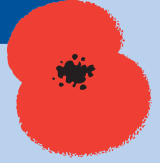


about the

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THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION



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Who we are...

The Royal British Legion provides financial, social and emotional support to millions who have served or are currently serving in the Armed Forces, and their dependants. Nearly 10.5 million people are eligible for our help – that's 1 in 6 people.

We are also one of the country's largest membership organisations, with over 400,000 members nationwide, and a further 11,000 overseas. We welcome men and women of all ages, whether or not they have served in the Armed Forces.

Founded in 1921, the Legion is not just about those who fought in the two World Wars of the last century, but also about those involved in the many conflicts since 1945 and those still fighting for the freedom we enjoy today. This year, as always, British troops have been posted to the forefront of some of the world's most dangerous trouble spots and they may need our help in the future. As well as providing wide ranging welfare care, we are the Nation's custodian of Remembrance, ensuring their sacrifice is never forgotten.



What we do...

The Legion is the major voice for Service and ex-Service people throughout the year. We campaign and lobby on a wide range of issues, including mental and physical health, housing and homelessness, employment, community and adult care, disability, skills development and debt. Our aim is to continuously improve the welfare and support provided for veterans and their dependants of all ages



We are custodians of Remembrance, ensuring those who gave their lives for the freedom we enjoy today are always remembered. We are responsible for the Two Minute Silence on Remembrance Sunday and 11 November, bringing Remembrance into the national calendar. We also organise the annual Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall, and assist with the march past at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday.





POPPY SUPPORT

For Service people past and present and their families

Nearly 10.5 million people are eligible for our welfare support. We fight nearly 36,000 ongoing War Disablement Pension cases for veterans and make around 300,000 welfare and friendship visits every year. We can offer financial aid in an urgent crisis, or help homeless ex-Service people get back on their feet. We also advise people on compensation claims, and offer careers advice for those looking to make a fresh start after leaving the Forces. Our welfare services are split into six categories at present, although Poppy Support is looking to expand its Services in the coming months:



- **Poppy Advice:** We can offer advice on War Pensions, Compensation Claims, and also Careers advice for those leaving the Forces.
- **Poppy Funds:** We can provide funds in a temporary crisis, such as homelessness, or assist with loans for property repairs and starting up a small business.
- **Poppy Homes:** A major part of our welfare work is to provide short and long-term care for ex-Service people and their dependants in our seven Poppy Homes around the country.
- **Poppy Breaks:** We have four Poppy Break Centres for those recovering from an illness or bereavement, located in some of the country's most popular, traditional seaside resorts.
- **Poppy People:** Volunteers are vital to our organisation – you can join as a Poppy Collector, or as a Caseworker, providing emotional support and practical assistance in the local community. We are also looking for more Hospital and Housebound Visitors.
- **Poppy Travel:** We offer Remembrance Travel pilgrimages and tours to war cemeteries, memorials and battlefields worldwide, with each designed as a relaxing and informative holiday. These can be customised for schools and groups.



The Poppy Appeal

Each year the nation expresses its unequivocal support for the Legion's work through its generous support of the Poppy Appeal. It is one of the best known and supported campaigns in the calendar. The Poppy Factory in Richmond, London, produces millions of poppies every year, along with the wreaths laid at Remembrance services around the country and the poppy petals that fall at the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall. The poppy has become a symbol of reflection and hope.





Why poppies?

The First World War caused widespread devastation to areas of Northern France and Belgium, but the poppy flowered every year, bringing colour and hope to the devastated landscape. Colonel John McCrae, a doctor serving with the Canadian Armed Forces, was deeply moved by what he saw and, inspired by the poppies, wrote a poem – *In Flanders' Fields*. McCrae died in a military hospital on the French coast shortly after writing his poem, but it was published in *Punch* magazine, showing the world what conditions on the battlefields were like.

On the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918, the First World War ended. Thousands had died, thousands more had been injured and scarred by their horrific experiences, and needed support and practical help when they returned. For those people and their families, life would never be the same again.

Civilians wanted to remember the people who had given their lives for peace and freedom. An American War Secretary, Moina Michael, was inspired by John McCrae's poem, and sold poppies to raise money for the ex-Service community. And so the tradition began.

In 1922 Major George Howson MC, who served in the First World War, founded the Disabled Society. He recognised unemployed

ex-Service men could make artificial poppies and approached the Legion. He founded a small factory, which was later to become The Royal British Legion Poppy Factory.

The British Legion – now The Royal British Legion – was formed in 1921 from four separate ex-Service organisations. The first official Legion Poppy Day was held in Britain on 11 November 1921, and since then the Poppy Appeal has been a key annual event in the nation's calendar.

In Flanders' Fields

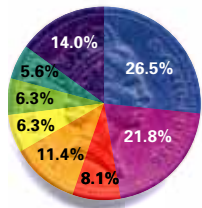
John McCrae, 1915

***In Flanders' fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place: and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.***

***We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders' fields.***

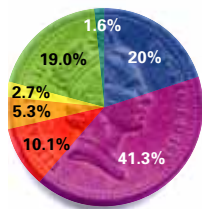
***Take up our quarrel with the foe;
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high,
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders' fields.***

Where the money goes



How the income was raised Total £88.9m

■ Appeals	£23.6m
■ Donations and Legacies	£19.4m
■ Events, Lotteries and Trading	£7.2m
■ Fees for Care Services	£10.1m
■ Grants to Fund Welfare Services	£5.6m
■ Affiliation Fees	£5.6m
■ Other Charitable Services	£5.0m
■ Asset Sales and Investment Return	£12.4m



How the money was spent Total £75.3m

■ Care Services	£15.1m
■ Community Welfare Services	£31.1m
■ Membership Services	£7.6m
■ Communication & Campaigning	£4.0m
■ Remembrance and Ceremonial	£2.0m
■ Funds Generation	£14.3m
■ Corporate Governance	£1.2m

The Legion spends over £75 million every year carrying out its work for the serving and ex-Service community. The annual Poppy Appeal raises £26 million, with other income coming from events, legacies, donations, sponsorships, sales, fees and investments.



Come and join us!

We welcome men and women of all ages to become members. Anyone can join the Legion – whether or not you have a connection with the Armed Forces.

Members of the Legion meet through a network of branches and clubs for social events and meetings, and can become involved in many of the activities of the Legion, including caseworking, fundraising and Legion in the Community events both nationally and locally.

By becoming a member you are helping to ensure that Britain maintains its strong network of social support and comradeship for all ex-Service people and their families.

Membership benefits include:

- Discounts with our Travel Service
- Discounts with a number of supporting organisations
- Favourable rates on a variety of Insurance deals
- Social events at approximately 700 Legion Clubs
- Free Magazine delivered to your home



- Comradeship
- Involvement in helping the ex-Service community

For further information please contact: Membership Division – 020 7973 7266; or Legionline – 08457 725 725; or your nearest local branch.

Local and national fundraising events:

Events in aid of The Royal British Legion take place around the country throughout the year. For your local contact please call Legionline.

Make a donation: Any donations to the Legion are welcome. Please send cheques to The Royal British Legion, 48 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JY or donate online at www.britishlegion.org.uk

Regular giving: Regular donations to the Legion give us long-term support, and are very cost effective. For further information please call Legionline or log onto www.britishlegion.org.uk

Gift Aid: If you are a UK taxpayer, we can reclaim tax on your donation if you complete a Gift Aid Declaration Form. Please call Legionline to find out more.

Remember the Legion in your Will: A gift to the Legion in your Will allows your support to continue into the future. For advice on how to include the Legion in your Will, please contact Legionline.

Become a corporate partner: A partnership between the Legion and your organisation can create a high profile and profitable marketing opportunity. For details about the benefits call Legionline or email ideas@britishlegion.org.uk

Shop for the Legion: By shopping online at www.buy.at/poppyappeal you can help the Legion – many high street retailers supply goods at cheaper prices, and a donation to the Legion is made from all purchases.

Poppy People: We always need more Poppy Collectors, Caseworkers and Hospital & Housebound Visitors. If you have the time and are interested in volunteering, please contact us.

The National Memorial Arboretum

Created in 1997, the National Memorial Arboretum is a living tribute that will forever acknowledge the personal sacrifices made by the Armed and civil services of this country.

With some 50,000 trees already planted, and 120 dedicated plots established on the site, the Arboretum is a place where current and future generations can wander through growing woodlands and enjoy the beauty of the trees. Families and friends will find it a peaceful and beautiful place to remember loved ones, particularly those who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

The National Memorial Arboretum has a lot to offer both young and old. Come for a day out to enjoy the peace and tranquility, the trees, the memorials, the history, and the sense of national pride. There are full visitor facilities, a shop and a restaurant.

Visit the website at thenma.org.uk



Legionline:
08457 725 725

Legionline is the Legion's information service and helpline. Open Monday to Friday, 10am – 4pm. All calls charged at local rates.

Contact us:

The Royal British Legion

Telephone: 020 7973 7200

Fax: 020 7973 7399

Registered charity number 219279

britishlegion.org.uk