

## A message from our chairman.

Welcome to the inaugural edition of our branch newsletter! As your chairman for 2024, I'm excited to kickstart this initiative, which I hope will become a regular means of communication with all of you.

I am deeply honoured to serve as your chairman, and I am genuinely grateful for the trust you have placed in me. Rest assured, I am fully prepared for the challenges and tasks that lie ahead.

At our recent AGM, I outlined several key objectives for our branch, one of which is the importance of staying connected with you. This newsletter is a direct response to that commitment, aiming to keep you informed, engaged, and involved in the activities and developments in the area.

Warm regards, *John*



## Club Matters

We're incredibly fortunate to have a club as our home, and if you haven't had the chance to visit yet, we strongly encourage you to do so.

The club boasts an exciting lineup of live music, special events, family barbeques, pub games, bingo, and a fully licensed bar. Plus, you'll be delighted to find that drink prices are considerably more affordable than those you'd encounter on the High Street.

When the sun is shining, the large walled garden becomes a serene retreat, complete with barbecue facilities, a gazebo, and plenty of seating. It's the perfect escape from the hustle and bustle.

The club is also available for hire, making it an ideal venue for parties, anniversaries, and respectful gatherings after funerals. They offer both private and semi-private spaces to suit your needs.

A huge thank you goes out to Serena Coates and her amazing team for their unwavering support and hard work. Without their dedication, many of our activities wouldn't be possible.

Come on down and discover all that your club has to offer.



**LIVE MUSIC  
 AT THE PUTNEY ROYAL  
 BRITISH LEGION**

**4 MAY** **GARY DEE**

**18 MAY** **VELVET**

**1 JUN** **ALAN LOVELL**

**15 JUN** **NICK ALLOTT**

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 **PUTNEY - ROYAL BRITISH LEGION**

**RBL**  
 ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

## Remembrance Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

Our plans for this year' parade and service of remembrance are well underway.

Branch President, Leslie McDonnell has been working closely with Cllr Rex Osborn from Wandsworth Borough Council, who we need to provide approval for the necessary road closures and the police performing traffic management. Risk Assessment and Method Statement (RAMS) documents have been submitted to the council for approval.

Our Remembrance activities are a significant endeavour, often placing a financial strain on the club. Historically, the club has shouldered most of the associated costs. To alleviate this burden, we're initiating fundraising efforts.

In light of the upcoming 80th anniversary of D-Day on June 6th, we're offering official D-Day 80 pin badges in exchange for a donation towards funding the band. These badges should be available at the bar by Friday 17th May..

Your support will help us honour those who have served in a meaningful manner. Any donations, no matter the size, would be immensely appreciated. Let's come together to ensure our Remembrance activities continue to uphold the respect and gratitude our veterans deserve.



## Social Media & Webmaster Wanted!

We are currently seeking a dedicated individual to take on the role of Webmaster. This vital position involves overseeing our website and various social media platforms to help us better connect with the community.

If you're ready to use your digital skills to make a difference and support our veterans and their families, we want to hear from you! To express your interest or learn more about this volunteer opportunity, please contact the chairman.



## Branch Community Support.

At our recent Annual General Meeting, it was raised that our Branch wasn't registered for Community Support, which meant we couldn't interact or help our local beneficiaries.

However, we're happy to announce that Carol Blackman and John Bailey have kindly stepped up to serve as our Community Support Officers,

They will undergo safeguarding training and screening to ensure they're well-prepared to assist potentially vulnerable members of our community.

## The 80th Anniversary of the Normandy Landings.

# D-DAY 80

To commemorate the 80th anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy, the club are in the early stages of planning a special event.

More information will be provided on their website and social media platforms. Posters advertising the event will be also be made available at the club.

D-Day was the successful allied invasion of the beaches of Normandy on 6 June 1944. Codenamed Operation Neptune, the Normandy landings made up the largest seaborne invasion in history and played a crucial role in liberating Western Europe from Nazi occupation.

D-Day was of unprecedented scale. The allied forces' staggering operation involved the coordinated efforts of more than 155,000 troops supported by 11,500 aircraft, and 6,900 naval vessels in an assault on five Normandy beachheads: Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword. Integral to its success were years of planning, intelligence gathering, and deception campaigns, as well as the courage of the thousands of brave men that stormed the beaches that day.



International collaboration was crucial to the allied victory. While most of the personnel that landed in Normandy on D-Day were from the UK, the United States, and Canada, a significant number from Australia, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Greece, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, and Poland also took part in the Normandy Campaign.

In commemorating the 80th anniversary of D-Day, we pay homage to the resilience and fortitude of the veterans who played a crucial role in this pivotal moment of the Second World War. The invasion claimed the lives of thousands of allied soldiers. These brave men—many just teenagers—left their families and their futures behind to liberate Western Europe from the grip of the Nazis. We must remember the sacrifices they made.

## Poppy Appeal 2024 Plan Update.

In 2023, our efforts for the Poppy Appeal soared, raising over £35,000! Our incredible team of volunteers truly outdid themselves, and we extend our heartfelt gratitude for their dedication and hard work.

Unfortunately, shipping issues in the Eastern Mediterranean region have caused delays in accessing our stock ordering system. We anticipate this to be resolved by August. On a brighter note, the RBL has ordered an additional one million pin badges for 2024, which will alleviate their low availability we saw in 2023.

We always welcome new volunteers! If you can spare some time to deliver poppy boxes to our regular venues or collect donations, please reach out to the chairman for a casual chat and further details.

Volunteering lies at the core of our commitment to veterans. By joining the Poppy Appeal, you contribute to a range of vital services, from mental health support to housing assistance, enriching the lives of those who once served.





One of our youth members affiliated through the Wandsworth 13 Company Army Cadets.

## Youth Affiliation

Out of the 47 cadet units linked to the RBL in the Greater London District, 8 are affiliated to us in Putney.

We're dedicated to helping young individuals grasp the importance of the RBL, understanding topics like Remembrance, conflict, and the significance of peace.

We've reached out to the Commanding Officers of all 8 units, offering our club as a venue for events. Together with the club, we're organising a family fun-day featuring a barbecue, Nerf Gun challenge, games, and other activities.

We anticipate finalising a date for this event in the next couple of weeks.

Youngsters can become RBL Youth Members at no cost. All they need to do is fill out an application form and obtain parental consent.



## Staying in touch

**Beneficiary Helpline:** Call 0808 802 8080 (8am to 8pm, 7 days a week)

For those with hearing impairment, they provide a Live Text Chat facility 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week. Alternatively, their British Sign Language team are available by appointment from 09:00 to 17:00, Monday to Friday. Both can be accessed via the "Contact Us" page of the main website. [www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk)

**MembershipQUIRES:** Call 0800 307 7773 (9:00 to 17:00, Monday to Friday)

### Your Local Contacts:

Putney Branch Chairman: John Bailey

Call 07513 054997

Email [putney.chairman@rbl.community](mailto:putney.chairman@rbl.community)

Putney Branch Secretary: Susan Harley

Email [puney.secretary@rbl.community](mailto:puney.secretary@rbl.community)

Putney RBL Club: Serena Coates

Email [putneyrbl@outlook.com](mailto:putneyrbl@outlook.com)

## Branch Officers and Committee.

Leslie McDonnell –President

John Bailey - Chairman

Laurie Black –Treasurer

Susan Harley –Secretary.

Committee: Christopher Coates, Serena Coates, Garry Winstone, Daisy Downs, Karen McAnea and Carol Blackman.



Two of our fabulous 2023 volunteers, in what we believe is the first time Snow White has bought a poppy. Dwarves under close arrest!