch if you wish to do so, however we are calling on members across the country to help us raise money for the Poppy Appeal so we can continue to support those who need us now more than ever.

I want to hold an event but my idea is not listed above. Can I do something else with my branch or community?

Yes — we welcome all ideas and suggestions that are in keeping with the RBL 100 spirit of bringing communities together and celebrating our Centenary. If you have an idea or suggestion, speak with your Membership Support Officer or Community Fundraiser who can guide and support you.

Please ensure that your event/activity idea follows the government guidance on Covid-19 safety.

I organise collections at supermarkets over the Poppy Appeal. Can I organise a supermarket collection this summer to raise money for RBL 100?

Unfortunately, no — we value our partnerships with our supermarket partners closely and receive overwhelming support from them for our annual Poppy Appeal. We have agreed to only collect at supermarkets and other venues for the Poppy Appeal when we have the permission and mandate to do so, during the dates of the Poppy Appeal.

Whilst we encourage all our supporters to fundraise through their event, if they are able to, this is to be done so in the spirit of joining communities together. Your local Community Fundraiser can help guide, inspire and support you with this.

Can branch/county funds be used to pay for RBL 100 events?

Branch/county funds may be used to pay for these events up to a maximum of £350, on condition that by organising them branches are reaching out to and welcoming the local serving and veteran communities i.e. our beneficiaries. Branches may also use Branch Property Trust (BPT) funds, provided the event is to be held in the area local where the BPT property is/was located, as well as branch legacies (unless there are very specific restrictions in the will). There is a small budget at Head Office to assist branches that do not have the funds to do so, however grants can only be given to branches with less than £1,000 in the bank. Please speak to your MSO providing event details and the amount of money you need (up to £350) to check what funds can be used to help you.



Paying in your fundraising is quick and easy - and as soon as we receive your donations we can make a difference to the lives of those we support.

There are a few easy ways to pay in the money you raise:

- **Branch Members** — if you are a branch and wish to pay in money raised to the Poppy Appeal please liaise directly with your Poppy Appeal Organiser (PAO) giving them your branch ID to add to their paying in slip. If you are unsure who the PAO is in your area, please contact your Membership Support Officer. Alternatively call the Supporter Care team on 0345 845 1945 to get information on how to pay the money directly into the central account.
- **Poppy Appeal Organisers** — if you are a Poppy Appeal Organiser please pay in your usual way via your Poppy Appeal paying in book but please add the unique reference RBL 100 (and Branch ID if relevant) to the pay reference section on the paying in slip so we can allocate income to this activity.
- Through your online fundraising page please make sure you let your Community Fundraiser, Fundraising Assistant at Aylesford or Membership Support Officer know the description of the event and your page URL so they can locate your page and allocate income to your district.

If you are at all uncertain and need further guidance on how to pay in money raised please contact Supporter Care on **0345 845 1945** or supportercare@britishlegion.org.uk





Registered address: Royal British Legion, Haig House, 199 Borough High Street, London SE1 1AA
Registered charity number: 219279

