



THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION
(Incorporated by Royal Charter)
Registered Charity No. 219279

199 Borough High Street
London SE1 1AA



7th September 2020

COVID-19 UPDATE 2020

FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE

The Royal British Legion has developed plans to ensure the Festival of Remembrance will go ahead this year and together with the BBC is creating a pre-recorded programme that will be broadcast on BBC One on Saturday 7th November.

In light of current government restrictions and social distancing guidelines we are unable to offer the opportunity for members, staff, volunteers or members of the public to attend the filming of the event. We recognise that this will be disappointing news for many, but it is a necessary step to comply with government rules and to protect the health and well-being of those who would be travelling to and attending the event whilst Coronavirus is still present.

We will be using the whole auditorium in order to film a socially distanced performance and the only representatives present are those who will be participating.

FAQs	
Is the Festival of Remembrance taking place this year?	<p>The Royal British Legion has developed plans to ensure the Festival of Remembrance will go ahead this year and together with the BBC is creating a pre-recorded programme that will be broadcast on BBC One on Saturday 7th November.</p> <p>It will not be a live event and unfortunately no guests or audience members will be able to attend the recording.</p>
How and why has the Legion come to this decision?	<p>The Legion considered a wide range of options for this year's Festival of Remembrance that were within the current guidelines.</p> <p>The pre-recorded option was deemed the safest option by the Board of Trustees to ensure that a Festival of Remembrance can still take place this year.</p> <p>We recognise that this will be disappointing news for many, but it is a necessary step to comply with government rules and to protect the health and well-being of those who would be travelling to and attending the event whilst Coronavirus is still present.</p>
Will Legion Standard Bearers be invited to participate?	<p>Whilst following government rules on social distancing we will be aiming to retain the important perennial elements that make the Festival the special occasion that it is, albeit on a much-reduced scale.</p>

	Legion Standard Bearers therefore will be represented by the Union and the National Standards (to be paraded by the National Standard Bearer and the Deputy National Standard Bearer).
Will Legion Parade Marshals be required?	<p>As we will only have 2 Standard Bearers present, there will be no requirement for any Parade Marshals.</p> <p>We must actively look to reduce the number of people on site to comply with government rules so standard bearer's instructions will be issued by the Garrison Sergeant Major.</p>
How are others being chosen to take participate?	<p>The Festival of Remembrance team will work closely with the BBC and the MoD to feature a host of participants who will fully represent the breadth of our Armed Forces community.</p> <p>Participants will be contacted directly over the coming weeks as content plans develop.</p>
Will Poppy Collectors and Legion Volunteers be invited to participate?	<p>As above, The Legion will be aiming to retain the important perennial elements that make the Festival the special performance that it is, albeit on a much-reduced scale.</p> <p>Participants will be contacted directly over the coming weeks as content plans develop.</p>
What will happen if Government guidelines ease or second lock down is put in place?	<p>The Legion will continue to monitor Government rules and guidance to ensure that the Festival of Remembrance can be produced safely.</p> <p>Unfortunately, due to time constraints, the current plan of a pre-recorded Festival would not change should Government guidance ease by November.</p>
Will the Festival of Remembrance return to its usual format in 2021?	The Legion very much hopes that we will be able to deliver Festival of Remembrance 2021 as normal, however we will continue to monitor government guidelines.

Any further queries or comments should be directed to festival@britishlegion.org.uk

CENOTAPH CEREMONY

The annual National Service of Remembrance will be held at the Cenotaph in Whitehall on **Sunday 8 November**.

To ensure the safety of all those who are participating and to comply with social distancing measures as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the overall number of people taking part in The Cenotaph Dispersal will be considerably lower than in previous years. The well-being of those who choose to participate is our priority, and we have been working with the Government and relevant Associations to ensure the march is able to go ahead safely and that, in the centenary year of the Cenotaph, as many members of the Armed Forces Veteran community as possible are represented.

Additionally, the Government have expressed a need to reduce the number of spectators at this year's National Service of Remembrance. It is expected that numbers will be heavily restricted, and access cannot be guaranteed. **Please keep an eye on the Government's website for further information.**

FAQs	
Will the National Service of Remembrance be held at the Cenotaph in Whitehall?	<p>The Legion has been working with DCMS, the MoD and others to define the planning parameters for the annual Remembrance Sunday event given the ongoing restrictions in place to minimise the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>The Remembrance Sunday ceremony on Whitehall will take place, albeit in reduced and socially distanced form.</p>
Will the Cenotaph Dispersal take place?	<p>Yes - The Legion Team is currently restricting each Association to 8 representatives, in order to stay within our total capacity of approximately 2000.</p>
Will the Royal British Legion be represented?	<p>Yes - to ensure that the Legion's Veteran membership is appropriately represented, MSOs will be allocated 2 nominations per County for this year's Cenotaph Dispersal.</p> <p>Members who are eligible to march should contact their local MSO should they wish to register their interest.</p>
What are the eligibility criteria for Legion members wishing to take part?	<p>Members wishing to take part in the Dispersal must meet at least one of the following eligibility criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Military or civilian men and women from the UK and the Commonwealth who served the Crown on Military Operations• Wives, husbands or civil partners of those who died as a result of their service in Her Majesty's Armed Forces
What will happen if Government guidelines ease or second lock down is put in place?	<p>The Legion will continue to monitor Government rules & guidance to ensure that the Cenotaph Dispersal can be produced safely.</p>

	<p>We will be reviewing our current plans and will communicate again with all associations in mid-October and will adjust it our plans accordingly based on the latest Government guidelines.</p>
<p>Will public, family and friends be able to attend and watch the march past in London?</p>	<p>It is expected that restrictions will be in place for public viewing for Remembrance weekend.</p> <p>Family and friends wishing to view the March Past are advised to check the latest guidance a week prior to Remembrance Sunday before making any arrangements.</p> <p>The Legion recommends that members watch the event on television or support local Remembrance activity instead</p>
<p>Will I be able to watch the National Service of Remembrance and march past on TV?</p>	<p>Yes, the National Service of Remembrance and March Past will be broadcast live on BBC One on Sunday 8 November.</p>
<p>Will marching associations be able to lay a wreath?</p>	<p>In current plans, marching contingents will still be able to hand their wreaths over as they march past the Cenotaph.</p>
<p>How will the Legion ensure the march past is safe for participants?</p>	<p>The Legion will ensure the safety of those by following social distancing guidelines and increased sanitation of all communal areas e.g. toilets.</p> <p>Participants will form up on Horse Guards Parade and proceed onto Whitehall. Markers and marshals will be in place to ensure social distancing on both.</p>
<p>Will participants need to wear a face mask?</p>	<p>As the March Past will be taking place outside, there is no current requirement to wear a face mask.</p> <p>Marching Veterans will receive tickets and joining instructions closer to the time of the event in order to provide participants with the most up-to-date Government guidance.</p>
<p>Will there be parking available?</p>	<p>A very limited number of parking spaces will be available when individual Veterans register through their associations. Spaces will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis.</p> <p>Poppy Cabs Poppy Cabs, the Remembrance Sunday Free Taxi service will yet again be available this year. They will be operating numerous 'turn up and go' hub locations which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victory Services Club • Union Jack Club • Kings Cross (main line) • Liverpool Street • Paddington (main line) • Fenchurch Street • London Bridge

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria (main line) • Victoria Coach Station • Waterloo (main line) • Euston • Marylebone <p>For further information contact Mike Hughes (preferably by SMS or e-mail) on 07973 430022 or mike@mikehughes.org.uk.</p>
Can Local Cenotaph Parades take place?	Responsibility for the delivery of local remembrance events rests with civic authorities. Branches are encouraged to assist in the organisation of local Remembrance parades and services if the local authorities decide it is safe to go ahead with them. All members must ensure that any form of support and assistance complies with the local or government restrictions and social distancing guidelines.
Will the Cenotaph Dispersal return to its usual format in 2021?	The Legion very much hope that we will be able to deliver The Cenotaph Dispersal in 2021 as normal, however we will continue to monitor government guidelines.

Any further queries or comments should be directed to cenotaph@britishlegion.org.uk

Legion Centenary – Telling our story

The Legion's centenary year in 2021 will mark a milestone in the history of the organisation, and it's a real opportunity for us to showcase all that we do so well. From its very beginnings in 1921 our members and branches have been at the heart of the Legion and that's why we're turning to you to kick start the centenary commemorations by Telling Our Story.

No one is better placed to tell the story of the Legion's 100 years than its membership community. We need you to delve into the history of your branches and share Legion related records, artefacts, membership experiences, personal stories and more. This is your story. It's about you, your branches, your community, your local adventures and connections. To find out more and make a submission please visit the dedicated Telling Our Story resource area on the [Legion Website](#).