



# BRANCH COMMUNITY SUPPORT

SUPPORTING THE ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY IN YOUR LOCAL AREA



## INTRODUCTION

There are people living in the avenues, streets and roads near you that need help. That's why here at The Royal British Legion, we want the support we offer to extend beyond the four walls of our branches.

This approach builds on the foundations already created by the hard work of our branches and reinforces the delivery of a range of activities to meet the current and predicted needs of the Armed Forces Community. Branch Community Support falls under the following key activities:

- **Legion Awareness Events**
- **Telephone Buddies**
- **Home & Hospital Visitor**
- **Bereavement Support**
- **Local Touchpoints**

This leaflet explains a little more about each activity and how you can, if you are not already doing so, get involved. As ever, your support in making schemes like this a success is hugely appreciated.

**The Royal British Legion**



## LEGION AWARENESS EVENTS

Many people in your local area may be unaware of our large membership network or the services the Legion provides to the Armed Forces community. As a member of your local branch, you can help us reach out to beneficiaries needing support, or increase support for the charity, by hosting awareness events.



These are a great opportunity to raise awareness of the Legion, the work we do, and to raise some money at the same time. Hosting an event also gives you valuable face-to-face time with others and is a fantastic way for non-members, veterans and their families to learn about the Legion in an informal way.

You can host an event in many ways: coffee mornings, picnics, BBQs, afternoon tea, and even community fun and activity days. You can also be as creative as you wish and use these events as an opportunity to attract more members and volunteers to the Legion – helping us to widen our footprint.

**Be our voice in your local community by hosting an awareness event. Contact your local branch today to start planning now.**

## TELEPHONE BUDDIES

Loneliness is not always a choice. There are 370,000 ex-Service men, women and their families who are socially isolated or feeling lonely. This can be for many reasons: such as disability, bereavement, short or long-term ill health or because they live alone.

Some people have no family, or are unable to speak to or see their family often enough. Others can have social contact, be in a relationship or part of a family but they still feel lonely. Either way, loneliness can lead to physical and mental illness.

Through Telephone Buddies, you can give individuals an opportunity to talk to someone, experience companionship and be part of the community. This routine can help provide support directly to those who need it, and contribute to improving someone's wellbeing and happiness on a weekly basis.

**Become a Telephone Buddy, your friendship could be their lifeline. Contact your local branch today for more information.**



## HOME & HOSPITAL VISITOR

Some people are unable to go out alone to meet people or continue with social activities they enjoy. Others may have no one to visit them in hospital following ill health.

Sometimes their family and friends have commitments such as work, or they don't live nearby so are unable to visit. Whatever the case, this situation can cause isolation and loneliness, which studies show, can lead to physical and mental illness.

As a Home & Hospital Visitor, you can give individuals an opportunity to talk to someone, experience companionship and be part of the community. This consistency can bring routine into the person's life and give them something to look forward to, at a vulnerable time.

**Be someone's companion. Become a Home & Hospital Visitor. Contact your local branch today for more information.**



## BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

There are 350,000 ex-Service men, women and their families recently bereaved. Bereavement can affect people in different ways, and there is no right or wrong way to cope with the loss of a loved one.

Some may have lost someone in service and others out of service. Either way, bereavement is a distressing time for our Armed Forces families, and dealing with grief can affect people emotionally, physically and mentally. It's a time when someone's world can feel upside down, and like it has fallen apart.

As a member of the Legion you can be a bereavement representative. This vital role can make a huge difference to our bereaved Armed Forces families: including helping with requests for Legion representation and Standard Bearers from your branch, showing support by being present at a funeral, and providing a sense of comradeship in what is already a painful time.

**Support families during a difficult time by offering bereavement representation. Contact your local branch today for more information.**



There are many serving and ex-service people and their families who are hard to reach, meaning they may be unaware of the services and help the Legion can offer.

In partnership with your Local Area Office, you can help provide information to people in your community at outreach sessions\* and direct people to where they can access help.

You can be part of promoting and raising awareness of the services the Legion has to offer and helps us engage with those harder to reach individuals.

**Be our eyes, ears and voice on the ground. Contact your Local Area Office today on 0808 802 8080.**



\*Operating an Outreach Session is at the approval of the Area Office and is currently only available to UK branches.

LIVE ON 

**LIVE ON**



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[www.rbl.org.uk](http://www.rbl.org.uk)

If a person you are in contact with needs further assistance,  
please ask them to call 0808 802 8080

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