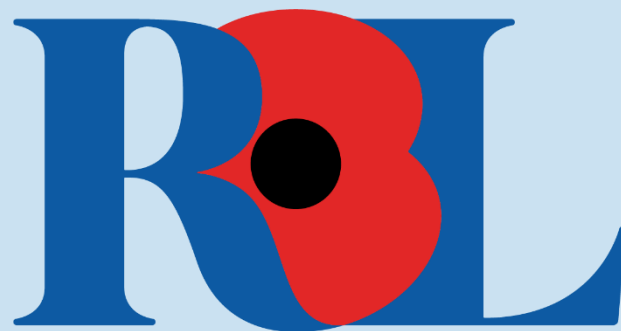


MEMBERSHIP MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK



ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

Contents

About the Membership Handbook.....	4
The Royal Charter.....	5
Policy Guidance	6
1. What it means to be a Legion member	6
1.a Values and conduct	6
2. Running my formation.....	8
2.a Management and finances	8
2.b Activities for members	26
3. Complaints	29
3.a Procedures for different kinds of complaints.....	29
4. Elections.....	30
4.a Rules.....	30
4.b Standing for election	35
5. Fundraising.....	37
5.a The Poppy Appeal.....	37
5.b Raising money for other causes	38
5.c Grants	39
6. Handling media requests.....	39
What to do if you get approached for comment	40
7. Protecting people's data	40
7.a General Data Protection	40
7.b Data Protection at Membership level	40
7.c Members retention schedule	42
Information	44
8. About the Legion.....	44
8.a How the Legion is financed	44
8.b The Legion's governance	45
9. About formations.....	45
9.a What formations are and how they are structured.....	45
9.b Committees and the roles people can hold.....	46
9.c Bye-laws	49
9.d County Plan	50
9.e Overseas Districts and Branches	50

9.f Legion-licensed clubs	50
9.g Premises occupied by Branches	52
9.h Formation finances	53
10. About the Membership Council	55
10.a Its aims and how it works.....	55
10.b What Membership Council members do.....	57
10.c Membership Council working groups.....	58
11. Annual Conference	61
12. Awards	62
13. Youth members.....	67
14. Legion-licensed bands.....	67
Role Descriptions	68
Glossary	72
Forms and Documents	74
MS1 Branch Information.....	74
MS1 for County Supported Branches	74
MS1A County Information.....	74
MS1B Standard Bearer Disclaimer.....	74
MS5A Branch Closure	74
MS5B Change of Branch Status	74
MS5C Branch Amalgamation	74
MS5D Change of Branch Name	74
MS9 Branch Formation	74
Ballot Paper Template.....	74
Volunteer Expense Claim Form	74
Model Bye-Laws	74
Overseas District Model Bye-Laws	74
County Plan template.....	74
SOP163 Appendix A –Request a payment from a Branch Legacy Trust	74
SOP163 Appendix B – Appeal a Legacy Trust Account Decision.....	74
Groups.....	110
Draft County Model Rules for Group Officers, Representatives and Members	114

About the Membership Handbook

This handbook has two sections:

- **Policy guidance** guides you in your day-to-day Legion activities.
- **Information** tells you how the Legion membership organisation works.

It also has two purposes:

- To help you to comply with UK charity law and with the Legion's policies when going about your Legion activities. Where you see the words 'must' and 'must not', or 'do' and 'do not', these instructions are a requirement of law or of Legion policy.
- To help you to run a happy and successful Branch, County, District or Section. Where you see 'may', 'ought' and other conditional words and phrases, that means the instruction is good practice but not a legal or policy requirement.

This book is detailed but not completely comprehensive, so if you have any questions that aren't addressed here, ask your Membership Support Officer for help.

Where you see the word 'County' or 'Counties', these terms cover all Counties, Districts and Sections.

The Royal Charter

The Royal Charter directs all of the Legion's work. It is a governance document that is recognised by the Government and the Charity Commission. It is enforceable in law. You can read the Royal Charter through the Legion's [website](#).

This handbook sits alongside the Royal Charter. It was created to help Legion officers, committee members and Legion members make sure they're acting within the rules of the Royal Charter.

Policy Guidance

This section of the handbook will guide you in day-to-day Legion matters. If you follow the guidance in the following pages, you will be acting within the law and in accordance with the Royal Charter and Legion policy.

Everyone is welcome to become a Legion Member. You can join membership via www.britishlegion.org.uk, by phone or by calling our free helpline or by completing a membership application form available from branches. Every member has to join a branch and pay an annual fee. Membership will be renewed annually and unpaid membership will be cancelled. If you decide not to be a member for any reason, your membership can be easily cancelled at any time.

1. What it means to be a Legion member

1.a Values and conduct

As local representatives of the Legion, members are expected to behave with integrity, to work together and to trust each other. Our values apply as much when dealing with people face to face as when communicating online, whether through official Legion channels, social media or personal emails.

We have ten guiding principles:

1. Respect and maintain the confidentiality of Legion information (unless you need to disclose something to prevent harm to yourself or to others, or to prevent financial or reputational risk).
2. Follow the organisation's policies and procedures.
3. Remain neutral and unbiased in all Legion activities.
4. Promote equality and diversity without being discriminatory.
5. Be dedicated to the responsibilities you have agreed to.
6. Be respectful and considerate towards others.
7. Guard the reputation of the Legion and build positive relationships internally and externally.
8. Ensure that no personal benefit or conflict of interest arises from your actions.

9. Be responsive and proactive in dealing with others.
10. Put comradeship at the heart of what you do

And we have five values that we maintain:

1. **Service**

We support and serve.

We are compassionate.

We provide great customer care to all the people who come in to contact with us.

We are accountable and act with integrity.

2. **Excellence**

We strive to be the best we can.

We are effective and efficient.

We are bold.

We are open to new ideas and approaches, challenge each constructively and are willing to learn.

3. **Collaboration**

We value working together and with partners to achieve shared goals.

Through strong communication and support, we build trust with each other and treat everyone with respect and honesty.

4. **Valuing our people**

We support, encourage and provide opportunities for all our people, ensuring we recognise and value everyone's contribution.

5. **Passion**

We are passionate about our role and contribution.

With a positive outlook, we are committed to our work.

2. Running my formation

2.a Management and finances

2.a.(1) Holding meetings

BRANCHES

	General Branch Meeting	Annual General Meeting (AGM)	Special General Meeting	Committee Meeting
Frequency	Quarterly (suggested)	Once a year	As required	Quarterly
Dates	Committee to decide	Between 1 October and 30 November	As required	Committee to decide
Chair	Branch Chairman or Vice-Chairman in their absence			
Notifications	Committee to decide	At least 21 days before to all members	At least seven days before to all members	Committee to decide
Attendees	Members	Members; (optional) guests, County reps, staff	Members	Committee
Quorate requirements				Four Committee members form a quorum
	Suggested: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide updates on the local and wider work of the Legion • Provide updates on Branch past and future activities • Make decisions • Nominate candidates for elections at County and national levels • Vote on candidates for elections at County and national levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review previous year's activities • Agree next year's activities • Elect officers and Committee members • Nominate candidates for elections at County and national levels • Vote on candidates for elections at County and national levels • Debate and agree motions for County and Annual Conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove from office or position a Branch Committee member • Elect another member to replace the removed member or fill in a vacant post • Discuss any other urgent matter of importance and make appropriate decisions 	
Other		Members can add items to the agenda if they submit them before the deadline	Meeting can go ahead only if the Committee decides it is needed or it has	If a Committee member is absent for three meetings in a row in a 12-

		specified by the Committee	been requested by a minimum of two-thirds of members	month period, they are deemed to have vacated the seat unless a valid reason has been provided and accepted by the rest of the Committee
<p>Any reports presented at the meeting and minutes of previous meeting must be circulated to the attendees at least three days before the meeting.</p> <p>If community support cases are discussed during the meeting, the personal details of beneficiary/beneficiaries must not be disclosed.</p>				

COUNTIES

	Annual General Meeting	Special General Meeting	Committee Meeting	Special Committee Meeting
Frequency	At least once a year	As required	At least four times a year	As required
Dates	To be decided by the County Committee and County Conference Committee	Within 21 days of a valid request	To be set at its first meeting after the Annual Meeting of County Conference	Within 14 days of the request being received
Chair	County Chairman or Vice-Chairman in their absence			
Notifications	<p>At least:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 weeks before: Branches notified about date/time/venue • Eight weeks before: Branches submit nominations for County Committee, County Conference Committee and National Conference Committee and Motions and Charter Motions for Annual Conference and/ or County Conference • Six weeks before: Branches receive provisional agenda • Five weeks before: Branches submit amendments to motions • Two weeks before: final agenda sent to all Branches 	At least seven days before to all Branches	N/A	At least seven days before to all Committee members

Attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors (members, guests) • Delegates: compliant Branches and County-Supported Branches (but not sub-Branches) can appoint: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One delegate if a Branch has 300 members or fewer ○ Two delegates if a Branch has more than 300 but fewer than 1,000 ○ Three delegates if a Branch has more than 1,000 but fewer than 1,500 members ○ Additional delegates for every 500 members over 1,000 		<p>Required: County Officers and Committee members</p> <p>Optional: Membership Council representative</p>	<p>Required: County Officers and Committee members</p> <p>Optional: Membership Council representative</p>
Quorate requirements			At least half the members entitled to attend and to vote must be there to make the meeting quorate	At least half the members entitled to attend and to vote must be there to make the meeting quorate
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declare results of the County elections • Approve amendments or additions to the County by-laws (requires a two-thirds majority vote) • Pass resolutions requiring specific actions from the County Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss a single matter of extreme urgency or importance • Remove from office an officer of the County Committee or member 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vote on submitted motions that have been approved by the Conference Committee • Elect Committee members • Elect County Conference Committee members • Elect a candidate to the National Conference Committee • Announce the results of County Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman elections • Review the accounts for the past year • Review the County plan covering the next three years • Review reports and the progress made with the County plan over the past year • Consider any discussion papers on relevant topics approved by the County Committee on which the views of the membership should be sought 	of the County Committee		
Other	<p>The meeting can go ahead if at least three Branch delegates are there at the start of and throughout the meeting</p> <p>Delegates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can speak and vote • Must be current Legion members • Must not be Legion employees • Must not be County officers or members of the County Committee <p>Motions cannot be proposed and seconded by delegates from the same Branch</p> <p>Minutes must be sent to Head Office, Area Manager and Membership Council representative within three months of the meeting</p>	Meeting must be called at the direction of the Board of Trustees, the County Committee or of at least one quarter of the Branches in the County	<p>Minutes to be distributed to the Membership Council representative and the Area Manager</p> <p>If a Committee member is absent for three meetings in a row in a 12-month period, they are deemed to have vacated the seat unless a valid reason has been provided and accepted by the rest of the Committee</p>	Meeting must be called at the request of any eight members of that Committee

For details of how national meetings are held, please refer to the [Royal Charter](#); and to the Standing Orders, available through Office 365 or your Membership Support Officer, for the Conduct of Annual Conference.

2.a.(2) Administering the membership

Branch membership lists are kept online on the Office 365 portal. For access and information, speak to your Membership Support Officer.

Branches may decide to set a joining fee and/or an annual subscription fee, both of which must be decided by the members at the Branch Annual General Meeting. Each of these fees must not be less than £1.

The Branch Committee must tell Head Office what their membership, joining and subscription fees are using the Branch rates letter each year. If the membership team at Head Office does not receive this information before the reply date on the Branch rates letter, then the fees for the forthcoming membership year will revert back to £0.00/€0.00.

Branches should actively help members to renew their membership. Their Membership Support Officer can help with any queries. Please forward any cheques or applications within 30 days of receipt to avoid delays processing them.

Members may transfer their membership to another branch. If they have paid their membership fee and any subscriptions due to their current Branch, they will not need to make any additional payment in their current membership year.

Branches must not refuse membership unless they have valid reasons. Any objections to an application must be made to the County Committee via the Membership Support Officer. The Membership Council will make the final decision on whether the application should be accepted in consultation with the County Committee.

2.a.(3) Financial management

For an explanation of Legion funds, click [here](#).

Branch and County banking

Branches must have only one bank account. This must be a current account held preferably with Lloyds Bank or Barclays. It must be held in the name of 'The Royal British Legion – [Branch name]'. Personal accounts or accounts in the name of Committee members must not be used for Branch transactions, even as a temporary measure.

If a Branch has more than one account, they must close the additional account(s) and transfer the money in it or them to the [Branch Funds Initiative](#) (BFI). If you're not sure what to do with a bank account, contact your Membership Support Officer for help.

Branches should keep enough money in their current account to meet their day-to-day requirements. For most Branches, this will be £1,000 or less. All funds that are surplus to day-to-day requirements must be placed in the Branch Funds Initiative. The maximum amount of funds that Branches can hold in their current account is £5,000; anything more than this must be placed in the Branch Funds Initiative.

If your Branch banks with Lloyds, you can access internet banking via the Legion's corporate internet banking platform. If you need help to set this up, contact your Membership Support Officer or Branch Accounts team in Head Office. Branches banking with other banks are not permitted to set up internet banking without the express permission of the Finance Department. This is to ensure that appropriate financial controls are in place over all Branch transactions.

How to manage Branch funds

The Branch Committee, under the leadership of the [Branch Chairman](#), is responsible for the Branch funds. It must make sure:

- That there are adequate controls and accounting records.
- That Branch expenditure complies with the policies and procedures of the Legion and with charity law.

Branches should create a simple budget for the year, setting out the income they expect to generate and what they expect to spend.

Day to day, the [Branch Treasurer](#) maintains the Branch accounts. The Branch Committee should approve the Branch Treasurer's [delegated authority limit](#), generally between £250 and £500, depending on the size of the Branch.

Branches may choose to record their income and expenditure in separate funds (Benevolent Fund or General Fund). A fund is simply a way of recording income, expenditure and cash separately in the Branch accounts. This does not mean that each fund requires a separate bank account. A Branch can have more than one fund in its current account and [Branch Funds Initiative](#). At the end of the financial year, the sum total of all funds held by the Branch should equal the total amount of cash held in the current account and BFI.

If Branches have funds that are surplus to requirements, they should consider making a donation to the [Poppy Appeal](#), making a transfer to the County Welfare Fund or donating to a Legion Care Home. This will ensure that the funds are used to support the Legion's beneficiaries. You can ask your local Community Fundraising team or check the Fundraising Handbook about other projects and ideas.

Branches and Counties sit outside of the Legion's VAT arrangements. This means that Branches and Counties are unable to register for VAT. Branches must not charge VAT on any invoices they raise and are unable to reclaim any VAT they are charged by suppliers and other third parties.

Gift Aid

Members are encouraged to Gift Aid their membership fee when they join. They can add or remove a Gift Aid declaration at any time by contacting membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk

Note that any Gift Aid donations cannot be paid into Branch funds as Branches cannot claim Gift Aid directly. The Legion will claim Gift Aid centrally and only on donations and gifts received directly to its accounts.

Branch Funds Initiative (BFI)

To withdraw funds from the [BFI](#), you can apply by post/email using the appropriate form or via [LOMAS](#). The Finance Department will transfer the funds within a week of receiving a correctly completed and authorised BFI withdrawal form.

To deposit funds in the BFI, send a cheque to the Finance Department made payable to The Royal British Legion with the BFI deposit form.

Dos and Don'ts for spending Branch and County funds

Do:

- Use funds to further the charitable aims of the Legion.
- Spend funds on events (for example, to recruit new members, for Remembrance events or to raise funds for the Legion).
- Keep invoices or receipts for everything you buy with Legion money. By law, all invoices, receipts and vouchers must be securely retained for seven years. If you don't have an invoice or receipt, the person who has spent the money must create and sign a voucher, detailing what the money was spent on and how much. The voucher must be countersigned by a Branch officer who had nothing to do with the purchase.
- Keep the Branch cheque book and paying-in book in a locked safe or drawer.

Don't:

- Use funds for the purchase, construction, repair or maintenance of memorials unless the memorial is owned by the Branch and responsibility hasn't been passed on to another party. Memorials are usually the responsibility of the local authority.
- Use funds to accumulate more money.
- Sign blank or partially completed cheques.
- Sell goods. The Royal British Legion as a charity cannot trade; that is why goods can only be sold through a separate trading company (Poppy Shop). Branches and Counties are part of the charity and therefore must not trade under charity law. However, they can offer low-value items sourced from the Legion (such as pins, pens and wristbands) for a suggested donation (not a minimum donation) to raise funds. Please note that any income from items produced by the Poppy Appeal must be sent to Poppy Appeal.
- Use funds to subsidise another Branch, a Legion club or any other third party. That includes loans or making reductions or deferments of charges due to the Branch. If this

happens, the Branch Committee members responsible may be found personally liable to reimburse the charity.

- Give grants or make donations to other charities. The only exceptions are a donation to a local ex-Service charity with the approval of the Operations Directorate through the local Membership Support Officer, or a donation to the Central Benevolent Fund to be allocated to a grant that the Board of Trustees has already agreed.
- Use funds for paid employment. If your Branch needs resources, contact your Membership Support Officer for guidance.
- Enter into any financial credit or lease agreement (including the rental of property or equipment).

Rules on cheque and cash handling

You can read the full policy (SOP131) if you request it from your Membership Support Officer, but below are some day-to-day rules to help you keep your transactions in order – and to help protect the Legion from fraud.

- A Branch's bank account must have up to four mandated signatories, all of whom must be Branch Committee members. At least two signatories who are not related to each other must sign every cheque. It is the Branch Committee's responsibility to make sure the list of mandated signatories is up to date when members leave or join the Committee.
- Check bank statements as soon as you receive them. Investigate any unexplained entries immediately. If you suspect fraud, tell your Membership Support Officer.
- Reimburse petty cash only when you see a receipt and only directly to the claimant.
- Keep the Branch petty-cash float as low as possible and reconcile it monthly. Any expenditure above £50 should be reimbursed by cheque. You can find the petty cash policy (SOP3) on Office 365 or request it from your Membership Support Officer.
- All expense claims should comply with the Legion's expenses policy (SOP42), which is available on Office 365 or from your Membership Support Officer. All claims must be submitted on [the correct form](#), signed by the claimant and with receipts attached. All expense payments must be approved by the Branch Committee (at least their Treasurer and Chairman) before payment.
- Issue a receipt for any cash or cheques given to the Branch, unless the donation is part of a cash collection. Any cash received should be counted as soon as practically possible in

the presence of two people. Use the SOP131 form, available on Office 365 or from your Membership Support Officer, to record the amount counted.

- If cash or cheques cannot be banked immediately, they should be placed in a sealed envelope, petty-cash tin or collection box and locked in a safe or a drawer.
- Ideally, cash and cheques should be banked within three days of receipt. Any cash receipts in excess of £1,000 should be banked within 24 hours. The longest you should leave it to bank cash and cheques is one week after receipt.

How to submit your annual return

Every Branch and County must submit an annual return of their income, expenditure and assets held at 30 June, no matter what the level of activity in their accounts. The return must be sent electronically or in hard copy, with all supporting documentation, to the relevant Membership Support Officer (who will check it and forward it to the Finance Department) on or before 30 September following the Branch financial year end. Branches, Counties and Districts that use [LOMAS](#) should submit their annual return in LOMAS. Branches do not need to have approved their return at the [Branch AGM](#) before submitting it.

The return must be prepared in the format prescribed by the Finance Department, which is sent to each Treasurer before the end of the financial year, and must include:

- A copy of the bank statement for each account held by the Branch showing the balance at 30 June.
- 'Authority to Disclose Information' letters for each financial institution used by the Branch. This documentation is required by the Legion's statutory auditors.

Non-LOMAS Branches are encouraged to submit their accounts electronically (using Microsoft Excel) as this speeds up the year-end process. However, in all cases, the original Branch return must be printed and signed by the Branch officers, and the completed forms, ledger and supporting documentation must be independently examined prior to submission. Branches should use a Legion-trained Independent Examiner (IE) for this purpose. Your Membership Support Officer has a list of local Legion IEs. If no Legion-trained IE is available, refer to the 'Guide to completing the year end Branch Return', which is updated annually and sent to Treasurers with the Branch Return forms, for guidance on people who are eligible to independently examine Legion Branch returns.

New Branches are not required to submit a Branch return in their first financial year until they have been operating for six months.

Each year, a number of Branches are selected for audit by the Legion's statutory auditor or the internal audit and compliance team. Branches are more likely to be selected for audit if they are holding substantial Legion funds, have failed to submit their return on time or have failed to respond to queries on their return from the Membership Support Officer or the Finance Department.

Funding and insuring Branch events

Branches must attempt to secure services for their events at little or no cost where possible. Any expenditure associated with the event must be reasonable and proportionate.

All [Branch events](#) should be discussed and approved at a minuted Branch Committee meeting in advance of the event.

The Royal British Legion holds public liability insurance in the event that it is held legally liable for injury to a third party or for damage to third-party property.

Branch events are covered by the Legion's insurance policy. This includes Branch Standards paraded at such events, whether within the UK or overseas.

As far as Remembrance events are concerned, responsibility for organising Remembrance parades should be passed to the local authority.

Parade safety for Remembrance events is the responsibility of a Civic Authority. Temporary Traffic Management Operation (TTMOs) may only be organised and deployed by the Civic Authority and on no account should RBL staff or volunteers be deployed to manage. Where RBL has to be the Event organiser (because the Civic Authorities refuse) RBL may take this role but there can be no street Parade, no road closure and, therefore, no need for a TTMO unless this aspect of the event is owned by a Civic Authority. Whilst the branch can be involved in determining a Parade route, it should not itself contract with a third party and may not take responsibility for the design, planning and deployment of a TTMO.

Where a Branch organises an event to raise funds, the event must comply with the requirements of the 'one-off fundraising event' concession in order to ensure that it is not subject to VAT and corporation tax. The event must be run by the Legion and not a third party, it must be clear to those attending the event that the primary purpose of the event is to raise funds for the charity and there must be no more than 15 events of the same kind in the same location in a financial year. Branches should seek advice from the Legion's Finance Department if they are unsure whether an event they are planning qualifies for the exemption email (branchaccounts@britishlegion.org.uk).

Any events organised by members that are of a social nature, such as Christmas meals, or travel, such as trips to the National Memorial Arboretum, visits to Regimental Museums or trips overseas, are not Legion events and therefore are not covered by the Legion's insurance policy. Any income and costs related to these events are not charitable income and expenditure, and should not pass through the Branch accounts. They must be held and accounted for separately. Under no circumstances may Legion funds be used to subsidise social events for members.

If you're planning a large fundraising event (with expenditure of more than £1,000), please check with your Community Fundraiser that it doesn't clash with any other large event.

How to deal with legacies

If a Branch is notified of a legacy, the Branch must contact the Legacy Admin Team at the earliest opportunity on legacies@britishlegion.org.uk or call the Legacy Administrator on 020 3207 2389.

The Legacy Admin Team manage, receipt and allocate all legacy income to ensure that the correct amount is received and that funds are used in the manner specified in our Royal Charter and the Will. All correspondence relating to legacies must be sent to the Legacy Admin Department as soon as possible.

Where a legacy is specifically gifted to the Branch the legacy shall be paid to the Branch if under £5,000, those legacies over £5,000 will be placed into a Trust held for the benefit of the Branch. The Royal Charter sets out that legacies should only be used for furthering the Legion's Objectives which means use is restricted to welfare and remembrance activities,

so it is not possible to place the legacy income into the Branches BFI account.

To make a withdrawal from a legacy Trust the Branch should use form SOP 147 which is available from the Legacy Admin Team or on the intranet. In accordance with Charity Commission requirements to prevent funds being held in trusts indefinitely the Legacy Admin Team will review the legacy trust portfolio annually and, where funds remain unspent, will liaise with the Branch to find ways to spend it.

To prevent double accounting, legacies held in Legacy Trusts at Head Office should not be listed in Branch Accounts as this would mean they are accounted for twice.

2.a.(4) Recruiting and retaining members

Branch members, County Recruiting Officers and Recruiting Advisers are responsible for recruiting activities, but it's up to every member to bring new people into the Legion. Find out everything you need in the Recruitment Handbook, available through Office 365 or from your Membership Support Officer.

2.a.(5) Training

Training is provided by the Membership Training team in Head Office or by the [County Training Officers](#). Any queries about membership training should be sent to: membershiptraining@britishlegion.org.uk. More information about training can be found in the Membership Training Handbook, available from your Membership Support Officer.

2.a.(6) Forming, amalgamating and closing Branches and Counties

Amalgamating Counties and Branches

These are the steps that must be taken:

1. The Chairmen and Committees of the Counties agree to the restructuring and to write to the Chairman of the Membership Council for approval, copying in the relevant Membership Council representative.
2. Once the Membership Council has agreed, the Counties (Branches) must call a joint Special General Meeting of their County Conferences at which Branch delegates must vote by simple majority whether to approve the formation of the new County. The relevant Membership Council representative should be at this meeting.

3. If approved, Branch delegates must elect the new County Committee, Chairman and Vice-Chairman to serve until the next Annual Meeting of County Conference. Following the election of the new County Committee, Chairman, and Vice-Chairman, the previous County Committee, Chairman and Vice-Chairman retire immediately. Branch delegates must also elect three non-County Committee Members as members of a new County Conference Committee.
4. County Treasurers must close their accounts on the date of the Special General Meeting at which the amalgamation was approved, prepare them for independent examination or audit and for adoption of the annual accounts at the next Annual Meeting of County Conference.
5. All of the funds of the constituent Counties must be passed to the new County Treasurer to form the new County funds.
6. The old County Standard should be laid up, with a new one obtained and dedicated. Alternatively, the panel of one of the previous County Standards may be altered.
7. [Remembrancetide](#) must continue to be conducted on the basis of the constituent Counties until the new County is formed at the first Annual Meeting of County Conference. After that, the new County assumes responsibility for the co-ordination of events during Remembrancetide.
8. As soon as possible after their election, the new County Committee must set the date of the Annual Meeting of County Conference and draft new County bye-laws for approval by the Annual Meeting of County Conference. The Committee should appoint:
 - A [County Treasurer](#)
 - A [County Training Officer](#)
 - A County Recruiting Officer
 - A [County Youth Officer](#)
 - A County Parade Marshal
 - A County Standard Bearer (until the next competition)
9. For the remainder of the first Legion financial year, the new County budget is to comprise the sum of the budgets of its component Counties. The balance of the County budgets for the financial year is to be channelled through the new County instead of the former Counties. The County must propose its own budget bid for the following year.

10. At the next Annual Meeting of County Conference, delegates must approve the accounts of the constituent Counties closed at the date of formation of the new County. At the conference, the results of the postal ballot for County Chairman and Vice-Chairman should be announced. The Chairman should be elected for three years and the Vice-Chairman two years, to allow for continuity. After that, the Vice-Chairman's term should be three years. The full County Committee should also be elected following normal [election rules](#). Retiring Committee members may stand for re-election. The County Treasurer should be appointed and the County bye-laws adopted.
11. This process is followed for amalgamation of Branches.

Forming a County

These are the steps that must be taken:

1. The Chairmen and Committees of the Branches wishing to form a new County agree to the restructuring and to write to the Chairman of the Membership Council Chairman for approval, copying in the relevant Membership Council representative.
2. After the Membership Council has approved the new County, the Branches that will form the new County must organise Branch meetings to put forward nominations for the County Founding Committee. Head Office staff will distribute nomination forms for Committee Officers and members, guidelines and a timetable to all Branches concerned.
3. The nomination forms are to be returned to Head Office and the subsequent election will be coordinated by Head Office.
4. The founding County Committee consists of seven elected members, a County Chairman and County Vice-Chairman. All are elected for three years. The seven candidates with the most votes will be the members of the County Founding Committee.
5. Less than four weeks after their election, the County Founding Committee must appoint a County Treasurer and County Secretary. Each must be appointed until the first Annual Meeting of County Conference.
6. The County Founding Committee should set the date of the Annual Meeting of County Conference and start the process of drafting new County bye-laws for approval by the Branch delegates at the Annual Meeting. The County Founding Committee will act as

the County Conference Committee for the first Annual Meeting. Minutes of the first meeting of the County Founding Committee must be sent to Head Office.

7. At the first Annual Meeting of County Conference after the Special General Meeting, up to a further eight Committee members may be elected by Branch delegates. County Committee members will serve for one, two or three years (initially decided by County Conference to avoid all the committee changing at once).
8. The Branch delegates must elect a new County Conference Committee.
9. As soon as possible after their election, the new County Committee should appoint a County Training Officer, a County Recruiting Officer and a County Youth Officer. The County Treasurer and County Secretary appointed at the first County Founding Committee meeting remain in post until the Annual Meeting of County Conference the following year.
10. The County Committee can appoint a County President.
11. A new County Standard is to be obtained and dedicated in accordance with Legion practice. The County Committee shall also arrange the appointment of a County Standard Bearer.
12. The County Committee must appoint a County Parade Marshal.
13. Remembrancetide must continue to be conducted on the basis of the constituent Counties until the new County is formed at the first Annual Meeting of County Conference. After that, the new County assumes responsibility for the co-ordination of events during Remembrancetide.
14. Once a bank account has been opened, all Branches in the new County will make a donation to the new County Committee in order to meet initial administration costs. The County Founding Committee will make a recommendation to Branches on the amount to be paid into the County account.
15. The County must propose its own budget bid for the following year.

Forming a Branch

A new Branch needs at least 15 members or potential members aged 18 or over to have a meeting about it. It must 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.”

A County representative must attend the meeting where the proposal to form a Branch is being discussed to offer guidance and support. If the meeting agrees to form a new Branch, then form MS9, available from your Membership Support Officer, must be completed. The Membership Support Officer must send the completed MS9 to the relevant Membership Council rep and to Head Office for approval by the Membership Council. A County Committee may stop the formation of new Branches where there is already a Branch in existence.

Closing a Branch

If a Branch cannot be revived and it is impractical to amalgamate it with a neighbouring Branch or form a County-supported Branch, Branch members or the County Committee may decide to close the Branch. Such closure must be approved by the Membership Council.

Branches can be closed in two ways:

<p>The decision to close is made by Branch members.</p> <p>Steps to follow:</p>	<p>The decision to close is made by the County Committee as the Branch is no longer functioning.</p> <p>Steps to follow:</p>
<p>Members hold a meeting where they formally resolve to close.</p>	<p>The Membership Support Officer will check if there are any members remaining in the Branch. If there are none, the County will proceed with the closure.</p>
<p>Branch Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advises the remaining members on which Branches they can transfer to. • Decides how the remaining Branch funds will be distributed (within existing rules and after taking into consideration any restrictions placed on those funds). 	<p>If there are members left, the Membership Support Officer will advise them that the Branch is at the risk of closure and invite them to a Special General Meeting.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arranges for the laying up of the Branch Standard. 	
<p>The Branch Chairman informs the Membership Council rep, the Membership Support Officer and County Chairman of the Branch Committee's decision and sends them a copy of the meeting minutes.</p>	<p>If the meeting goes ahead, the members may decide to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close the Branch. • Keep the Branch alive and form a new Committee.
<p>The Branch Treasurer arranges for the Branch's bank account(s) to be closed. The funds are transferred in accordance with the Branch Committee's resolution except where some of the funds are found to be restricted (for example, if they're connected to a Branch Property Trust or restricted legacy). These funds must be transferred to Head Office.</p>	<p>If members decide to close the Branch, or the meeting does not go ahead due to lack of interest from the remaining Branch members, the Membership Support Officer will advise them how they can transfer to another Branch. The County Committee will proceed with the closure.</p>
<p>The Branch Treasurer prepares a final Branch return at the closure date and sends this to the Membership Support Officer with supporting bank statements showing a nil balance on the accounts.</p>	<p>The Committee must attempt to contact the Branch bank account signatories in order to transfer any remaining funds and close the bank account(s).</p>
<p>Form MS5A will be completed by the Membership Support Officer and the County Committee and passed on to the Membership Council.</p>	<p>If the County is unable to close the bank account because the signatories are not available, it should seek help from the Legion's Finance Department, who can try to recover the funds.</p>
	<p>Form MS5A will be completed by the Membership Support Officer and the County Committee and passed on to the Membership Council.</p>

Becoming a County-supported Branch

A County-supported Branch (CSB) is a method of operating for Branches that are struggling to form a Committee. To become a CSB, a Branch applies to County Committee and the Committee will approve the new Branch status if:

- The Branch is no longer viable in its present form for a specified reason (eg unable to form a Committee, unable to recruit a Treasurer).
- The Branch is unable to fully comply with the Legion [compliance](#) requirements (governance and financial).
- Other than the specified reason for not being viable, the Branch is active in its local area and closing would result in a loss of Legion representation in its local area.
- There is no likelihood of potential Committee members coming forward, even if the Branch were to face closure.

Outgoing officers will close the bank account and hand over any funds to their County to be held as a restricted fund for the Branch – these funds are available to CSB through the County Treasurer. The CSB will appoint two members to act as Point of Contact, who must be able to communicate electronically.

Returning to full branch status from County-supported Branch or sub-Branch

County Supported or a sub-Branch may apply to return to full branch status with their County approval when the branch is able to form a full committee and regain control over their funds. MSO and County Committee will be able to guide a branch through this process which will involve elections of the new committee.

2.b Activities for members

Members who take part in activities with their local Branch or County will often find that they get more out of their membership and feel more connected to the Legion's work. During the course of the year, Branches should carry out their fundraising and community support responsibilities, but they should also spend time on other activities.

Events of a social nature (funded by members and not by Branch funds) might include trips to the National Memorial Arboretum, Christmas meals, visits to Regimental museums or travelling to places of interest. Members can also participate in sports competitions with other Branches at County and Regional level. There are currently competitions for bowls, snooker and darts in some areas.

Members driving on behalf of the Legion in a volunteer role must be legally entitled to drive and have a full driving licence. Once a person reaches the age of 70, they have to renew their driving licence every three years. When a volunteer is using their own vehicle in their

voluntary activities, they should tell their insurers but make it clear that they will only receive out-of-pocket expenses and that this is not commercial use of the vehicle. Association of British Insurers insurance companies do not charge an extra premium for volunteer drivers.

Branches often help with local Remembrance events and funerals. Guidance for ceremonial activities for Branches can be found [here](#).

2.b.(1) Branch community support

Branch community support is how Branches promote the objectives of the Legion and provide support for local Legion beneficiaries. Every Branch is required by the Royal Charter to appoint a Branch Community Support Committee or a [Branch Community Support Representative](#).

The Area Manager can provide advice on locally available Branch community support courses for training purposes.

Community support can include carrying out volunteer casework, visiting beneficiaries or providing advice and information. Anyone applying for a community support role must meet strict training and screening requirements; these are necessary to protect the organisation, our volunteers, members and beneficiaries.

Where you receive a complaint about a BCS Supporter or a BCS Supporter makes a complaint, this should be referred to and dealt with by the Area Manager (AM), and handled in accordance with the Operational Complaints Procedure. Following the investigation, the AM will ensure the BCS Rep is aware of the outcome. It should be noted that if a complaint about a BCS Supporter is upheld then action may be taken to remove that person from the BCS role. The branch must uphold any decision made.

2.b.(2) Publicising your events

Social media is a great way of promoting the Legion and telling your community about your activities. The Legion has some rules for using social media that will help you to get the most out of it, and you can request these from your Membership Support Officer. Please check [our website](#) for tips on how to publicise your events.

2.b.(3) Going to Annual Conference

Sending delegates to Annual Conference

Every [compliant](#) Branch and County can send a delegate to [Annual Conference](#). Branch and County delegates can speak, but only Branch delegates can vote. Branches with more than 300 members may send a second delegate. Branches with more than 1,000 members may send one further additional delegate for every 500 members over 1,000.

Members of Legion staff may not attend Annual Conference as voting delegates.

Branches and Counties may put forward motions for Annual Conference, as long as they have been approved at the relevant Annual County Conference. Two delegates of the same Branch may not propose and second the same motion.

How things work at conferences

Read the Standing Orders, available through Office 365 or your Membership Support Officer, for conference protocol and process.

Delegates' expenses

Delegates are able to claim their [travel expenses](#), part of which will be paid by Head Office and the remainder by the Branch or County.

3. Complaints

The Legion takes seriously all complaints about the services it delivers to its members and stakeholders; about the integrity and propriety of all its employees, members and volunteers; and about its policies and procedures.

The Legion is committed to making its complaints-management process accessible, fair and transparent. All complaints made will be appropriately investigated as quickly as possible and, where appropriate, the complainant informed of outcomes and any action taken in line with the current complaints and grievance procedures.

3.a Procedures for different kinds of complaints

If you have received a complaint about a member or you want to make a complaint about a member, you'll find the information you need in the Legion Complaints Committee (LCC), available through Office 365 or your Membership Support Officer. More on handling complaints is covered under the Membership council section of this handbook. In exceptional circumstances, the MC Chairman has the power to expel a member where necessary.

If you are unhappy with how your membership queries have been handled, please contact membershipservices@britishlegion.org.uk

For complaints about fundraising activities, refer to the Poppy Appeal Organiser Handbook, available through Office 365 or your Membership Support Officer.

If you are making or have received a complaint that relates to club membership, the club committee should be approached first.

4. Elections

For information on how the Legion is organised, see sections 'About the Legion' and 'About Formations' later in this handbook. Many roles within the Legion are elected by members.

4.a Rules

- No canvassing is allowed.
- Nomination forms must be signed by the candidate to show they have accepted it.
- All forms relating to elections should be completed in block capital letters.
- [Spoilt ballot papers](#) will not be included in any count.
- If there is only one valid nomination, that person is elected. [Negative voting](#), including the 'for or against' type, is not allowed and will render a ballot paper invalid. If there is more than one candidate, every [compliant](#) Branch in the electoral region will have the opportunity to vote.
- Candidates for the National Branches District must live in the UK.
- Candidates for any overseas district must live in the European Economic Area.
- Ballot papers that are incorrectly filled in or that have arrived after the deadline are declared void.
- Candidates cannot be nominated for both positions of County Chairman and County Vice-Chairman in the same election year.
- Ballot papers and candidates' CVs must be presented at a Branch meeting (not a Branch Committee meeting).
- The candidate who gets the most votes is the winner.
- In the event of a tie, the result is decided by drawing lots.

Members and Life Members are entitled to vote, hold office and be members of any council or committee. However, members are not allowed to hold office or be elected if:

- They have an unspent conviction for an offence involving dishonesty or deception.
- They have been disqualified as a company director under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986.
- They are an undischarged bankrupt.
- They have been removed from trusteeship of a charity by a court of law or by the Charity Commission.

ELECTIONS

ELECTIONS					
General notes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Only current, adult members or Life Members may be nominated. 2. There can be only one nominee per Branch for each position. 3. If Branch members nominate more than one member for County or national elections, a vote is held. The nominee who gets the most votes is the winner. If there is a tie, the final nomination is determined by lot between the tied candidates. 4. If only one nomination is received, the candidate is deemed elected. 				
	Nominations	Actions prior to election	Voting	Term	Vacancy occurring mid-term
Board of Trustees, National Chairman & National Vice-Chairman	Refer to Royal Charter and the Election Pack issued annually to all Branches in October.				
National Conference Committee	Refer to Annual Conference Special Circular issued annually to all Branches in October.				
Membership Council	<p>The Secretary to the Membership Council will issue nomination papers to each compliant Branch by 1 October.</p> <p>The nominee must be a Branch member of that Electoral Area and live either in the Area or adjacent to it. Candidates for the National Branches Region must live in the United Kingdom. Candidates for Overseas must reside in the European Economic Area.</p> <p>The nomination must be proposed, seconded and voted on at a Branch General Meeting.</p>	<p>The Membership Governance Coordinator must check if the nomination is valid and inform the candidate and the Branch that it has been received. They must also inform the Branch and the candidate if the nomination has been rejected.</p> <p>If there is more than one nomination, the Membership Governance Coordinator must forward all nominations to an external company such as Electoral Reform Services, who will</p>	<p>Branch members must decide on their preferred candidate at a Branch General Meeting and mark their choice on the ballot paper.</p> <p>The Branch Secretary must ensure the ballot paper is signed by the Branch Chairman and one other Committee member, place it in the return envelope and send it to the external company. Ballots must be received by 5pm on the last Friday in March.</p>	Three years.	The Membership Council Chairman must co-opt a member from a Branch in the electoral region unless more than 15 months of tenure is left – in this case new elections are arranged.

	<p>The Branch Secretary must send to the Membership Governance Coordinator the Branch's nomination form with a copy of the candidate's CV. This must be received not later than 5pm on the second Friday in December. The nomination form must be signed as accepted by the candidate.</p>	<p>conduct the election.</p> <p>Candidates' CVs and ballot papers, accompanied by a pre-paid envelope, will be sent to compliant Branches in the electoral region by 31 January.</p>	<p>The external company receives and retains all returned envelopes in a secure place and notes any envelope that has been opened or not sealed correctly and immediately reports it to the Membership Governance Coordinator.</p> <p>On the Monday following the last Friday in March, the external company opens and counts the votes for each candidate.</p> <p>Any Branch ballot paper that has been completed incorrectly or arrives after 5pm on the last Friday in March will be declared void and the envelope and the papers forwarded to the Director General, who will inform the Branch concerned.</p> <p>The elected candidate is the one who gets the most votes.</p> <p>The external company will inform the Membership Governance Coordinator of the result of the ballot.</p>		
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			<p>The Membership Governance Coordinator will then inform the candidates and Legion formations.</p> <p>In the event of a tie, the National Chairman, witnessed by the Director General, will draw lots.</p>		
<p>County Chairman & County Vice-Chairman</p>	<p>The Membership Support Officer must request nominations from Branches by 1 July and circulate the nomination sheet.</p> <p>Compliant branches may only nominate one current member per branch for each post at a Branch General Meeting.</p> <p>The nominee does not need to be a member of the nominating Branch but must belong to the branch in the County where elections take place. Once elected, he/she cannot remain a voting member of any Branch committee.</p> <p>Where a CC or CVC is Branch Chairman and a replacement cannot be found, threatening the existence of the branch, the candidate can stay in both roles for up to three months until a new Branch Chairman is in place. Any conflicts of</p>	<p>The Membership Support Officer must check if the candidate is a current member of a Branch in the County and inform the candidate and the Branch that the nomination has been received. They must also inform the Branch and the candidate if the nomination is rejected.</p> <p>If there is more than one nomination, the Membership Support Officer must send ballot papers to compliant Branches by 1 October with a return pre-paid envelope addressed to the Area Office.</p>	<p>Members must decide on their preferred candidate at a Branch General Meeting and mark the ballot paper accordingly.</p> <p>The Branch Secretary must ensure the ballot paper is signed by the Branch Chairman, place it in the return envelope and send to the Membership Support Officer. Ballots must be received by 5pm on the second Monday in December.</p> <p>The Membership Support Officer must inform the candidates about the date/time/venue of the vote count at least seven days before the count.</p> <p>Two scrutineers (appointed by the Area Manager</p>	<p>Three years.</p> <p>No person may serve more than three terms as a Chairman or Vice-Chairman. However, this does not exclude one person from being elected for three terms as a Chairman and three terms as Vice-Chairman.</p>	<p>The next highest-placed candidate in the latest election must fill the vacancy until the end of the term. If there is no such candidate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there are less than 15 months until the end of the term, the Committee must co-opt a temporary replacement. • If there are more than 15 months until the end of the term, a new election must be started within one month and completed within four months. Follow the steps explained on the left.

	<p>interest arising during this period must be declared.</p> <p>Candidates for the National Branches District must live in the United Kingdom. Candidates for any Overseas District must live in the European Economic Area. Candidates cannot be nominated for both positions of Chairman and Vice-Chairman in the same election year.</p> <p>The Membership Support Officer must receive the Branch nomination, accompanied by the candidate's CV and a passport-sized photograph, no later than 5pm on the second Monday in September.</p>		<p>and Membership Council representative), one of whom is the chief scrutineer, must open and count votes within seven days of receiving the ballot papers. Candidates may be present as observers. Ballots completed incorrectly, not signed, or arriving late are void.</p> <p>The candidate with the highest number of votes wins the election. In the event of a tie, the chief scrutineer must draw lots.</p> <p>The Membership Support Officer must immediately pass the election results to the Head of Membership Administration, Governance and Compliance. The results must be announced at the Annual Meeting of County Conference.</p>		
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<p>County Committee (at least seven but no more than 15 members)</p> <p>AND</p> <p>County Conference Committee (three members out of six)</p>	<p>The Membership Support Officer must request nominations from Branches by 1 July and circulate the nomination sheet. Compliant Branches may nominate no more than one current member per Branch for each Post at their Branch General Meeting.</p>	<p>The Membership Support Officer must check if the candidate is a current member of a Branch in the County and inform the candidate and the Branch that the nomination has been received. They must also inform the Branch and the candidate if the nomination is rejected.</p>	<p>By ballot at the Annual Meeting of County Conference.</p>	<p>One, two or three years as decided by the Branch Committee.</p>	<p>The Committee must co-opt a temporary replacement until the next Annual Meeting of County Conference when a new election must be held.</p>
<p>Branch Officers (Chairman, Vice-Chairman (optional), Secretary, Treasurer (appointed, not elected) & Committee members</p>	<p>The nomination sheet listing Branch office and tenure must be made available to members 21 days before the Branch Annual General Meeting. Completed nomination sheets – including the name of the nominee, membership number and name of the proposer and seconder – must be sent to the Branch Secretary at least seven days before the Branch Annual General Meeting.</p>	<p>The Branch Secretary must check if candidates are current members and if they consent to stand for position. The master nomination must be created and circulated to members.</p>	<p>By ballot by eligible members present, unless the position is unopposed, in which case the person is elected automatically. Election of Branch officers takes place before the election of Committee members.</p>	<p>To be decided by the Branch Committee.</p>	<p>The position must be filled until the end of the original term by co-option to 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.</p>

4.b Standing for election

Candidates are not allowed to canvass. But they can:

Create a CV no longer than one page of A4, with a passport-size photo attached.

- Consider what will help the decision of voters: for example, Legion-specific experience, relevant professional experience and a personal statement.

They should bear in mind that CVs may be edited before they're distributed to voters. Candidates may be asked to make alterations (which they can accept or decline).

You can find the template ballot paper for elections [here](#).

5. Fundraising

Counties and Branches have a key role in fundraising and should play their part in the Poppy Appeal. There will be committees looking after County Funds and Branches will look after Branch Funds.

In addition, Counties and Branches may raise funds for their General funds but must keep this activity separate from the Poppy Appeal and not use Poppy Appeal branding for this purpose. This is because Poppy Appeal branding may suggest fundraising for the Poppy Appeal and create confusion over how the funds will be spent. Also fundraising for the General Fund must not take place during [Remembrancetide](#).

It is good practice for Counties to form a County Fundraising Committee. This may comprise people who are not Legion members but have been chosen because of their local standing and influence or their experience in fundraising.

Bear in mind that fundraising is a regulated activity with its own [national code of practice](#). This code applies to volunteers as much as to paid fundraisers, so if you're doing any fundraising at all, you should be aware of it. If you have any questions, contact your Community Fundraiser, who you can find through your Membership Support Officer or local Area Office, or contact Supporter Care (supportercare@britishlegion.org.uk).

5.a The Poppy Appeal

The Poppy Appeal is the Legion's largest fundraising campaign. It runs every year from 14 October to 14 November. Counties have a key role in the Poppy Appeal, and Community Fundraisers in each County are responsible for successfully delivering the campaign. They are also responsible if any fundraising goes wrong when members don't follow the legal requirements. Community Fundraisers must be aware of any fundraising activity within their area.

The PA Handbook contains the most up-to-date information available on the Poppy Appeal. You can find it on Office 365 or from your Membership Support Officer.

Counties and the Poppy Appeal

Counties should work with Community Fundraisers to ensure that proper arrangements are in place for the distribution of Poppy Appeal materials (poppies, trays, posters, etc) and merchandise, and for the collection, security and banking of the monies received.

Remember that this merchandise can be used only for raising funds for the charitable objectives of the Legion and not for the running costs of the Branch. Branches must make it clear to their donors if they raise funds (outside of the Poppy Appeal) for the Branch funds and not the Poppy Appeal.

Community Fundraisers will organise regional seminars as required, so that Poppy Appeal Organisers can be trained and briefed.

Counties should also make full use of [awards](#) and certificates for achievements in the Poppy Appeal for Counties, Branches, clubs, individuals and businesses.

Branches and the Poppy Appeal

Branches should be guided and assisted by the Community Fundraiser to organise the Poppy Appeal. The Community Fundraiser will appoint a Poppy Appeal Organiser with support of the Branch and needs to be kept up to date if the person holding the role of Poppy Appeal Organiser changes.

All Branch events for the Poppy Appeal should be used for fundraising by the Poppy Appeal Organiser unless there is a specific fundraising initiative for General Fund. Remember, however, that Branches are not allowed to trade (during events or at any other time). They can only ask for donations for goods and there is no suggested donation to be set.

This is important because charities are subject to VAT regulations when they trade. PAO does not need to be the member of the Branch to be appointed for this role.

5.b Raising money for other causes

Branches may sometimes join with other charities but it must be made clear to donors who they are giving their money to. When Legion merchandise is being used, the funds raised are always for the Legion charity.

If Branches want to raise money jointly with other charities, this is not permitted during the Poppy Appeal period (14 October to 14 November) and the Legion logo and merchandise must not be used for it.

With any questions, contact your local Community Fundraiser or Membership Support Officer.

5.c Grants

Branches that wish to apply for funding from statutory funding bodies (for example, National Lottery Heritage Fund) or from trusts and foundations (for example, the Garfield Weston Foundation or any livery companies) must first contact the Trusts and Foundations Fundraiser at Head Office. Email them at philanthropy@britishlegion.org.uk. Branches must not submit any grant applications without prior agreement from the Trusts and Foundations Fundraiser.

The Trusts and Foundations Fundraiser will confirm whether the Legion already has a relationship with any potential funders and can advise on the best time of year to apply.

For applications of £10,000 and above, the Trusts and Foundations Fundraiser will be happy to support Branches. The Branch maintains responsibility for drafting the application, and the Trusts and Foundations Fundraiser will review and offer advice. Branches must inform their Membership Support Officer and/or Area Manager if their application is successful.

Any funds received by the Branch from external organisations must be [ringfenced](#) within the accounts, and the associated expenditure must be accounted for as restricted. Branches must also inform the Trusts and Foundations Fundraiser of successful bids so that they can update their records. Branches wishing to make an allowed donation, should contact the Grants team on ExternalGrants@britishlegion.org.uk

6. Handling media requests

All local PR work is coordinated by the Area Manager, supported by the Regional PR Officer and where necessary with the County Chairman. The Area Manager can also help Branches with PR around public events such as open days.

What to do if you get approached for comment

If you're approached for comment on Legion activities by the media, please get in touch with the Legion's [press office](#) straight away. They will be able to give you a brief and advice. The press team will also help if a crisis occurs or if you are simply unsure of how to handle an issue.

7. Protecting people's data

Members' details are held in the central database managed by Legion staff. Branches and members should report any changes, such as changes of address, here or to their Membership Support Officer.

It is the responsibility of those who process people's data to do so within reason and within data protection laws. You can read the Legion's privacy policy and promise [here](#).

7.a General Data Protection

The Royal British Legion is committed to using good practice in the handling of personal data in order to comply with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The Legion aims to be fair and lawful in the way it uses, processes and stores personal data, and will keep members informed about the purpose for which we collect their data, adhering to individual rights of access to their data and any objections they may have regarding the use of their personal information.

All general TRBL policies and procedures relating to data protection can be obtained from the Membership Support Officer.

Members must inform the Membership Support Officer or Membership Services of any data breaches.

7.b Data Protection at Membership level

All members, including the Membership Council, County and Branch Officials, who process personal data which includes collecting, accessing and storing, must adhere to the following principles:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtaining data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal data obtained on the membership application form should be sent to the relevant office as soon as possible, preferably by recorded delivery. Any copies kept locally must be kept securely and destroyed as soon as the new joiner's membership is confirmed. • Members who collect personal data from others must always clearly explain the purpose for which the information is being collected and how it will be used.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessing data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership listings can be accessed online via Office 365 system. O365 users must not share their login details with others. Only authorised Branch Officers who signed the form can have access to membership listings. • Membership data can also be obtained via email or post from the Membership Support Officer or the Membership Department staff. Only Branch/County Officers who signed the MS1(A) form and Membership Council members can obtain membership data.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storing data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal data must be stored securely: • Hard copies must be kept in a safe place e.g. locked room, drawer, cupboard, or box. • Electronic copies must be kept on a device which is password protected (e.g. laptop, memory stick); ideally the folder / file should also be password protected. Members must take care to avoid having the devices lost or stolen. Where a device or paper records containing personal data is lost you must report this as a data security breach to the Membership Support Officer or Membership Services as soon as possible. Data should not be kept if it is no longer needed and should be securely disposed of or deleted.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processing data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members' data must not be used for any other purpose than communicating information relating to TRBL. Mailings or information unrelated to TRBL activities, in particular third party marketing materials, must not be sent or emailed. Membership listings or any other materials based on these listings (e.g. address labels) should be used within one week of receipt and then destroyed, as they quickly become out of date. The central database is modified on a daily basis as a result of address changes, lapses, deaths, resignations, changes of membership type and new members. • When emailing more than one person, members' email addresses should not be typed into the 'To' field, but placed in the BCC (Blind Carbon Copy) section.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retaining data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data must not be retained for longer than necessary. General retention rules can be found in the Members Retention Schedule in paragraph 12 below. If you cease to be a TRBL member you must hand over to the branch or Head Office any paper

	materials containing members' personal data such as lists or labels, and delete any electronic formats of membership data you hold.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members have not given consent for their details to be made available to anyone except TRBL authorised staff and Branch Officers. Consequently, a member's personal details (including addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses) must never be shared with the public, other organisations, other members, unauthorised staff or other volunteers, without the member's prior written consent.

7.c Members retention schedule

Description of document	Format	Trigger (time when the retention period specified in the next column starts	Disposal Action and Retention Period ("delete for paper means placing in a shredder or a secure disposal bin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications received and sent by post or email that contain personal data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper (P) / • Electronic (E) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date received / sent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delete after 12 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of County or Annual Conference delegate applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P / E 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusion of Conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delete after 3 months.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of Youth affiliation applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P / E 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affiliation cancelled / ended / branch closed / youth organisation closed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delete immediately
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accounts forms - Bank statements - Authority to disclose information forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P / E 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document completion date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preferably make an electronic copy (to be deleted after 7 years) and destroy paper copy immediately. If not possible keep in a safe place and destroy after 7 years.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of expense claim forms / receipt vouchers / payment vouchers / other financial documents e.g. invoices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P / E 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment received by the claimant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P: make an electronic copy and destroy paper copy immediately. If not possible keep in a safe place and destroy after 7 years. • E: delete after 7 years

• Membership complaints	• P / E	• Issue resolved (e.g. completion of mediation meeting, Investigation Panel or appeal)	• Delete after 3 years
• Membership reports and listings with members' details	• P / E	• New report / listing obtained	• Delete immediately • (Office 365: we will auto-delete all the reports that are older than 12 months)
• MS1 / MS1A	• P / E	• Completion date	• Delete after 5 years
• Election documents: candidate CVs, ballot papers	• P / E	• Election results obtained	• Delete after 30 days
• County / Branch meeting minutes	• P / E	• Publication date	• Delete after 5 years
• Copies of membership application forms	• P / E (scanned)	• P / E: membership confirmed date	• Delete immediately
• Cheques	• P	• P: receipt date	• Cheques must be banked weekly. Returned cheques to be destroyed immediately
• Any documents with Personal data of cancelled / deceased members	• P / E (scanned)	• Death /cancellation notification	• Remove personal data (email, telephone number, DOB and address) from all documents immediately

Information

This section of the handbook is designed to give you an understanding of how the Legion works and is financed.

8. About the Legion

8.a How the Legion is financed

All funds held by the Legion (by Branches, Counties and centrally) are charitable funds and are the responsibility of the [Board of Trustees](#). The funds must be used only according to instructions and policies from the Board of Trustees. These instructions and policies are always in accordance with the Royal Charter, charity law, financial laws and other regulations concerning use of charitable funds, as well as codes of practice, rules of good practice and other professional compliance advice the Legion receives.

The use of charitable funds for purposes other than those laid down by the Board of Trustees is strictly forbidden and may be illegal.

The Board of Trustees is responsible for two funds defined in the [Royal Charter](#):

The Benevolent Fund

This contains gifts of money or property from public or private subscription or other sources, and is the charity's main source of income. The Poppy Appeal provides a large part of this income. The Royal Charter requires formations to give active support to the organisation of the Poppy Appeal, which is a year-round activity, and not just confined to Remembrancetide.

The General Fund

This funds the membership organisation. It draws its income mainly from the annual membership fees paid by members and from Gift Aid on those fees. It covers:

- Membership administration, governance, grants, training grants and events grants [\(the application process for which can be found here\)](#) for Counties.
- Producing *Legion* magazine
- Membership Support

- Membership Training
- Membership staff costs

Both funds will be examined annually by an independent examiner or a qualified auditor.

8.b The Legion's governance

The Board of Trustees is the Legion's governing body. It instructs and advises the Membership Council, Counties and Branches. Find out more about how the Board of Trustees works on our website [here](#).

The Membership Council represents the members of the Legion. Find out more through your local branch.

Legion staff implements the policies and procedures agreed by the Board of Trustees and the Membership Council.

9. About formations

9.a What formations are and how they are structured

- **A formation is a Branch, County, District or Section. In this handbook, including in this section, when we talk about Counties, we mean Counties, Districts and Sections.**
- Counties, Districts and Sections are administrative regions of the Legion. They have different names but the same functions.
- A Branch is a group of Legion members, which may be formed based on locality or shared interest. Counties are made up of several Branches.
- To become a member of the Legion, a person has to join a Branch. Every Legion member is therefore a Branch member.
- A member can join upto four branches, so can belong to a maximum of four branches at one time and pays only one membership fee. They will have to pay admin fees for each Branch they joined.
- A member who sits on more than one Branch Committee, must be a member of that Branch and this does not exceed four branches at any given time.

- An individual, who is a member of multiple branches, is not allowed to be nominated as a Conference delegate by more than one branch.

Four kinds of Branches:

- Branches that cover a defined geographical area. These are the most common kind and each one comes under the responsibility of a County.
- Overseas Branches. Read more about these [here](#).
- National Branches. These are non-geographical and are often created by special-interest Groups. National Branches are overseen by the National Branches District.
- Branches of the [Women’s Section](#).

A Branch must have a Committee of at least seven members, elected and appointed. If a Branch isn’t able to form a Committee, it can apply to its County for [County-supported Branch](#) status.

A County-supported Branch has no Committee, just two points of contact, and no bank account. The County manages its funds.

All Branches are part of a County (with some exceptions Overseas and National) and are guided by their Counties. A Branch not happy with any decision of its County Committee, may within 28 days raise a complaint to the Membership Council. A copy of the complaint must be sent to the County Committee at the same time.

Branches can form Groups, particularly in large Counties. Groups can help Branches to support each other, act as a forum and provide a link between Branch and County. More on Groups can be found [here](#).

Counties and Branches each have their own Committee. Counties also have their own Conference.

9.b Committees and the roles people can hold

	Branch	County/District
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Committee roles	Chairman, Vice-Chairman (Optional), Treasurer (appointed), Secretary, Branch Community Support Committee or Representative, Branch Recruiting Officer (non-compulsory)	Chairman, Vice-Chairman, County Community Support Committee or Representative, County Recruiting Officer, County Training Officer
Committee-appointed roles (but not Committee members)	President (non-compulsory)	President and Treasurer (both compulsory)
Number of additional Committee members allowed	Three to seven	Seven to 15
Quorum	Four	Half the members entitled to attend and to vote

Rules for all Legion officers

They must:

- Follow the duties and responsibilities outlined by the Board of Trustees and the Membership Council.
- Adhere to all Legion policies and procedures.
- Ensure the formation complies with charity law.
- Serve the interests of the Legion at all times.
- Undergo appropriate training for their role.
- (For Branch officers) not serve as officers of an associated club Committee.
- (For Branch officers) not be a tenant or representative of a tenant of properties held in trust by the Branch.

Community support

Branches are there to promote Legion's work in their communities and the best way to accomplish that is to register for Branch Community Support Scheme (BCS). Every Branch must appoint a Branch Community Support Committee or a [Branch Community Support Representative](#) at its first meeting following the Branch AGM.

These members are responsible to the Branch Committee for the community support activities of the Branch. They must follow strict confidential working practices. It is highly recommended that they complete appropriate training: your Area Manager can advise on courses.

The County Community Support Committee or the County Community Support Representative advises Branches on the delivery of local support services. They work closely with the Area Manager and other Area staff, who can provide professional advice and support. Some roles in this scheme require specialist training. Any Branch having difficulty with managing its welfare work should ask the Area Manager for help. Outside of the BCS scheme branches are also encouraged to make annual contributions to the County Welfare Fund, which is used for local cases throughout the year.

There are opportunities for members to become telephone buddies, case workers or visitor volunteers. Find out more about these roles [here](#).

What happens if a role suddenly becomes vacant?

If this happens to the role of Chairman or Vice-Chairman, the next highest placed candidate in the latest election fills the vacancy. If there is no such person, the Committee may co-opt a temporary replacement for the remainder of the term unless there are more than 15 months until the next election. In this case the Committee must initiate an election within one month and complete it within four months to fill the vacancy.

If a vacancy occurs for any other position, the Committee may co-opt a suitable member of a Branch within the County as a temporary replacement until the next annual meeting or special meeting, when a fresh election must be held for the rest of its term. A member elected or appointed in this way may be elected for up to three further terms in the office concerned.

Can Committees remove other officers?

The Chairman can ask a Committee member to relinquish his or her position if there is a conflict with the Legion's mission, values and objectives, or where there is failure to accept a majority decision of the Committee. A Chairman can also be asked to step down by the rest of the Committee or by two-thirds of Branch members at a Special General Meeting. If

a Branch officer misses three meetings without presenting extenuating circumstances, they may be asked to step down.

What County Committees do:

- Oversee the activities of the Branches in their Counties and establish Groups.
- Recommend to the [Membership Council](#) the closures, openings and status changes of Branches.
- Oversee Branch Community Support.
- Prepare County Plans.
- Can authorise any person, whether or not a member of the Legion, to visit any meeting of any Branch or Branch Committee in its County at any time on its behalf and to have access to all deeds, documents, books and accounts of this Branch.
- Take a Branch into administration where necessary, keeping the Membership Council informed at all stages.
- Make sure that every Branch submits copies of its annual Branch accounts to Head Office.
- Hold an annual meeting, which may put motions forward to the Legion's [Annual Conference](#).
- Help the [Board of Trustees](#) and the Membership Council to carry out the work of the Legion.
- Help to organise the [Poppy Appeal](#) and any other fundraising activities in their Counties.
- They can establish sub-Committees.
- They should act on resolutions passed at the Annual Meeting of County Conference (or at a Special Meeting of the County Conference), as long as they do not conflict with the Royal Charter or with the Board of Trustees' instructions.
- Encourage payment of membership fees by Direct Debit and encourage members to Gift-Aid their subscription where appropriate.
- For more about their responsibilities, see the [Royal Charter](#).

9.c Bye-laws

Bye-laws lay down how a formation is organised and structured and how it works. They also contain all the terms of reference of County sub-Committees. They are based on the

[Model Bye-Laws](#). For Counties, any amendments or additions must be approved at a Meeting of County Conference by a two-thirds majority and then approved by the Membership Council. For Branches, any amendments or additions must be approved by the County Committee.

9.d County Plan

Counties must have a three-year plan based on Legion aims and policies and the county objectives. County Plans should be reviewed annually by the County Committee at their annual meeting.

9.e Overseas Districts and Branches

There are two kinds of overseas Branches: those that operate within an overseas District and those that are stand-alone. Stand-alone Branches come under the responsibility of the Membership Council.

Overseas Districts (Germany, Spain North and Spain South) operate in the same way as UK Counties but should be aware that some activities (for example, fundraising and property ownership) will be regulated by local laws. If there is a conflict, then the law of the home country of the District or Branch must prevail. The Legion's Membership Support Officer (Overseas) offers support and guidance to all overseas formations.

Overseas Districts have their own supplementary Model Bye-Laws, found [here](#).

9.f Legion-licensed clubs

Legion members can join Legion-licensed clubs (referred to here as TRBL Clubs). Club membership is additional to Branch membership and club members may need to pay an additional club membership fee directly to their club.

TRBL Clubs are independent, not-for-profit, registered mutual trading societies, which are not part of the charity. They must apply to the Legion for a licence to use the charity name and logo. They must be run in accordance with the law, the registered club rules and the conditions of the licence under which the club uses the name of the Legion in its title and the Legion logo.

The Legion provides model club rules, approved by the Financial Conduct Authority, and on the basis of the agreed rules, the club is correctly registered.

Each club is granted a licence in perpetuity by the Legion, allowing it to use the Legion's name and logo. Failure to comply with the conditions of the licence and rules can result in the withdrawal of the licence. Clubs are required to submit an annual application to obtain or renew their Legion licence, attaching supporting accounts and a recommendation from the Regional Club Relationship Manager to obtain or maintain a licence. The County Committee will have the opportunity to challenge or support the Regional Club Relationship Manager's recommendation.

The issue of a full or conditional licence and the withdrawal of a licence must be approved by the Membership Council. The issue of a full licence needs to be approved for the first time; following the first approval, if there are no recommendations for a licence change or withdrawal, the club will be automatically granted a full licence without the need for further approvals from the Membership Council.

The activities of Legion clubs are supported by the following staff members: Regional Club Relationship Managers and the National Clubs Administration Manager. Staff can provide management advice for clubs, but clubs must make their own decisions when it comes to running the business.

If a club occupies a building in corporate trusteeship, the club is the Legion's tenant. The occupation of the club is regularised through a lease or other tenancy arrangement. Rent is charged to the tenant in accordance with the Charities Act 2011, the Landlord and Tenant Act and Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors standards. For more information about property issues, contact commercialadmin@britishlegion.org.uk or your Regional Property Manager.

Overseas Districts must ensure that Branches do not use the Legion's name or their Branch accounts in connection with any bar or club used by the Branch. They must also make sure that Branches do not use the Legion's name on any financial accounts connected with bars and clubs.

Counties should monitor the activities of clubs to ensure that a club is not in breach of its Legion licence and that it is not bringing the name of the Legion into disrepute. Any issues must be reported to the Regional Club Relationship Manager and the National Clubs Administration Manager. Counties must, however, recognise that clubs are independent trading societies and therefore they cannot interfere with the internal running of a club.

Counties must work with the Regional Club Relationship Managers and Membership Support Officers to recommend the issue and withdrawal of the Legion licence to and from clubs.

Counties must not provide business advice or guidance to clubs – the first point of call for any business matters are the Regional Club Relationship Managers and National Clubs Administration Manager.

Counties are encouraged to appoint [Club Liaison Officers](#).

It is illegal for Branches to subsidise Legion clubs (or any other social purpose) from charitable funds. That means they mustn't pay for things that the club should pay for. They also must not loan money to clubs. To do so would be to use charitable funds wrongly and might lead to the Branch Committee members facing criminal proceedings.

Branches must not collect club rent – the Legion's Commercial Department has a duty to ensure that a proper rent is charged in accordance with charity law and the lease, and that rent is received when due.

Branch officers must not also serve as club officers and vice versa. Committee members who sit on both Branch and club Committees must declare their interest and withdraw from that part of a meeting of the Branch Committee when decisions affecting the relationship between the Branch and club are to be made.

9.g Premises occupied by Branches

Branches that occupy or control properties must make sure that building is safe. The Branch Chairman is responsible for this, although he or she can delegate day-to-day management to another Legion member.

Everything you need to know on building safety legislation is in the Branch Occupied Premises Statutory Compliance Policy available through the Commercial Team at the Head Office.

9.h Formation finances

9.h.(1) Legion funds – general notes

All money held by Branches, Counties and Districts are charitable funds and belong to the Legion. The Board of Trustees is responsible for the management and administration of this money.

The Legion's corporate financial year runs from 1 October to 30 September. The financial year for Branches, Counties and Districts runs from 1 July to 30 June. The Legion's accounts are audited annually.

To find more information about funds held by the Legion, please consult the [Royal Charter](#).

9.h.(2) Membership funds

The General Fund

Membership fees go into the General Fund, an unrestricted fund. General Fund and Gift Aid claimed on those fees and donations also go here. It pays for:

- Membership governance and administration, including Annual Conference.
- Grants to Counties and Districts for administration, training and events.
- Producing *Legion* magazine.
- Membership support, development and training.
- The costs of staff involved in activities that support the membership.

Branch and County funds

They are unrestricted funds, the day-to-day administration of which has been delegated to Branch and County Committees. These funds must be used to further the Legion's charitable aims through activities, [almonisation](#) of welfare grants or through donations to the Poppy Appeal or other Legion services and activities.

Some Branches and Counties also have their own restricted funds. These funds may contain money from [Branch Property Trusts](#), legacies and other donations and can only be spent in accordance with the relevant terms or wishes of the donor.

9.h.(3) The Branch Funds Initiative (BFI)

The Branch Funds Initiative is a savings scheme administered by Head Office. Funds are pooled and invested on long-term deposits with banks approved by the Finance Committee. This helps Branches and Counties to benefit from a higher rate of interest than they would normally achieve independently and keeps their funds secure.

9.h.(4) LOMAS

The Legion Online Membership Accounting System (LOMAS) is an electronic accounting system for Branches, Counties and Districts maintained by the Finance Department. Its purpose is to provide Branches and Counties with a secure online platform for maintaining their accounts and to automate the production of the annual Branch return. LOMAS is not an online banking platform.

If your Branch is interested in using LOMAS, contact your Membership Support Officer. If you need help with LOMAS, email LOMAShelpdesk@britishlegion.org.uk

9.h.(5) Branch Property Trusts

Some Branches are connected to properties that are held on trust. For more information on that, please contact your local Area Office or Membership Support Officer.

If you have any queries about Branch Property Trust funds, contact bpt@britishlegion.org.uk

10. About the Membership Council

10.a Its aims and how it works

For guidance on Membership Council elections, click [here](#).

The Membership Council is a sub-committee of the Board of Trustees. It represents the needs of Legion membership. It usually meets six times a year, right after the meetings of the Board of Trustees. The Membership Council Chairman can also call a special meeting of the council if needed.

The Membership Council exists to:

- Help with membership policy matters at the request of the Board of Trustees or Legion directors.
- Manage and administer Counties.
- Manage and administer Branches that do not belong to a County.
- Approve the formation, amalgamation and closure of Counties, Branches.
- Approve County model bye-laws, County bye-laws and Branch model bye-laws.
- Approve, amend and withdraw Legion club licences.
- Monitor the General Fund Budget and make recommendations on income and expenditure.
- Make recommendations for the improvement of membership administration and systems to make sure that members' needs are being met.

It helps to develop the Legion's strategic membership plan and oversees:

- The Membership complaints procedure.
- Membership Training
- The Ceremonial Handbook.
- The Legion's Youth policy.
- The Legion's Bands policy.
- The Legion's Cups and Shields Guidelines.

Details of these can be found on Office 365 or through your Membership Support Officer.

The Membership Council is made up of the following:

- Two members of the Board of Trustees appointed by the Legion's National Chairman. These two members are the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Membership Council.
- 19 members, including one from each electoral region and one from Overseas, the Women's Section and National Branches.

Geographical Electoral Regions:

- Cornwall/Devon
- Somerset/Wiltshire
- Dorset/Hampshire/Isle of Wight
- London (Greater London)
- South East (Kent, Surrey and Sussex)
- East Anglia/Essex (Cambridgeshire, Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk)
- South East Midlands (Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire)
- South West Midlands (Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire)
- West Midlands (Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Birmingham)
- East Midlands (Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire)
- Wales (Gwent, North Wales, South East Wales, South West Wales)
- Yorkshire (North and East Yorkshire, South and West Yorkshire)
- Merseyside/Cheshire (Cheshire, West Lancashire)
- Manchester/Lancashire (Greater Manchester, Lancashire)
- Northern (Cumbria, Isle of Man, Northumbria)
- Ireland (Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland)

At meetings, there needs to be at least one trustee member and seven elected members present for the meeting to be [quorate](#). In addition, the Legion's Assistant Director Membership should be present and heads of department and managers from the Legion's membership division if they are needed. Other members of Legion staff may be invited to help with specific agenda items. The Legion's Director of Operations may have a standing agenda item so that they can brief the membership council and feedback on matters relating to the Legion's operation.

The Chairman of the Membership Council chairs the meetings. Therefore, he or she needs the skill and experience to guide the council, including good knowledge of the Legion's

activities. Anything he or she says in this role should reflect Legion views and policy. In the absence of the Chairman, meetings are Chaired by the Vice-Chairman of the Membership Council.

The meeting participants work through the agenda. Reports that have been produced for the Membership Council to consider (including sub-committee work) are circulated at fourteen days ahead of the meeting to Membership Council members by email.

The Membership Council provides the Board of Trustees with minutes of meetings and detailed reports on specific proposals where needed. Members of the Membership Council can see meeting agendas, briefing papers and decision minutes on the Legion intranet. Confidential items are published in the secure area.

The Membership Council can also advise the Conference Committee on motions for [Annual Conference](#).

Members of the Membership Council represent the views of themselves and their regions. However, once a majority decision is taken by the Membership Council, it must be honoured by all members. The Chairman can ask a Membership Council member to relinquish his or her position if there is a conflict with the Legion's values and aims, they do not accept a majority decision or if they have been absent for three consecutive meetings in a year.

10.b What Membership Council members do

Membership Council members always act in the best interests of the Legion. They must not gain financial or other benefit from membership of the council. Council members take decisions together and are collectively responsible for their implementation. They delegate responsibility for the day-to-day running of the membership to the membership department. They ensure that the membership organisation acts within the terms of the [Royal Charter](#). They are also responsible for organising briefings in their electoral regions.

Membership Council members undergo training when they take up their role. They are paid reasonable expenses. They should attend Annual Conference and can attend County

Committee meetings in their electoral region without invitation. They should attend the annual general meetings of Counties in their electoral region.

Membership Council members must not be Chairmen or Vice-Chairmen of Counties or Branches, or voting members of County or Branch Committees. They can only take the role of a President. Any conflict of interest must be declared.

10.c Membership Council working groups

Ceremonial Working Group

This group maintains the Ceremonial Handbook, which can be found on Office 365 or through your Membership Support Officer, and considers all matters to do with ceremony. It meets at least three times a year and the agenda is circulated at least one week before each meeting. The Chairman of this group presents the minutes to the Membership Council.

The members are:

- Three members of the Membership Council, one of whom is appointed as the Chairman by the Membership Council Chairman.
- The National Parade Marshal (or an assistant if he or she cannot attend).
- The Women's Section National Parade Marshal (or an assistant if she cannot attend)

The Membership Governance Coordinator coordinates the meetings of the Ceremonial Working Group. Three members of this group must be at a meeting for it to be quorate. Votes are taken by a show of hands.

Cups and Shields Adjudicating Working Group

This group decides on the application criteria and the winners of cups and trophies. It meets twice a year and the agenda is circulated at least one week before each meeting. The Chairman of this group presents the minutes to the Membership Council.

The members are:

- Four members of the Membership Council. One is appointed as the Chairman by the Chairman of the Membership Council.

- The Secretary, who is the Annual Conference Coordinator.

Members serve for three years and can serve multiple terms. Three members of this group must be at a meeting for it to be quorate. Votes are taken by a show of hands.

Legion Complaints Committee

For guidance on dealing with complaints, click [here](#).

This group deals with membership complaints and reports to the Membership Council. It is briefed on all formal complaints and discusses them at meetings, where it decides whether to investigate. The Chairman of the group can consult members of Legion staff if he or she needs to.

If the group decides that there needs to be a formal investigation, the group Chairman sets up an investigation panel. This panel consists of three or five members and has its own Chairman, appointed by the complaints committee Chairman.

If there is a complaint against a member of the Board of Trustees or a member of the Membership Council, the Complaints Committee Chairman will refer that case to the Legion's Governance Committee.

The Complaints Committee may suspend a member or volunteer from any County, Branch, committee or sub-committee for up to 90 days before a formal investigation. The Complaints Committee may revoke or extend the suspension if needed.

The members are:

- Five members of the Membership Council, one of whom is appointed as Chairman by the Membership Council Chairman.

Members serve for three years and can serve multiple terms. The Members of Legion staff can be invited to meetings to help with specific agenda items. The Legion's Membership Complaints Officer is the secretary and is required to attend all complaints committee meetings. The secretary convenes meetings, issues an agenda and briefing papers before meetings, and issues minutes to Complaints Committee members and other relevant people. Four members must be at a meeting for it to be [quorate](#). If the Complaints

Committee Chairman is absent, another member of the Complaints Committee can take their place. Votes are carried out by a show of hands. If there is disagreement, the Chairman decides.

Appeals

The Complaints Committee Chairman considers appeals against decisions by investigation panels initially. An appeal committee consists of the Complaints Committee Chairman, plus the two trustees who sit on the Membership Council. If the appeal committee decides that there are procedural errors, new evidence to support the appeal or valid grounds for an appeal to be heard, the appeal goes ahead, overseen by an appeal panel. If the appeal committee decides against an appeal, the Complaints Committee Chairman will tell the person in question. The appeal panel consists of three or five members of the Membership Council.

11. Annual Conference

The Legion holds an Annual Conference, as required by the [Royal Charter](#). It is held over two days normally on the weekend before the spring bank holiday. Its location is decided at Annual Conference four years earlier. Conference is set by the Standing Orders of Conference (a copy of which is available from the local MSO).

Annual Conference comprises:

- Reports and accounts for the past year.
- The Legion Director General's address.
- Review of the corporate plan.
- Motions, including the proposal of amendments to the Royal Charter and the membership rules.
- Nominations for membership of the Conference Committee.
- All decisions at Annual Conference are taken in the form of voting by Branch delegates.

The Conference Committee

The Board of Trustees appoints a Conference Committee to oversee the preparation of the Annual Conference and its agenda. This committee consists of:

- One member of the Board of Trustees nominated by the National Chairman.
- Two members of the Membership Council nominated by the Membership Council Chairman.
- Three members or life members elected by Annual Conference.

Members of the Board of Trustees, Membership Council and staff members may attend and can speak at Annual Conference. However, they may not vote or attend as the delegate of any Branch or County Conference.

The Legion President presides at the opening of Annual Conference. The conference is chaired by the Legion Chairman (or in the Chairman's absence by the Legion Vice-Chairman). Read the Standing Orders, available through Office 365 or your Membership Support Officer, to find out how Annual Conference works.

12. Awards

The Legion recognises outstanding contributions or achievements that go well beyond what might normally be expected of a Legion officer or member.

National awards

To be considered for a national award, a person must have already been awarded a County or Branch Certificate of Appreciation. National awards are decided by the National Chairman.

- **The National Certificate of Appreciation** is the highest honour. It may be awarded to a member who has made a conspicuous contribution to the Legion for at least 12 years. Certificates are presented at Annual Conference and are accompanied by a lapel badge inscribed 'For Merit'.
- **Life Membership** is awarded to a member who has given at least 10 years meritorious and conspicuous service to the objectives of the Legion as defined by the [Royal Charter](#). This member usually holds the Legion Gold Badge. The recipient remains a member without having to pay a membership fee for the rest of his or her life. When Life Membership is approved, a certificate is sent to the member, together with a Life Membership card and badge.
- **The Gold Badge** may be awarded to a member who has given at least eight years meritorious and conspicuous service to the objectives of the Legion as defined by the Royal Charter. Following the National Chairman's approval, the Branch or County proposing the award must meet the cost of the badge. When the recipient passes away, the badge becomes the property of the next of kin, who may retain it or return it to the Branch.

Application forms for national awards can be obtained from the Membership Support Officers or from Office 365. Applications must:

- Demonstrate the individual's service to the Legion.
- Be signed by the Chairman of the nominee's Branch, Group or County. If the Chairman is the nominee, the application must be signed by the President. Where two or more offices are combined, it may be necessary to involve the Treasurer.
- Be recommended by the County Committee.

It is advisable not to tell the nominee about recommendations to avoid disappointment if the application isn't successful.

County award

A County Certificate of Appreciation may be awarded to a member who has made a conspicuous contribution to the County.

Branch award

A Branch Certificate of Appreciation may be awarded to a member who has made a conspicuous contribution to the Branch or Legion in general.

Queen's Birthday and New Year Honours

Legion members may be recommended for inclusion in the Queen's Birthday and New Year Honour List. Recommendations are normally for the Order of the British Empire – Officer of the Order (OBE), Member of the Order (MBE) or British Empire Medal (BEM). The Legion has its own Honours Group who oversee the nominations process; the Honours Group is chaired by the National President.

The member being nominated should have given exceptional and outstanding service to the Legion. Citations must be submitted on the dedicated Cabinet Office Citation form which contains a record of offices/roles held and date and demonstrates the distinctive nature of the nominee's work. References should be made to service in HM Forces and any voluntary work with other organisations and in the local community.

The Legion has guidance on the Honour process, which along with the form can be requested via your Membership Support Officer (MSO) or the Director General's Office. Please note only the Cabinet Office citation form will be considered, no additional information such as supporting letters will be reviewed as part of the citation. All citations should have the 'nominated by' completed in case any queries arise.

The timetable for nominations is set by the Cabinet Office and therefore subject to change. The Director General's Office will e-mail County Chairs and MSOs with the timetable with an expected return date of end of January for New Year Honours and end of August for the Queen's Birthday Honours. Please send these to:

EA to the Director General,
The Royal British Legion, 199 Borough High Street, London SE1 1AA
or e-mail your County Chairman or MSO for forwarding to the DG's office

Due to the complicated process around Honours it is better to avoid telling the nominee that they have been nominated to avoid disappointment if the recommendation is not successful.

Legion cups and trophies

These awards are all presented at Annual Conference.

For showing the most progress and efficiency during the year:

- Haig Cup (Branches at least three years old of 301 members or more)
- Lister Cup (Branches at least three years old of 300 members or fewer)
- Maurice Challenge Cup (counties)

For the Haig Cup, winners receive a scroll of award and a star to add to their Branch Standard. For the Lister Cup, winners receive a star and for the Maurice Challenge cup, winners receive a scroll.

How to apply: County Committees put forward Branches; Membership Council representatives put forward Counties. Membership Support Officers should send applications to the membership department by 31 January.

For Branches achieving the biggest percentage increase in paying members from 1 April to 31 March the following year:

- Jellicoe Cup (a UK Branch with 100 members or fewer) nominated by the County
- Jellicoe Shield (a UK Branch with 101 members or more) nominated by the County
- Churchill Shield (a national Branch) nominated by National District
- McCrae Shield (an overseas Branch) nominated by MC Rep for Overseas or MSO

All Branches must be at least three years old. For the Jellicoe Cup and Shield, winners receive a scroll to add to their Branch Standard. All nomination forms can be found on Office365.

For counties achieving the best percentage increase in membership during the previous year:

- Knox Shield (Small County Recruiting Trophy – Counties with up to 5,000 members) nominated by BCS Reps
- Downing Shield (Large County Recruiting Trophy – Counties with 5,001 or more members) nominated by BCS Reps

For raising the greatest sum per member for the Poppy Appeal:

- Noel Rogers Trophy (overseas Branches)
- Bucher Trophy for Clubs (clubs licensed by the Legion)

How to apply: Entry forms are available from the Poppy Appeal department and must be completed by 30 March.

For the highest per capita figure for the Poppy Appeal based on the latest population census:

- Poppy Appeal Trophy for County Poppy Appeal Results (Counties)

No application required.

For the best percentage increase per capita for the Poppy Appeal collection based on the latest population census:

- Hughes Trophy (Counties)

No application required.

For clubs showing significant progression in comradeship and good management:

- Ian Hamilton Cup (clubs licensed by the Legion)

How to apply: County Committees put forward clubs (they can nominate more than one club per County). Membership Support Officers should send applications to the membership department by 31 January.

Certificates of Merit: these may be awarded to runners-up.

For an individual disabled Legion member who has inspired other members through their leadership and guidance:

- Lewis Shield

Individuals are put forward by their Branch, with the County also providing a citation to support the application.

13. Youth members

The Legion is committed to helping young people understand the issues of Remembrance, conflict and the importance of peace.

[County Youth Officers](#) are appointed to develop relationships with young people, schools and cadets in the County.

Branches may affiliate with any local youth organisation, such as St John Ambulance, The Scout Association, Girlguiding, The Boys' Brigade or youth clubs. The purpose is to promote mutual support and encouragement to each other's aims and objectives in the local community.

In addition, the Legion welcomes members from the age of 12 up to the age of 18. Young people can join as [Youth Members](#) free of charge. All they have to do is fill out an application form.

You can read our safeguarding policy on Office 365 or request it from your Membership Support Officer.

14. Legion-licensed bands

Music is a fundamental part of Legion life and its bands offer unique opportunities to musicians.

Legion-licensed bands are allowed to use the Legion's name and logo. Find out more [here](#).

Role Descriptions

The following descriptions apply to County and Branch roles.

President

The President is usually someone of important community standing but is not a Branch or County officer. The President is appointed by the Committee usually for a three-year tenure, which can be repeated. He or she may speak and advise but has no vote on the Committee. Typically, the President will advise on nominations and present awards. His or her role, however, is representative and advisory nor can they attend County Conference as a delegate. He or she must be able to promote the Legion and build relationships in the local community.

Vice-President

A County may have one or more appointed Vice-Presidents who will not attend meetings unless invited to do so. The rules for a President also apply.

Chairman

The Chairman is mostly responsible for running the formation. The Chairman is elected normally for three years but can also in some circumstances be appointed for one, two or three years, and their tenure can be repeated. This person must be a Legion member aged 18 or above, or a Life Member, and they must not have an unspent conviction, have been disqualified as a company director or a trustee, or be an undischarged bankrupt.

The role involves (at County level) working with the County Committee to recommend opening, closing and all changes of status of local Branches; leading a Branch or County in delivering the Legion's work – especially Branch community support; driving good governance and compliance of Branches and Counties.

A Chairman must be a good leader, able to drive and implement decisions taken by the Committee; able to mediate to resolve issues between members; and direct activities and chair meetings.

Vice-Chairman

The Vice-Chairman will support the Chairman in running the formation. The Vice-Chairman is elected for three years but can also be elected for one or two years, and their tenure can be repeated. This person must be a Legion member aged 18 or above, or a Life Member, and he or she must not have an unspent conviction, have been disqualified as a company director or a trustee, or be an undischarged bankrupt.

The Vice-Chairman works with the Chairman and the Committee to grow, administer and advise membership within the agreed boundaries. He or she supports the Chairman in the management of the formation and steps in when the Chairman is absent.

Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible for money and accounting. Treasurers are appointed for one year. They are non-elected members and have no vote on the County Committee but have a vote on the Branch Committee.

The Treasurer is responsible for running income and expenditure accounts. At County level, Treasurers must use LOMAS for this and must attend the training the Legion provides. At Branch level, LOMAS is optional but recommended. There is also LOMAS training available for Branch Treasurers.

All Treasurers look after all financial matters and must submit audited annual accounts following the end of the financial year in June.

The Treasurer must report the Branch income, expenditure and cash balances to the Branch Committee at least quarterly. The report should explain any large or unusual transactions or instances where income or expenditure differed significantly from what was planned. The report must be accompanied by a quarterly bank reconciliation, which reconciles the cash book balance with the amount on the bank statement.

The Branch Treasurer is also responsible for maintaining records of Branch transactions, either electronically (in Excel or LOMAS) or hard copy (in a ledger book or similar). These transactions should be summarised by income and expenditure type in order to produce a quarterly report for the Branch Committee. When keeping records electronically, Branch Treasurers are advised to keep regular backups, using the Office 365 auto-save function, to

ensure that records are not lost. In addition, the Branch Treasurer is responsible for safeguarding the Branch cheque book, paying-in book and bank statements.

Branch Treasurers should refer to the 'Guide to completing the year end Branch Return' issued annually by the Finance Department before completing their return. They should contact their Membership Support Officer if they have any queries.

County Treasurers are responsible for looking after County-Supported Branches' accounts.

Branch Secretary and/or Branch Membership Secretary

This person manages Branch administration such as correspondence, agendas and meeting minutes. They also safeguard documents such as legal deeds and help with membership queries before escalating to the Membership Support Officer.

Branch Community Support Rep

This person is an appointed member who is the point of contact for all queries relating to the activities the Branch undertakes within the BCS scheme. They will have access to the Office365 BCS reporting system, where they will report all instances of where Branches run awareness events, offer bereavement support, hospital visits, telephone buddies system and local touchpoints.

Club Liaison Officer

This person encourages a closer working relationship between Branches and clubs on charitable activities – for example, fundraising, events and Branch Community Support.

They encourage Branches to invite club officers to Branch Committee meetings and vice versa or to hold joint meetings of club and Branch Officers to maintain healthy Branch/club relationships.

The Club Liaison Officer advises County Committees of the club issues in the local area.

They work with the Regional Club Relationship Manager to discuss club activities – but don't get involved in the daily running of the club or licensing process.

The Club Liaison Officer encourages County or Area Club Forums, offering clubs an opportunity to discuss best practice, shared issues and problems.

They provide suggestions on maintaining the viability of the Branch where a club fails.

They support the Membership Support Officer in informing members about clubs at risk and potential membership loss.

County Training Officer

This person is appointed to provide members with training such as Branch Community Support awareness. They have to undergo a Train the Trainer course or have sufficient experience in training delivery. They are local champions for membership training-related matters and queries.

County Youth Officer

This person is appointed to create and nurture links between the Legion and local youth organisations. This can be thorough joint Remembrance and fundraising activities or promoting and educating young people about the Legion's work.

County Recruitment Officer

It's an appointed member who specializes in recruiting members and advises branches on best practice to this.

Glossary

Almonisation A process through which the Legion seeks to share the cost of a grant made to support a beneficiary. Counties are encouraged to contribute their funds to the cost of community support interventions in their area. Legion also almonises from regimental associations and other charities and organisations able to give a financial grant.

Branch event An event held by Branches in their area with the aim of recruiting new members, raising funds for the Branch or for the purpose of Remembrance.

Compliant Branch A Compliant Branch is one that submitted its annual accounts before 30 September for the financial year that ended on 30 June of that year, and submitted its MS1 form before 31 December of that year. (County-supported Branches do not submit accounts and are therefore compliant if they submitted the MS1 form by 31 December.)

County Supported Branch a branch operating under a specific set of amended governance and finance structures.

Delegated authority limit The amount that a Treasurer can spend without the specific approval of the committee. Only the committee can authorise proposed spending above this limit.

Formation A Legion Branch, County, District or Section.

A Branch is a group of members that can form locally or based on shared interest.

A County (which is the same as District or Section) is a group of Branches that can encompass a geographical area (for example, Kent County or Northern Ireland District) or shared interests such as Women's Section or National Branches District.

LOMAS Legion Online Membership Administration System, where [Treasurers](#) manage a formation's finance.

Membership Council a committee established by and account able to the Board of Trustees with such responsibility for the management and administration of members and membership issues as the Board of Trustees may from time to time determine.

Negative voting Voting 'against' a candidate by any annotation other than the one required by ballot paper sign to vote for a chosen candidate.

Quorate Having the necessary number of people present for decisions to be allowed to be made.

Quorum The number of people needed at a meeting so that decisions can be made.

Remembrancetide The period between 14 October and 14 November when Poppy Appeal and Remembrance activities take place to commemorate those who serve and raise funds for those who need support.

Ringfenced Fund is a fund designated for a specific purpose.

Spoilt ballot paper A spoilt ballot paper is one that cannot be counted because there is no vote for a candidate, a vote against a candidate or a required signature is missing.

Women's Section is a group of Branches that welcome women only. It used to run as a sister charity to the Legion until 2015. Its proud history and legacy is safeguarded by Women's Section Central Committee, which also oversees specific funding schemes for which the Women's Section fundraise.

Br Branch

BFI Branch Funds Initiative

BPT Branch Property Trust

RBL Royal British Legion

WS Women's Section

Forms and Documents

The following forms and documents are contained in this Handbook. For any other forms, check Office 365 or request them from your Membership Support Officer.

[MS1 Branch Information](#)

[MS1 for County Supported Branches](#)

[MS1A County Information](#)

[MS1B Standard Bearer Disclaimer](#)

[MS5A Branch Closure](#)

[MS5B Change of Branch Status](#)

[MS5C Branch Amalgamation](#)

[MS5D Change of Branch Name](#)

[MS9 Branch Formation](#)

[Ballot Paper Template](#)

[Volunteer Expense Claim Form](#)

[Model Bye-Laws](#)

[Overseas District Model Bye-Laws](#)

[County Plan template](#)

[SOP163 Appendix A –Request a payment from a Branch Legacy Trust](#)

[SOP163 Appendix B – Appeal a Legacy Trust Account Decision](#)

MS1 FOR THE YEAR COMMENCING 1st OCTOBER 20.....

All sections of this form must be completed in capitals at or after the Branch Annual General Meeting. Completed forms must be sent to the Membership Support Officer by 31 December (hard copy by post – recorded delivery, or scanned copy by email). One copy must be retained by the Branch for their records.

SECTION 1 - BRANCH INFORMATION			
BRANCH NAME:		BR CODE:	BR
WEBSITE ADDRESS:			
BRANCH MEETING DETAILS: E.g. First Wednesday of each month at 19:30 starting from DD/MM			
MEETING PLACE:	Postcode:		
This Branch wishes to deliver BCS activities	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
If no, please provide a reason			
Branch email contact			

SECTION 2 - BRANCH COMMITTEE OFFICERS	
Please note that all positions must be fulfilled (except for a Vice-Chairman who is not a compulsory Officer to elect) and one person cannot hold more than one of the Branch Officer positions. Close family members must not hold positions in which they approve each other's expenses or oversee and check on the work of another.	
CHAIRMAN	Name:
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:	Address:
	Telephone:
	Email:
VICE-CHAIRMAN (Optional)	Name:
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:	Address:
	Telephone:
	Email:
SECRETARY	Name:
MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:	Address:
	Telephone:
	Email:
TREASURER (Appointed, not Elected)	Name:
	Address:

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:	Telephone:
	Email:
SECTION 3 - BRANCH COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS	
BRANCH PRESIDENT (Optional) <u>MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:</u>	Name:
	Address:
	Telephone:
	Email:
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY (Optional) <u>MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:</u>	Name:
	Address:
	Telephone:
	Email:
STANDARD BEARER <u>MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:</u> Please note that Standard Bearers must also sign Section 5 of this form	Name:
	Address:
	Telephone:
	Email:
POPPY APPEAL ORGANISER: (OPTIONAL APPOINTMENT – MUST BE APPROVED BY THE POPPY APPEAL) <u>MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:</u>	Name:
	Address:
	Telephone:
	Email:
BRANCH COMMUNITY SUPPORT (BCS) REPRESENTATIVE (If Branch delivers the community support) <u>MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:</u>	Name:
	Address:
	Telephone:
	Email:

SECTION 4 - DECLARATION OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

This section must be fully completed and signed by all Branch Officers / Committee Members / Appointments. The minimum number of Committee members is 3, and the maximum – 7.

Where an Officer/Committee Member/Appointment is elected/appointed during the year the declaration must be read and agreed by them. This action must be minuted at their first meeting.

I confirm that I am eligible for election to the Branch Committee and I have been duly elected. 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, and the Membership Council. I will be vigilant to serve the interests of the Royal British Legion at all times. I will adhere to the data protection rules outlined in GDPR.

The contact details you have provided on the form will be used for communications between Branch Officer/Committee Members, and for communications from TRBL staff relevant to your role. These contact details may be shared with individuals within TRBL who need to contact you in relation to branch matters. We would like to ensure that your contact details are accurate and up to date and would ask that you inform your Membership Support Officer if there are any changes.

ROLE	NAME (PRINT)	SIGNATURE	DATE	Tick this box if you do not want your details published in the County Handbook/website
PRESIDENT				<input type="checkbox"/>
CHAIRMAN				<input type="checkbox"/>
VICE-CHAIRMAN				<input type="checkbox"/>
SECRETARY				<input type="checkbox"/>
TREASURER				<input type="checkbox"/>
BCS REP OR BCS COMM. CHAIRMAN				<input type="checkbox"/>
COMMITTEE MEMBER Membership no:				<input type="checkbox"/>
COMMITTEE MEMBER Membership no:				<input type="checkbox"/>
COMMITTEE MEMBER Membership no:				<input type="checkbox"/>
COMMITTEE MEMBER Membership no:				<input type="checkbox"/>

PLEASE CONTINUE ON A SEPARATE SHEET IF REQUIRED.

SECTION 5 - STANDARD BEARER AND STANDARD BEARER JUDGE PHYSICAL FITNESS CONFIRMATION

This section must be signed by the appointed Standard Bearer and anyone who will act as a Judge at the Standard Bearer competitions. During competitions and remembrance events the Royal British Legion will make every effort to ensure their safety, however, as with any physical activity, there are health risks and a minimum level of physical fitness is required.

I confirm that:

1. 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 8ft long and up to 3.5kg in weight (in wet or windy weather conditions Standards may become heavier and difficult to hold upright);
 - Some actions such as Dips may put a strain on the back and shoulders;
 - A Standard Bearer Judge I may be required to remain on my feet for periods of up to 3 hours.
 - Competitions and remembrance events may prove demanding and stressful for some.
2. If I am in receipt of any disability related allowance or benefit, I will inform the appropriate authorities of my intention to undertake the role of Standard Bearer and/or Judge as this may affect my eligibility status.
3. To my knowledge, I have no physical conditions or disability that could potentially put me 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/remembrance event.

ROLE	NAME (PRINT)	SIGNATURE	DATE
STANDARD BEARER			
STANDARD BEARER JUDGE			

MS1 FOR COUNTY SUPPORTED BRANCH FOR THE YEAR COMMENCING 1st OCTOBER 20.....

All sections of this form must be completed in capitals at or after the Branch Annual General Meeting. Completed forms must be sent to the Membership Support Officer by 31 December (hard copy by post – recorded delivery, or scanned copy by email). One copy must be retained by the Branch for their records.

SECTION 1 - BRANCH INFORMATION			
BRANCH NAME:		BR CODE:	BR
WEBSITE ADDRESS:			
BRANCH MEETING DETAILS: E.g. First Wednesday of each month at 19:30 starting from DD/MM			
MEETING PLACE:	Postcode:		
This Branch wishes to deliver BCS activities	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If no, please provide a reason			
Branch email contact			

SECTION 2 - BRANCH POINTS OF CONTACT	
1st POINT OF CONTACT <u>MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:</u>	Name:
	Address:
	Telephone:
	Email:
2nd POINT OF CONTACT <u>MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:</u>	Name:
	Address:
	Telephone:
	Email:

OPTIONAL APPOINTMENTS

STANDARD BEARER <u>MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:</u>	Name:
	Address:
	Telephone:

Please note that Standard Bearers must also sign Section 5 of this form	Email:
POPPY APPEAL ORGANISER: (OPTIONAL APPOINTMENT – MUST BE APPROVED BY THE POPPY APPEAL) <u>MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:</u>	Name:
	Address:
	Telephone:
	Email:
BRANCH COMMUNITY SUPPORT (BCS) REPRESENTATIVE OR BCS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN (OPTIONAL) <u>MEMBERSHIP NUMBER:</u>	Name:
	Address:
	Telephone:
	Email:

SECTION 4 - DECLARATION OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

This section must be fully completed and signed by both Point of Contact.

Where Point Of Contact (POC) is elected/appointed during the year the declaration must be read and agreed by them. This action must be minuted at their first meeting.

I confirm that I have been duly elected. I acknowledge my responsibility as Branch Point of Contact 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, and the Membership Council. I will be vigilant to serve the interests of the Royal British Legion at all times. I will adhere to the data protection rules outlined in Part 1, chapter 1.1.6 of the Membership Handbook.

(The contact details you have provided on the form will be used for communications between Branch Points of Contact, and for communications from TRBL staff relevant to your role. These contact details may be shared with individuals within TRBL who need to contact you in relation to branch matters. We would like to ensure that your contact details are accurate and up to date and would ask that you inform your Membership Support Officer if there are any changes.)

ROLE	NAME (PRINT)	SIGNATURE	DATE	Tick this box if you <u>do not want</u> your details published in the County Handbook/website
1st POC				<input type="checkbox"/>
2nd POC				<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 5 - STANDARD BEARER AND STANDARD BEARER JUDGE PHYSICAL FITNESS CONFIRMATION

This section must signed by the appointed Standard Bearer and anyone who will act as a Judge at the Standard Bearer competitions. During competitions and remembrance events the Royal British Legion will make every effort to ensure their safety, however, as with any physical activity, there are health risks and a minimum level of physical fitness is required.

I confirm that:

4. 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 8ft long and up to 3.5kg in weight (in wet or windy weather conditions Standards may become heavier and difficult to hold upright);
 - Some actions such as Dips may put a strain on the my back and shoulders;
 - A Standard Bearer Judge I may be required to remain on my feet for periods of up to 3 hours;
 - Competitions and remembrance events may prove demanding and stressful for some.
5. If I am in receipt of any disability related allowance or benefit I will inform the appropriate authorities of my intention to undertake the role of Standard Bearer and/or Judge as this may affect my eligibility status.
6. To my knowledge, I have no physical conditions or disability that could potentially put me 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/remembrance event.

ROLE	NAME (PRINT)	SIGNATURE	DATE
STANDARD BEARER			
STANDARD BEARER JUDGE			

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION – FORM MS1A – COUNTY INFORMATION

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

COUNTY:			
COUNTY CODE: CN			
CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS:			
EMAIL:		WEBSITE:	
COUNTY MEETINGS: Monthly/Quarterly/Other If other, specify:	DAY	TIME:	VENUE:

SECTION 1

COUNTY/DISTRICT 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:
MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT OFFICER	Membership number:	Name:
		Telephone:
		Email:
TREASURER	Membership number:	Name:
		Telephone:
		Email:
POPPY APPEAL COORDINATOR	Membership number:	Name:
		Telephone:
		Email:
		Name:

STANDARD BEARER	Membership number:	Telephone:
		Email:

SECTION 2

COUNTY COMMUNITY SUPPORT 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:

SECTION 3

ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE

NAME	Membership number:	Address:
		Telephone:
		Email:

Data Protection

At The Royal British Legion we take your privacy seriously and we will only use the information you have provided on this form to record the contact information of the County Committee members.

We will not share your data and promise to keep your personal information safe and secure.

We will hold your personal data for five years or until you step down from your position.

For more information about how The Royal British Legion processes personal information and about your rights under the data protection law, please see our Privacy Policy:

www.rbl.org.uk/privacy

SECTION 4

The individuals named on this form as Officers/Members of the County Committee and County Community Support Committee were duly elected/appointed.

Membership Support Officer

NAME

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

County Community Support Committee Secretary

NAME:

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

SECTION 5**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY OF APPOINTED COUNTY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Where a County 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 County 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 Directory or Handbook (hard copy and digitally). I will be vigilant to serve the interests of The Royal British Legion at all times."

SECTION 6**CERTIFICATE OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY
(To be signed by all County Officers and Committee Members)**

I acknowledge my responsibility as County 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 Directory or Handbook (hard copy and digitally). I will be vigilant to serve the interests of The Royal British Legion at all times.

NAME (PRINT)	SIGNATURE	DATE

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION – FORM MS1B – STANDARD BEARER DISCLAIMER

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 feet 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 carrier’s 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 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.

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: ____/____/____

MS5A - BRANCH CLOSURE

To: The Membership Council via the Membership Governance Coordinator

County/District/Section:		Date:	
---------------------------------	--	--------------	--

1. At a meeting of the County/District/Section Committee on.....it was agreed to recommend: Closure of Branch, BR..... (Branch Code)

2. The County Committee has explored other options but there is no prospect of maintaining this branch at its present status.
 - a. explored the option of CSB
 - b. explored the option of AMALGAMATION

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

4. The Branch Minutes are attached to confirm the Branch's wish to proceed with closure

5. The reasons for closure are:
.....

6. Number of members in Branch.....

7. Arrangements have been made for remaining branch members to transfer to:
.....Branch, BR.....(Branch Code)

8. The Branch has a Legion Club relationship.
The Club will now be affiliated to theBranch, BR.....(Branch Code) for administration purposes

9. For Beneficiary Support the branch area has been added to that covered byBranch, BR..... (Branch Code) or has been divided among the following:

Branches:	Branch Code:
.....	BR.....
.....	BR.....

10. Branch is not subject to any investigation
.....

11. Following confirmation of Branch closure by the MC, the Branch Standard should be:
 - a. Laid up in accordance with current procedure in the Ceremonial Handbook
 - or**
 - b. Passed to the County/ District Committee for use by the County/ District Parade Marshall for training

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

13. Finance

Asset	
Total:	

Assets have been transferred to:

Head Office

County

Poppy Appeal

Not Transferred/Other (please provide reason and last known location as well as any evidence of chasing the remaining funds)

Restricted/Ring-fenced Funds (Please detail below)

Is there a Branch Property Trust?

Bank Statements Attached

Point of contact relating to Finance during closure (only)

14. Additional Comments:

(please note: this section should be used for any narrative to add to the previous page such as: why CSB or AMALGAMATION option wasn't suitable, if funds are still remaining, were all the letters sent to officers and banks)

.....
.....
.....

a. MSO Notified audit team of closure

County Chairman signature:

Print Name:

Membership Support Officer signature:

Print Name:

Membership Council Rep signature

Print Name:

County Chairman – signed:..... Print name:.....

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

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION – FORM MS5B – CHANGE OF BRANCH STATUS FROM SUB BRANCH

.....County

To: The Membership Council Secretary

Date:.....

RETURN TO FULL BRANCH STATUS or BECOMING A CSB from a SUB-BRANCH

1. At a meeting of the County Committee on.....it was agreed to recommend that (delete as applicable):

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

2. The County Committee has examined the circumstances ofbranch and has decided that:

- the Branch is capable of taking on the responsibilities of a Full or County Supported Branch

3. Branch Admin Fee :

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:

.....

8. 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 Chairman – signed:..... print name:.....

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

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION – FORM MS5C – BRANCH AMALGAMATION

.....County

To: The Membership Council Secretary

Date:.....

AMALGAMATION

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

- Amalgamation ofbranch,(Branch Code)
withbranch, (Branch Code)

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

3. The County 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 by

.....branch, 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		
Amalgamated Branch		Bank Statements Attached
Poppy Appeal		Branch Property Trust
Not Transferred/Other (please provide reason and last known location)		

13. Additional Comments:

.....

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

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

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION – FORM MS5D – CHANGE OF BRANCH NAME

.....County

To: The Membership Council Secretary

Date:.....

BRANCH NAME CHANGE

1. At a meeting of the County Committee on.....it was agreed to recommend:
- The Branch,(Branch Code),
is renamed to the Branch.

2. The Branch Minutes are attached to confirm the Branch wishes to proceed

13. Additional Comments:

.....

County Chairman – signed:..... *print name:*.....

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

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION – FORM MS9 – BRANCH FORMATION

**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)

At a meeting of members of The Royal British Legion held
at.....
on theday of.....20.....
the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLVED

“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.”

Minutes of the Meeting are attached

Branch Officers were elected as follows:

Chairman.....

Vice-Chairman (Optional).....

Treasurer (Elected).....

Secretary.....

Headquarters of branch.....

.....

Address for Correspondence.....

.....

Phone Number.....e-mail.....

Signed.....Secretary
(Print Name and Sign)

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

**THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION,
BALLOT PAPER FOR THE ELECTION OF THE COUNTY CHAIRMAN**

Candidates are listed in alphabetical order.
 Please mark a cross against the name of your branch's preferred candidate.
 Should more than one candidate have a mark against their name, the ballot paper will not be included in the ballot and will be considered a spoilt paper.

Candidate's Name	Preference (X)

Branch name:

Chairman Signature*:Date:

*Where the Branch's Chairman is standing, the Vice Chairman or in their absence, a Committee member will sign.

The Completed Ballot Paper must reach.....

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ELECTIONS BY THE BRANCHES FOR CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNTY COMMITTEE.

Within the timescale, the Branch Secretary must place the ballot paper and candidates CVs before the meeting of the branch.

The branch meeting will decide on its preference and mark the ballot paper with a cross against the name of the preferred candidate. Should more than one candidate have a mark against their name, the ballot paper will not be included in the ballot but will be considered a spoilt paper.

The Branch Secretary will record the decisions in the minutes of the meeting.

The Branch Chairman will sign the completed ballot paper and place and seal it in the appropriate envelope provided. The sealed flap of the envelope is to be signed by two branch officers.

The envelope is then to be placed in the pre-addressed envelope provided by Head Office.

The Branch Secretary is to ensure that the completed ballot paper, enveloped as required above, reaches Head Office by 5 p.m. on Monday 11th December 2017.

The Area Manager will appoint two disinterested individuals to act as Scrutineers for the vote count.

*To be elected as the new County Chairman candidate must have received a **simple majority** of the votes cast.*

Volunteer expense claim form

Please complete all sections fully, legibly and accurately, attaching receipts where relevant. See overleaf for explanatory notes. We aim to pay your expense claim within 4-6 weeks of receipt; payment may be delayed if there is missing or incomplete information. **You do not need to provide bank details if already on our system.**

Name & Volunteer Role		PAO Ref. / Volunteer No. <i>(if applicable)</i>	
Address (incl. postcode)			
Email (for remittance advice)		Phone	
Bank Account Name		Sort Code	Account No.
Course attended (title, date & location)			
Date	Details of Expenditure (See examples overleaf. Include CMS Case ref no. where relevant but do not include beneficiary personal details)	Amount	
Total			
<i>Note: for additional claims please attach a separate sheet</i>			
<p>I understand that the information I have provided will be used only for the purpose of reimbursing out-of-pocket expenses, in accordance with Legion policy and procedures. I certify that the above details are true and accurate and that I incurred the expenses wholly, necessarily and exclusively whilst engaged on official Legion business. Where claiming mileage for use of my vehicle, I confirm that I have a valid driver's licence, road tax, MOT and insurance which covers business use.</p> <p>Signed (Claimant).....Date.....</p>			

Membership Dept Use: I confirm that I have checked this claim for accuracy in accordance with the Legion expenses policy and that all relevant receipts are attached.

Approved by (signature):Date.....

Print Name & Position: Membership Administration Manager Unit Code 4271-D010-

Activity Code 422000 - Volunteer Expenses

Please return to:
Membership Training, The Royal British Legion, Haig House, 199 Borough High Street, London, SE1 1AA

Eligible expenses

This form applies to all unpaid volunteers, including members carrying out activities on the Legion's behalf. Please see the table below for guidance on what can be claimed. Expenses will only be reimbursed if they comply with the principles and procedure set out below.

Travel – Public Transport	We will only reimburse 2 nd class rail travel Taxis are only reimbursed in certain circumstances (for reasons of personal safety, needing to carry heavy items, where public transport is more expensive or not available or where you have a registered disability)	
Travel – Driving <i>Please specify number of miles in Details of Expenditure</i>	Cars	45p per mile for first 10,000 miles, 25p thereafter
	Motorcycle	24p per mile
	Bicycle	20p per mile
	Car parking fees/tolls	As charged
Accommodation	Hotel Accommodation is booked centrally. Your course joining instructions include information about accommodation if the course is residential and provide a contact for booking requests if you feel overnight accommodation is required. Please give as much notice as possible, but even on the day of requirement a booking is possible, should an emergency occur. Accordingly accommodation costs will not be repaid if incurred outside these instructions.	
Subsistence (meals)	Breakfast (if leaving before 6.30am or not provided by hotel)	Up to £8
	Lunch	Up to £10
	Evening meal (when working after 8pm)	Up to £18
	Evening meal (when taken in hotel and not included in accommodation price)	Up to £28

Example claims:	Details of Expenditure	Amount
12/04/2016	Own vehicle mileage – drive to & from Wolverhampton stn. for conference, 28 miles @ 45p / mile	£ 12.60
12/04/2016	Car park fee	£ 15.00
12/04/2016	National rail fare – Wolverhampton to London	£ 55.20
12/04/2016	Dinner	£ 17.50
	Total	£100.30

Notes

1. Attach all **original** itemised receipts. Where this isn't possible, please provide an explanation.
2. Expense claims must be submitted within 3 months from the date when the expenditure was incurred, unless there are exceptional circumstances, e.g. illness.
3. There is the option to waive your claim or claim less than the maximum rates above. This would be appreciated.
4. Both the claimant and authoriser must ensure that claims comply with the Legion's policy, SOP42 'Staff, Volunteers and Trustees' Expenses

COUNTY MODEL BYE-LAWS
MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK
..... COUNTY BYE-LAWS

As authorised by the Membership Council

APPROVED

Chairman of the Membership Council (Signature)

Date:

The following County Bye-Laws are supplementary to The 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 all Groups and branches within the Legion County of

.....

After being passed by a two-thirds majority of those delegates present and qualified to vote on the appropriate motion at the previous Annual Meeting of the County Conference, all alterations and amendments to these Bye-Laws shall be submitted to, and approved by the Membership Council on behalf of the Board of Trustees, before they may be implemented.

1. County name and number

.....

2. County meeting place, frequency and timings of meetings

.....

3. County Committee appointments

.....

4. County sub-Committees and their Terms of Reference

.....

5. Groups within the County

(Only to be included by Counties which have a Group structure):

To assist the County Committee in the management of the County, and in compliance with the Royal Charter, Branches are placed into the following Groups for administrative purposes:

..... Group List branches:

..... Group List branches:

**OVERSEAS DISTRICT MODEL BYE-LAWS
MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK**

..... DISTRICT BYE-LAWS

As authorised by the Membership Council

APPROVED

Chairman of the Membership Council

(Signature)

Date:.....

The following Overseas District Bye-Laws are supplementary to The 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 all Groups and branches within the Legion Overseas District of

.....
After being passed by a two-thirds majority of those delegates present and qualified to vote on the appropriate motion at the previous Annual Meeting of the Overseas District Conference, all alterations and amendments to these Bye-Laws shall be submitted to, and approved by the Membership Council on behalf of the Board of Trustees, before they may be implemented.

1. District name and number

.....
2. District meeting place, frequency and timings of meetings

.....
3. District Committee by function and appointments

.....
4. District sub-Committees and their Terms of Reference

.....
5. Groups within the District (Only to be included by Overseas Districts which have a Group structure):

To assist the District Committee in the management of the District, and in compliance with the Royal Charter, Branches are placed into the following Groups for administrative purposes:

..... Group List branches:

.....

.....

SOP 163 Appendix A
Application Form: Request a payment from a Branch Legacy Trust

Trust Details

- 1. Name of Trust
- 2. Trust Code (if known i.e. LXXX)
- 3. Branch/County/District Details (include BR code if applicable)
- 4. Amount requested
- 5. Purpose of request
- 6. Charitable Object to be met and why this is an effective use of charitable funds
- 7. Confirmation of who will benefit (Beneficiaries/ Members/Public or other)

	£

Payment Details

- 8. Where should funds be paid to (please tick)

- Branch BFI**
- Branch Bank Account**
- County/District Bank Account**

Account Name	
Account Number	
Sort Code	

- Other Internal Transfer**

Details of transfer (E.g. Poppy Appeal)	
---	--

Application Details

- 9. Application Completed by

Name

Position	
Signature	
Date	

10. County Chair confirmation

Name of County Chair	
Comments on application	
Signature	
Date	

Head Office Processing

11. Confirmation Objective will be met

Decision	
Name of deciding officer	
Position	
Signature	
Date	

Following Approval the Branch Account team will process payment which will be approved by the Chief Finance Officer or Director of Finance in line with SOP 146: Financial Delegations of Authority.

SOP 163 Appendix B
Application Form: Appeal a Legacy Trust Account decision

Original Request Details

1. Name of Trust (include Trust Code)	
2. Branch Details (include BR code)	
3. Amount requested	£
4. Purpose of original request	
5. Date of original request submission	

Appeal Details

6. Appeal Reason/Response to original decision	
--	--

7. Appeal Completed by

Name	
Position	
Signature	
Date	

Head Office Processing

8. Appeal Decision Decision by Director	
Signature	
Name	

Position

Date

Following Approval the Branch Account team will process payment which will be approved by the Chief Finance Officer or Director of Finance in line with SOP 146: Financial Delegations of Authority.

ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

_____ COUNTY PLAN (YYYY – YYYY)

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In this box describe what the County has achieved in the past year and how you now need to amend the Plan to take your County forward whilst fitting in with the policies and procedures and the general direction of the Legion. Describe any major changes that took place and how they have impacted on your delivery.

2. OBJECTIVES

- i. Welfare.
- ii. Fundraising.
- iii. Remembrance and Ceremonial.
- iv. Membership, Recruiting and Events.
- v. Training.
- vi. Administration and Finance.

2.i WELFARE

In this box describe how your County will deliver welfare in the next three years and how this fits in with national initiatives.

Objective	Target date	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicator(s)	Budget estimate
<i>What do you want to achieve?</i>	<i>When do you want to achieve this?</i>	<i>Who is going to achieve this?</i>	<i>How will you measure whether you have achieved the objective?</i>	<i>How much will it cost you to achieve this? Cost impact: positive or negative?</i>

2.ii FUNDRAISING

<i>In this box describe the work that your County undertakes to increase fundraising support and income.</i>				
Objective	Target date	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicator(s)	Budget estimate
<i>What do you want to achieve?</i>	<i>When do you want to achieve this?</i>	<i>Who is going to achieve this?</i>	<i>How will you measure whether you have achieved the objective?</i>	<i>How much will it cost you to achieve this? Cost impact: positive or negative?</i>

2.iii REMEMBRANCE

In this box describe which Remembrance and Ceremonial events you organise throughout the year and what you hope to achieve with this.

Objective	Target date	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicator(s)	Budget estimate
<i>What do you want to achieve?</i>	<i>When do you want to achieve this?</i>	<i>Who is going to achieve this?</i>	<i>How will you measure whether you have achieved the objective?</i>	<i>How much will it cost you to achieve this? Cost impact: positive or negative?</i>

2.iv MEMBERSHIP, RECRUITMENT AND EVENTS

In this box describe how you want to develop membership in your County and what events you will need to organise to achieve this. Keep in mind national policies on Direct Debit subscriptions, Gift Aid, etc.

Objective	Target date	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicator(s)	Budget estimate
<i>What do you want to achieve?</i>	<i>When do you want to achieve this?</i>	<i>Who is going to achieve this?</i>	<i>How will you measure whether you have achieved the objective?</i>	<i>How much will it cost you to achieve this? Cost impact: positive or negative?</i>

SCHEDULED YOUTH ACTIVITIES AND ENGAGEMENT WITH YOUTH ORGANISATIONS

<i>What do you want to achieve?</i>	<i>When do you want to achieve this?</i>	<i>Who is going to achieve this?</i>	<i>How will you measure whether you have achieved the objective?</i>	<i>How much will it cost you to achieve this? Cost impact: positive or negative?</i>

--	--	--	--	--

2.v TRAINING

In this box describe what training you want to organise for your County and Branch Officers, Committee members and branch members.

Objective	Target date	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicator(s)	Budget estimate
<i>What do you want to achieve?</i>	<i>When do you want to achieve this?</i>	<i>Who is going to achieve this?</i>	<i>How will you measure whether you have achieved the objective?</i>	<i>How much will it cost you to achieve this? Cost impact: positive or negative?</i>

2.vi ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

In this box, describe which administrative changes you wish to make, in addition to maintaining established key returns and reports. Keep in mind national initiatives like the Branch Funds Initiative.

Objective	Target date	Responsibility	Key Performance Indicator(s)	Budget estimate
<i>What do you want to achieve?</i>	<i>When do you want to achieve this?</i>	<i>Who is going to achieve this?</i>	<i>How will you measure whether you have achieved the objective?</i>	<i>How much will it cost you to achieve this? Cost impact: positive or negative?</i>

Groups

Counties can use a Group system if they wish. All Counties need an efficient method of two-way communication with their branches. The Group system, used correctly, can be a valuable, vital, administrative and management tool for any County Committee.

Group meetings, held at regular intervals, provide a local point of contact and advice, mutual support and assistance. County officers can make good use of Group meetings to discuss policy matters and plan forthcoming events where Group/Branch support would be advantageous.

Optimum Group Size

Counties wishing to adopt, and use, the Group system should look carefully at the size and shape of the County area when it is deciding the Group areas and in which Group to place a Branch. Equally, it is important to determine the optimum Group size to provide an efficient and effective structure. Too large a Group can be cumbersome to organise, too small a Group can have little effect to which there is no advantage. The ideal size is therefore thought to be between 7-10 branches for a large, widely dispersed County and between 5-7 for a smaller County.

Group Naming

Groups are to be named to identify them. It can be by known and accepted regional terms, by town name, by district name or by reference to the area through points of the compass.

Model Group Rules

The Membership Management Handbook (MMHB) provides guidance for the management, responsibilities and work of the Group. The County Committee is charged with defining their responsibilities. Counties should provide a set of model rules for Groups which are to be endorsed by the County Committee. Where the model rules are to be modified for local use, again, they are to be endorsed by the County Committee before they are taken into use.

Group Members on the County Committee

The workload of County Committee members can be demanding. These members must be individuals who are able and willing to give their time freely throughout the year. A heavy and demanding workload can lead to a paucity of committee members, which may require some committees to co-opt individuals to vacancies. Having to co-opt individuals can have an adverse effect on the committee, reducing the number of elected committee members and therefore can affect the numbers required for a quorum. This in turn can restrict the committee from carrying out its business on behalf of the County membership.

County Committees should consider using one or two members from each Group to populate their County Committee. This spreads the County committee members across the entire County area giving representation to all branches and ensures that the County remains quorate.

Communication between County, Group and Branches.

Communication is the key to County, Group and Branch harmony. The County, its Groups and Branches must embrace technology and remain current.

Counties, Groups and Branches should use a calendar for planning events/activities. This requires effective and consistent co-ordination with the full co-operation of all concerned. This will reduce conflicts with shared dates for some smaller events and may ensure that larger County events can be supported by the Groups and Branches.

Compliance:

Group officers will be elected by the Branches they represent at the Group Annual General Meeting. See County Model Rules for Group Officers.

Group finances and Accounts:

There is no requirement for a Group to hold a Branch Funds Initiative (BFI) Account and this fund, if held, should be closed immediately and the income disposed of within the current rules.

If a Group needs to hold a Group R&P Account a justification case should be put forward to the County Committee and the Group must comply with the guidance given. The Group

R&P Account must not exceed £250, unless authorisation is given by the County Committee, and the Group must submit its account for audit annually within the given timeframes. A failure to comply may result in the County withdrawing its permission for the Group to hold an account and the account will be closed.

The principal expenditure will be on travel expenses of Committee members (those named on the Group MS1) and on administrative expenses incurred by the Group Secretary. It may also be necessary to provide for the hire of a hall for meetings (if branches within the Group are unable to provide premises). On this basis there is no need to build up a reserve for financial contingencies.

A Group Committee does not qualify for financial support from membership fees and there can be no official Legion source of funding for Groups. All Group funding must be raised from within the Group. Groups may raise subscriptions from their Branches and hold Group fundraising activities to provide funds to finance their activities. Branch subscriptions to the Group should be at a fixed rate per Branch to be decided at the Group Annual General Meeting (AGM) and made annually. The money obtained constitutes charitable funds and must be treated as such.

Formation of Groups:

Each County Committee may divide its area into geographical divisions to be known as Groups (a number of Branches that the Committee thinks appropriate for administrative purposes). As communication is the main priority, Group task the Group structure should be based on the geographical proximity of Branches. Groups are to conduct their business using the same policies and procedures as those for Branches contained within the Membership Management Handbook (MMHB), with the following exceptions:

Groups can operate in one of two ways:

A Group of Branches operating with Group Officers. They hold meetings with Branch Representatives at regular intervals. A Group Representative is appointed to represent the Group and its Branches at County Committee meetings where they are appointed to the County Committee.

A Group of Branches operating without Group Officers. They do not hold meetings. Each Branch is contacted as required by a County Committee member who is nominated by the County Committee to look after each Group of Branches.

If a County operates either Group system, every branch within the County must be allocated to a Group, without exception, the Group name should easily identify the Group and its area.

Groups operating with Group Officers are to submit a MS1 containing the contact details of the Chairman, Secretary and if applicable the Group Treasurer, Standard Bearer and Group Representative.

Each Branch within the Group may send a representative to Group Meetings to discuss and vote on issues and whilst any Branch member can attend Group Meetings only one representative from each Branch can vote.

Draft County Model Rules for Group Officers, Representatives and Members

Each branch in the Group (List branches by Name) is entitled to send as many members as they wish to Group meetings.

Each Branch is to provide an official Branch Representative, authorised to take appropriate decisions, within the remit of the Group, on behalf of the Branch; otherwise the representative is to refer to their own Branch Committee all matters requiring consultation. The Branch Representative elected to the Group Committee is to provide information and reports required by the Group.

It is for each Branch to determine how their representative is provided (by election/voting, nomination by Branch committee) and to determine who is eligible to be nominated (Branch Officer, Branch Committee member or Branch member).

Only the nominated Branch Representatives are authorised to vote at Group meetings, irrespective of the number or standing of any other Branch member(s) present at the time. Only one voting member per branch is permitted. Normally a Branch Representative is brought onto the Group Committee at the Group AGM. It is recognised that Branches need continuity of representation and change may be necessary outside the normal routine. The Branch is to notify the Group Chairman when there is a change to the nominated representative.

There are to be 2 Group Officers, the Chairman, and the Secretary. If the Group is to hold a R&P Account then a Treasurer must be appointed. If the Group has a Standard then a Group Standard Bearer is required. The Group is entitled to appoint and send Group Representative(s) to the County Committee in accordance with the County direction in force at the time. The Group Representative(s) will be nominated and named at the Annual Meeting of County Conference and considered elected to the County Committee. Should it be necessary to change Group Representatives between the Annual Meetings of County Conference, the Group will inform the County Chair/MSO of the change. The new Group

Representative will be formally co-opted at the next available County Committee meeting and have voting rights from that point forward.

The Group Chairman is to run all Group meetings. The Group will elect its Group Representative to take their place on the County Committee. The Representative can be any branch member from within the Group. The Group Representative must be willing to take full part in County Committee business; to positively participate in discussion and activity; and to be a member of County sub committees as appointed. If the County rules in force at the time allow more than one Group representative, the additional Representative(s) is/are to be elected by the Group at its AGM. If a Group is permitted more than one Representative under the County rules in force at the time and cannot, or does not wish to, provide more than one Group representative to the County Committee then that Group will so inform the County Chairman/MSO prior to the Annual Meeting of County Conference. The Group Representative position released by a Group will be filled at the Annual Meeting of County Conference by electing, from the floor at the conference, an individual member who is formally proposed and seconded to the vacant position. Anyone so elected is not required to represent the Group whose position they fill. Once elected, the individual will hold the position for the period of election, after which the Group may choose to fill it themselves or continue to release the position.

If it is necessary for the Group Committee to vote on any proposal then this will follow the voting rules laid down within the Membership Management Handbook (MMHB). As there are no specific rules for Group voting, the Group will follow the rules for Branch voting as the Group is made up of elected Branch members.

The Group Representative(s) to the County Committee is/are to provide a written record of action or major information points to Branch Representatives of the Group following the County Committee meeting. This is to be concise, distributed as soon as possible after the meeting but not more than fourteen calendar days, and is not to be seen to replicate or replace the County's official record of the meeting. It is for Branch Representatives to distribute the notes within their Branches according to their Branch Committee requirements.

The responsibilities of the Group Officers are to be found in the MMHB. There is no County requirement for a Group to have a Group President. The role of the Group is communication.

Management of Group Finances is covered in the MMHB. There is no requirement for a Group to hold a Branch Funds initiative (BFI) Account but some Groups may need to hold an R&P Account, to cover administration costs, which is limited to £250 and they will be required to submit an annual account for audit. The County Committee are responsible for authorising a Group to hold an R&P Account. The expenditure is limited to those items allowed under the current RBL regulations. Income can be raised in the form of Branch subscriptions. Groups should consider raising Branch subscriptions that enable the Group to conduct its business.

This should meet the requirements the MMHB by ensuring the Group raises its funds at a fixed rate and manages its business without generating any excessive funds. A Group may fundraise for a specific purpose and accept donations.

It is for Branches to correctly record their subscriptions to the Group in their financial records. These are normally in the form of expenses only.

The Secretary is to record and distribute action points made at Group meetings.

Branches are to provide concise written notes on points that they wish raised at the next County Committee meeting to ensure accuracy of the Branches' intent. The Group Representative(s) will then have all points to take forward to the next County meeting.

The Group Secretary is to issue an agenda no less than seven calendar days prior to a previously arranged Group meeting. Any Branch wishing to add an agenda point must do so through their elected representative to the Group Secretary prior to the issue of the agenda.

The Group meeting agenda will follow a set format, as will the Group AGM.

A quorum will consist of (group to insert number) Branch Representatives.

Group Officers and Representatives shall be elected for a (two or three year appointment – Group is to decide, but a one year appointment is not recommended), which is to coincide with the County Committee calendar. For continuity, Group Officer and Representative appointments should be staggered so that the Chairman and Secretary and any other Group Representative to the County Committee do not change in the same year.

A voting system of a simple majority of those present and authorised to vote will be used.

Group Representatives may become full members of the County Committee at the Annual Meeting of County Conference if the County so decides.

The Group meets at the same intervals as the County Committee meeting (currently quarterly). The Group meets in advance of the County meeting in order that Branch Representatives can provide the Group with a report on activities over the past period, a forward plan of activities for the next twelve months (where known), and raise in writing any issues that Group needs to bring to County attention.

These rules can be changed at any Group meeting by a simple majority of those authorised to vote, provided that the proposed change is submitted in writing to the Secretary in good time for the Secretary to distribute the proposed changes one month (31 calendar days) prior to the next Group meeting. This is to ensure that each Branch has a chance to review the proposed changes at a regular Branch meeting prior to the next Group meeting. Guidance is to be sought from the County Committee to ensure that there are no breaches of County rules/regulations and the County Committee agree to the proposed changes.

Signed:

Chairman

Secretary

Date: