



Remembrance Key Points



ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

Remembrance

The Royal British Legion (RBL) believes that the poppy and Remembrance unite all people and communities across the UK and the Commonwealth countries. The service and sacrifices of our Armed Forces Community, and its vital contribution across the generations, are recognised through Remembrance.

The poppy and Remembrance are at the heart of all that the RBL does, and we want the Armed Forces Community to feel valued, recognised and respected by society. This community includes:

- All those who serve, or have served, in His Majesty's British, and Commonwealth, Armed Forces: the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force
- Those who served on, or are currently on, active service to the Crown, including those within the foreign services under British Command
- The families of those who serve, or have served, including those who have been bereaved

The RBL is a non-partisan and non-sectarian organisation focused on the lived experiences of those who serve, or have served, in the Armed Forces and those affected by their service. We make no comment on the politics of conflict, war and acts of terror.

The poppy

For more than 100 years the poppy has been a symbol of Remembrance and hope for a peaceful future, uniting us in remembering the service of, and the sacrifices made by, our Armed Forces Community.

The poppy represents the wider impact of conflict and the contributions of people, organisations and services – such as the Merchant Navy and emergency services – in the defence of democracy and national security. The poppy also represents the innocent civilians who have been affected by conflict.

**The poppy is a symbol of
Remembrance and hope for a
peaceful future that is worn to
honour the service of, and the
sacrifices made by, our
Armed Forces Community.
It belongs to no political,
religious or ideological group.
As a non-partisan, non-sectarian
organisation, we do not condone
its use in support of any
political agenda.**

The symbolism of the poppy was inspired by Canadian doctor Lt Col John McCrae and his poem 'In Flanders Fields', written during the First World War. He saw that poppies grew in the devastation of the battlefields – a sign of hope following despair.

We welcome conversations about the meaning of the poppy and the ways that people choose to participate in Remembrance.

There is no right or wrong way to wear a poppy. It may be worn at any time of the year, whenever you wish to show your support for the British and Commonwealth Armed Forces. They are most visible during our annual Poppy Appeal, when sales of red poppies raise vital funds to support members of the Armed Forces Community in times of need.

The red poppy does not belong to any political, religious or ideological group and the decision to wear it is voluntary. While the red poppy is inclusive of all people by uniting them in Remembrance, we recognise that people may wish to wear other coloured poppies or other flowers.

Acts of Remembrance

All people, from all walks of life, are welcome to remember and positively participate in Remembrance. There are many ways to do this.

The Two Minute Silence is a time for the nation to come together to reflect on what it means to serve and sacrifice. While formally observed on Remembrance Sunday (second Sunday in November) and Armistice Day (11am on 11th November), a Two Minute Silence also permits time for personal reflection all year round.

While participation is voluntary, we ask that the moment is respected.

We ensure that all that we do resonates with people of all faiths and none. The Act of Remembrance is by its nature welcoming because of its universality. While the Act is secular, ceremonies may incorporate elements which speak to specific communities and audiences. The organiser may assemble readings, poetry or music, and other appropriate contributions, to bookend the Act of Remembrance so that the ceremony is meaningful for the attendees.

The RBL has no objection to wreaths of non-red poppies or other flowers being laid at memorials or in Remembrance services alongside red poppy wreaths; we respect the rights and freedoms of groups and individuals to make their own decisions on how to observe Remembrance.

It is the RBL's wish that non-red poppies or other flowers are not included within wreaths of red poppies, and remain separate on the basis that the red poppy is inclusive of all people.

As Remembrance evolves, so too do the practices. Recent tributes adopted at memorials and services include candles, lanterns and the placing of stones, amongst many others.

Find out more at [rbl.org.uk/remembrance](https://www.rbl.org.uk/remembrance)