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A young French woman poses on a motorcycle with British glider pilots in Normandy, June 1944.

Remembrance in 2024

Marking D-Day 80 and other major turning points in the Second World War



Remembrance is personal.

Everyone has a story to tell . . .



What is Remembrance and who is remembered?

The Royal British Legion (RBL) has been recognised as a national champion of Remembrance in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, with Poppy Scotland recognised in this role in Scotland.

The RBL's ambition is to ensure that the service and sacrifice of our Armed Forces community and those who serve our country are always remembered, and that **Remembrance is for All**.

Remembrance honours those who have served, or continue to serve, to defend and protect our democratic freedoms and way of life.

In our Remembrance commemorations:

- We remember the sacrifice of the Armed Forces community from Britain and the Commonwealth.
- We pay tribute to the special contribution of families and of the emergency services.
- We acknowledge innocent civilians who have lost their lives in conflict and acts of terrorism.



British and Canadian 3rd Division troops land at Juno Beach.

Overview of 2024 commemorations

This year marks the 80th anniversaries of momentous battles of the Second World War. The roads to freedom were opened with hard-fought battles from the beaches of Normandy to the forests and hills of India, in a conflict where the Allied nations came together in unprecedented collaboration.

This was the case with the D-Day landings of 6th June – the largest seaborne invasion in history and, along with the associated airborne operations, it marked the beginning of the liberation of France. An Allied force from no less than 13 countries established a foothold, but at great human cost. The ensuing Battle of Normandy was to cost tens of thousands of lives as it repulsed the occupying German forces eastwards.

At the same time as final preparations for D-Day were being made, the Italian Campaign was halted at the major German defensive 'Gustav Line'. The ensuing assaults of the Battle of Monte Cassino were the bloodiest of the Italian Campaign in which a multi-country Allied force distinguished themselves. The final breakthrough enabled the advance north to liberate Rome on 5th June 1944.

While battle raged across Europe, on the other side of the world Japanese forces invaded India and pushed back the British 14th Army. Outnumbered British and Indian forces withstood weeks of siege and brutal fighting, frequently hand-to-hand, at the Battles of Kohima and Imphal. Their defeat of Japanese forces was a turning point in the war in the east and the springboard for the later Allied liberation of Burma. The 14th Army was a true multinational force, with the majority of its troops from pre-partition India.

Later in the year Operation Market Garden was a daring attempt to secure bridges over the River Rhine and the courage and tenacity of its troops has made this a famous battle of the war.

18 May 2024

80th anniversary of the end of the Battle of Monte Cassino

6 June 2024

80th anniversary of D-Day and the start of the Battle of Normandy

22 June 2024

80th anniversary of the end of the Battle of Kohima

18 July 2024

80th anniversary of the end of the Battle of Imphal

25 September 2024

80th anniversary of the end of Operation Market Garden

8 November 2024

80th anniversary of the end of the Battle of the Scheldt

The Canadian-led Battle of the Scheldt also involved Royal Marines and Scottish Division units in a bitter campaign to open a secure passage to the port of Antwerp.

Each of these battles was a significant turning point in the War, and each was hard-fought and at a significant cost in casualties. Eight decades later we remember the service and sacrifice.

We want to ensure that these important anniversaries are marked by communities across the United Kingdom. As a Member, you are a messenger of Remembrance, and your local branch is often a focal point for activity and support for members of our Armed forces community.

Below, and in linked guides, is some information to aid you in helping us to make this happen.

[Click here to see our Remembrance guides](#)



Exhibition tower at Windrush 75, 2023

Exhibition units

To help you engage with your community we are producing a number of display units that will explore the themes we will be commemorating in 2024. These will take the form of free-standing displays of different sizes.

There will be an easily assembled four-sided tower which, at 2.5m high, would form a great talking point at an event. In addition, there will be one- and two-sided pull up banners. Some of the frames can be reused, which makes them a good investment to mark future anniversaries.

For 2024, each of these items will be available in three versions:

- Exploring D-Day and the Battle of Normandy
- Exploring the 80th anniversaries of 1944 including D-Day and the Battle of Normandy, Monte Cassino, Kohima, Imphal, Operation Market Garden and the Battle of the Scheldt
- Information for teachers and educators

There will also be the option of a large poster.

More information about the displays and the order process will be shared via Central News and available on MAP. You will need to pay our approved supplier direct who will ship the items to you.



The link-up at Milestone 109 between the two arms of the 14th Army which relieved the Japanese siege of Imphal.

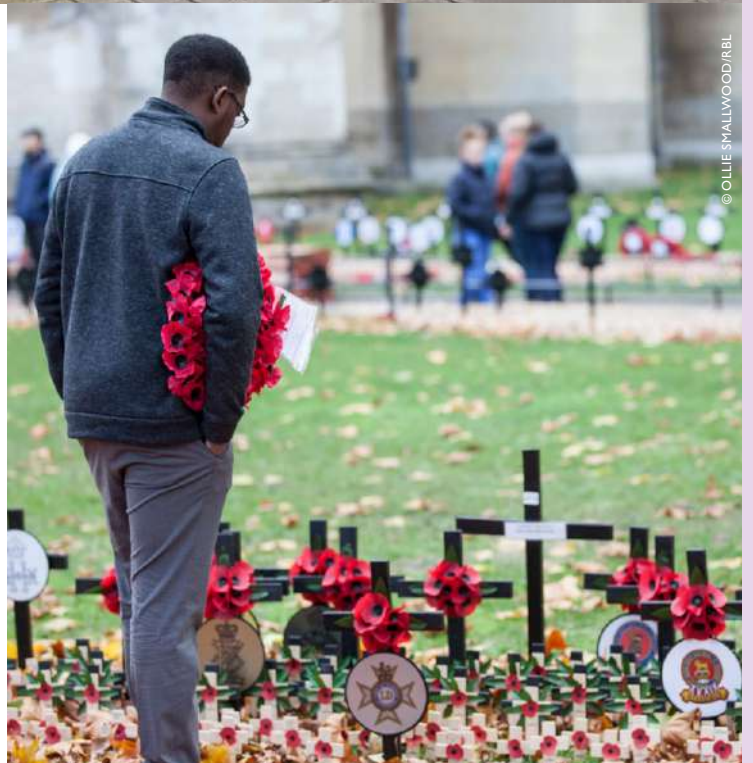


How people remember

Every year, as a nation, we unite in shared Remembrance. In this unified moment of quiet reflection we honour the fallen, and those affected by conflict, and show support for veterans, active servicemen and women and their families.

However, informal Acts of Remembrance can occur at any time of the year when a thought or feeling is triggered by something like an anniversary, film, photograph, the news or meeting someone new. At such times, people acknowledge their grief, sadness and pride as they remember a person or an event. Every Act of Remembrance can anchor memories and help people share their thoughts and feelings.

We want you to encourage people in your community to find their own way of engaging in Remembrance, whether it's visiting a monument, wearing a poppy, creating a quiet space for reflection, celebrating through music and dance, or going on a pilgrimage.



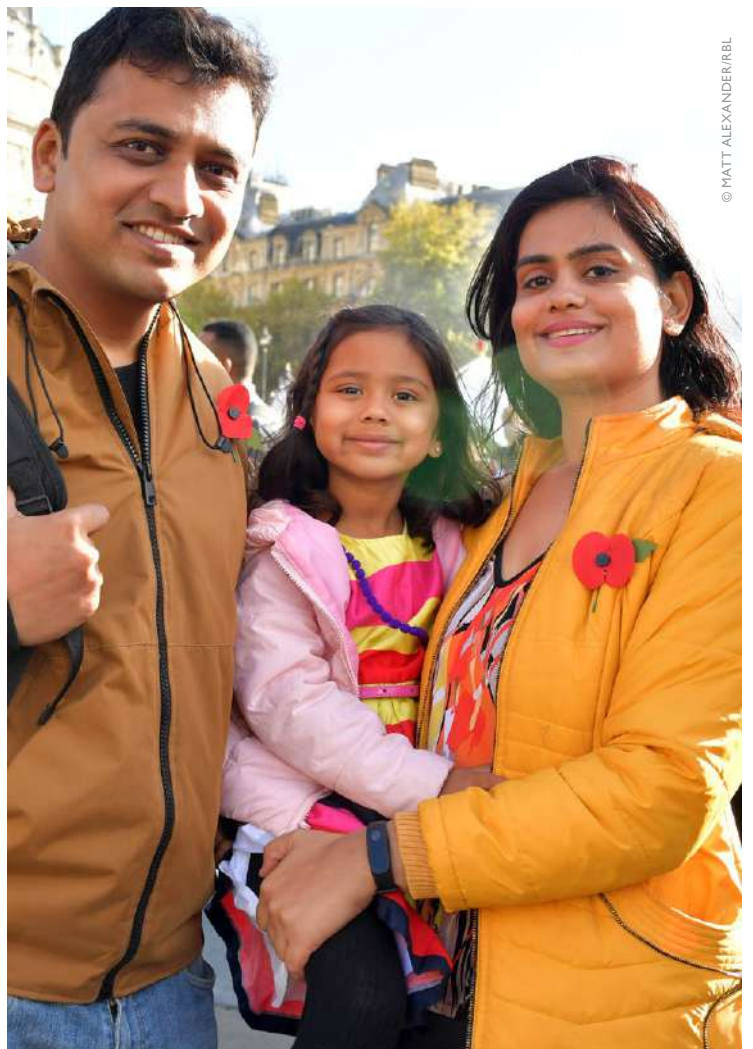
How to engage local audiences

Remembrance is a time to honour our Armed Forces community who have served and sacrificed to defend our democratic freedoms and way of life.

However, the number of those currently serving in the Army, Royal Air Force and Royal Navy is in decline. Consequently, fewer people in your wider community will have a direct connection and understanding of military service. Therefore, when you talk to people in your community about Remembrance, you may find their reasons for remembering are not solely focused on military service. People's thoughts, feelings and attitudes may differ from your interpretation of Remembrance.

To help people understand Remembrance we created a resource pack called **Connecting with Remembrance** to help you spread the message to people in your community. It includes talking points to help you explain the meaning of Remembrance, explore changing ideas of Remembrance, invite people to remember and look at how you can do more to help others remember. You can explore this resource on the RBL website here.

[Click here to access Connecting with Remembrance](#)



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Invite your local veterans

Your events may be enhanced if you were to invite local veterans – whether of the campaigns we are marking the 80th anniversaries of, or more widely.

Try different routes to invite veterans. Speak to fellow members who may know of them. You might also wish to enquire with care homes and day centres. Rotary clubs and guilds may have veterans among their members and local places of worship may also know of veterans. Many local councils have Armed Forces Officers

whose job is to identify veterans and their needs in the local community, and run events such as veterans' clubs.

If there is a Regimental Association or branch based in your area, and a regimental museum, they would be worth approaching as they may have connected with local veterans. Local history centres, history groups and museums may also be worth asking, as well as exploring online forums for veterans and local history. For example, there may be local dedicated Facebook groups you could join and post a request for information.



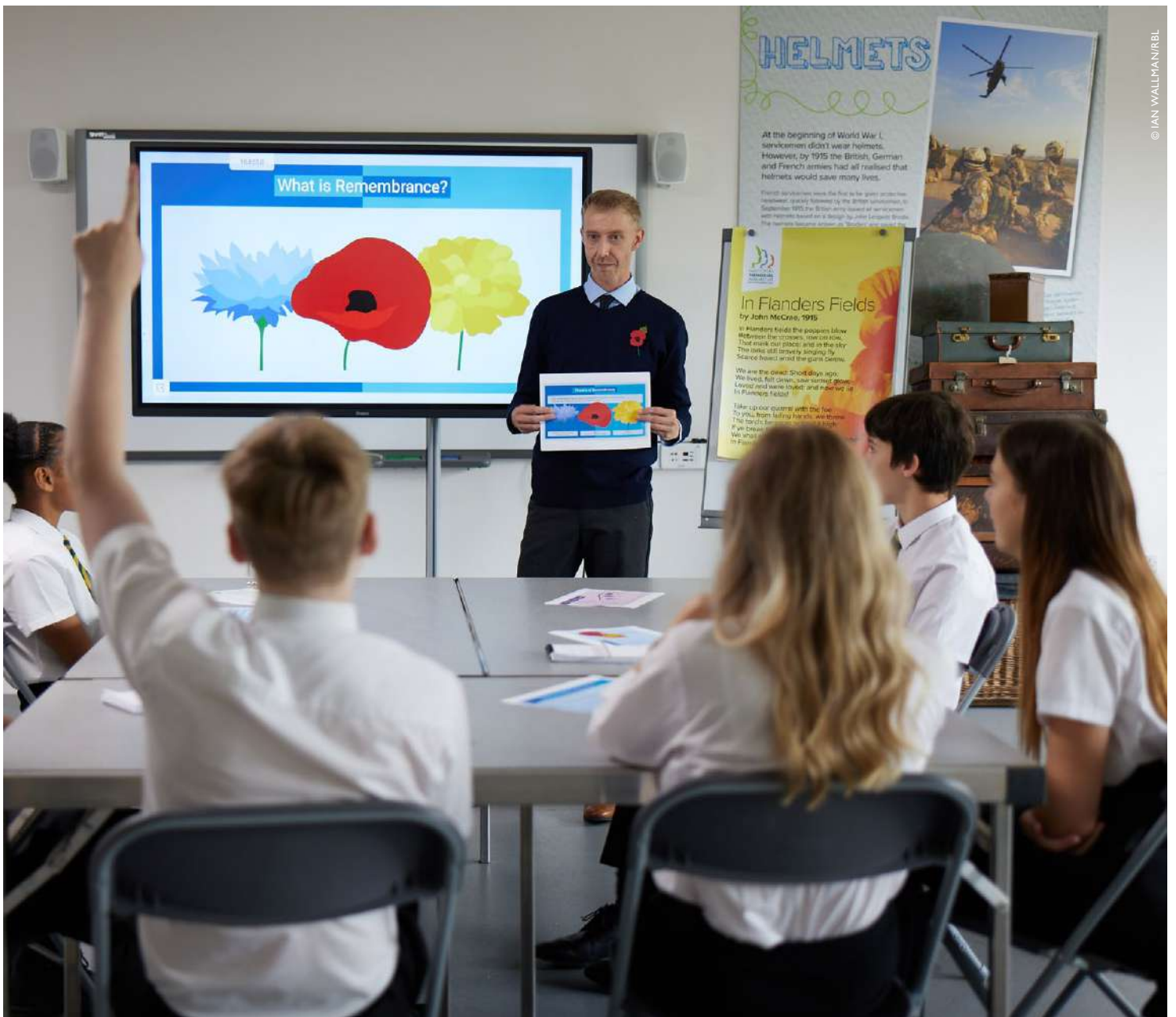
Examples of Remembrance activities

Members have been involved with organising and delivering Remembrance events for many years. Some branches have excelled at bringing their local community together to support Remembrance and our work. We are proud of your support and want to thank you for your continuing commitment, hard work and effort. Details of how to plan, organise and fund D-Day 80 events can be found within the **Activity and Event Guide** for Branches available here on the Membership Administration Portal.

[Click here to access
Activity and Event Guide](#)

As we look ahead, we can see how changing perceptions of Remembrance can impact planning. With this in mind we have produced a pack called **Making Remembrance Happen** to equip you with ideas to help people find ways to remember in their own unique way and to give you some ideas to help you brainstorm new or additional Acts of Remembrance. You can explore this resource on the RBL website here.

[Click here to access
Making Remembrance Happen](#)



Embracing the future of Remembrance

Engaging young people with Remembrance is an important part of our work. We support the teaching of Remembrance across the UK and have designed a range of resources and events for schools, youth groups and families.

Our online resources are available all year round and are free to download from our website. They include assemblies, book clubs, poetry workshops and other creative activities to allow young people to explore the meaning of Service and Remembrance. In 2024, we will be launching a special Book Club linked to the commemoration of D-Day with a range of activities for children to complete. All our resources are linked to the National Curriculum and are suitable for Primary and Secondary age. Resources are available in Welsh. On our website, we also have resources that can be shared with youth groups such as Cadets, Girl Guiding and Scouts.

[Click here to access our Teaching Remembrance resources](#)

We also aim to provide opportunities for young people to explore Remembrance in engaging and interactive events. Every November we host a Live Assembly which is broadcast across the UK to hundreds of thousands of children in schools. This event brings together art, music, poetry, interviews and more to create a unique, interactive, live-streamed experience for children aged 9 to 12. We also collaborate with the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire to host Teaching Remembrance Days in the Summer which are where an understanding and appreciation of UK Armed Forces past and present is brought to life through physical and interactive learning.

In 2024, participants will be taken back in time to hear the stories from those who served in 1944.

Taking part in Remembrance gives young people the opportunity to recognise the personal sacrifices made by men and women, past and present, to protect freedoms we enjoy today.

