



**Thank You
PR Toolkit**

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Introduction

To mark 100 years since the end of the First World War, The Royal British Legion is leading a national movement to say 'Thank You' to the entire generation who lived through the war, served, sacrificed and changed our world.

The charity is calling on the public to remember not only the British and Commonwealth Armed Forces who lost their lives, but also those - military and civilian - who played their part on the home front and those who returned to build a better life for the benefit of generations to come.

This document sets out key messaging and FAQs. It also includes advice on how to approach media outlets to cover your activity and what to consider when you're talking about Thank You.

Key messages

- To mark 100 years since the end of the First World War, The Royal British Legion is leading a national movement to say 'Thank You' to the entire generation who lived through the war – "All who served, sacrificed and changed our world."
- The war left legacies that positively impact our lives today, from ground-breaking social change and timeless works of art to pioneering innovations.
- The Legion is thanking the whole First World War generation. That's not just the British Armed Forces, but those who fought alongside them from today's Commonwealth. It's also the countless men, women and children who played their part on the home front.
- Everyone has a reason to say 'Thank You'. We all have a connection to the First World War and this is an ideal time to find out more about our heritage. Be part of the Thank You community.
- There's no limit to the ways you can say 'Thank You', whether it's a simple tweet or a full-blown event dedicated to those who made a difference in your community. Get inspired on our website: rbl.org.uk/thankyou

FAQs

Who, what, when, where, why, how?

Q: Why should we thank the First World War generation?

A: The world had never seen a war on this scale and everyone had to pull together. It was a generation of heroes and pioneers. Those who were left in November 1918 had to rebuild our society and create a whole new world that shaped our lives today.

At the Legion we feel the centenary is the right time to say 'Thank You' to ensure that the legacy, sacrifice and values of this unique generation are never forgotten.

Q: What was remarkable about this particular era?

A: The First World War literally redrew the world map and brought about incredible social change. The first women in the UK received the right to vote in 1918, partly thanks to their efforts during the war.

It was a period of extraordinary developments in technology, engineering, manufacturing and the arts – from air traffic control, daylight saving and reconstructive surgery; right down to some of the products we use every day like the wristwatch, trench coat and even the tea bag.

The war inspired incredible works of art, from the war poetry of Wilfred Owen to the iconic images of Paul Nash and the compositions of Elgar and Holst. It also saw the birth of the poppy as a symbol of Remembrance and of hope, inspired by John McCrae's poem *In Flanders Fields*, written following the Second Battle of Ypres in 1915.

Q: Who are we thanking?

A: We are thanking all those who served, sacrificed and changed our world. This includes the servicemen we often think of during Remembrance, and the hundreds of thousands of people from all over the world who fought and toiled alongside British troops.

It is also the men, women and children who supported the war effort in so many ways on the home front and elsewhere, and those who returned from the war to help rebuild Britain.

Q: Where is it happening?

A: There is no limit to where Thank You activity can take place: in schools, the workplace, in communities and online.

People can find out more about specific events by visiting rbl.org.uk/thankyou or by checking facebook.com/groups/thankyou100 to see what others in the Thank You community are doing.

Q: When is it happening?

A: People are welcome to start an activity at any time. You could look to do something between 8 August and 11 November. This reflects the 'Hundred Days Offensive' that started with the Battle of Amiens and led to the end of the First World War.

We are also encouraging people to use their extra hour when the clocks go back in the autumn to say Thank You. The weekend of 27-28 October will be the focus of the Thank You movement as it marks the end of Daylight Saving Time – itself an innovation of the war.

Q: Who can get involved?

A: Everyone has a connection to the First World War and anyone can take part in the Thank You movement. We want people and groups from all walks of life to join the movement and celebrate our shared history.

Q: Who is already on board?

A: Partners supporting the Thank You movement include high street retailers, blue ribbon brands, celebrities and sports clubs - through to communities, faith groups and schools.

You can find out more about our Thank You partners at rbl.org.uk/thankyou.

Q: How can you say 'Thank You'?

A: There's no limit to the way you can say 'Thank You' so feel free to be creative. We'd like you to explore your connections with the war and to look beyond traditional Remembrance activity where possible – think of all the people who contributed alongside the British Armed Forces, and the impact they had on your community and your life today.

If you're looking for inspiration, check out some ideas at rbl.org.uk/thankyou. For example:

- You could leave a tribute to one of the 1.1 million British and Commonwealth troops who died at everyoneremembered.org.
- If you're aged 16 or under, you could enter our [creative competition](#) and say 'Thank You' through a poem, song or work of art.
- Find out more about your own connections to the war generation with our Thank You partner ancestry.co.uk, or organise a World War One themed street party to celebrate those from your community who contributed to the war effort.

Q: Will Thank You replace other Remembrance activity?

A: Although we hope lots of people join us in saying 'Thank You', it is just one of many ways people can reflect on the contribution of the First World War generation. We will continue to lead a range of Remembrance activities throughout 2018.

Q: How is this different to other Remembrance activity?

A: The Thank You movement runs alongside traditional commemorative activity, such as at war memorials and church services. It's all about showing your appreciation for the First World War generation in inventive ways, both real world and online. You should feel free to join the Thank You movement even if your activity is a traditional one – this year, use it to say 'Thank You' as well as to commemorate the fallen.

We're thanking all those who contributed to the war, including women and children on the home front. We want to remind people just how relevant the First World War is to the society we live in today.

Q: What does The Royal British Legion do?

A: The Royal British Legion aims to support everyone in the Armed Forces Community at every stage of their life, from those serving and their families, to those transitioning out and veterans of all ages.

The Legion is the champion of Remembrance. We want to ensure that Remembrance is embraced by all, and that we continue to pass on the torch of Remembrance to new generations.

Media ‘How To’

To help you talk about your Thank You activity in your local press we have put together some simple advice on how to approach media outlets. Please do let us know if you’re planning any media work, and we will do what we can to support you, but hopefully the tools below will be all you need.

When talking to media, consider the following key points:

- Make sure you explain the main details: Who? What? When? Where? How?
- Above all, you need to show **why** your story should be talked about
- You can usually find contact details on the internet or inside publications
- When contacting regional media, make sure to reference your connection to their local area
- Include a reference to Thank You, as you will be part of a national movement

Print media (newspapers)

If organising an event or activity, contact your newspaper in advance to see if they are interested or able to attend. You can send a retrospective press release but this will need to be soon after the event (ideally within one day and preferably with high resolution pictures).

We’ve included below a template for how to lay out your press release. Remember to keep it simple and let the journalist know **why** they should talk about your story – have you uncovered interesting local connections? Who are you saying ‘Thank You’ to, how are you doing it and why is it important?

Broadcast media (TV and radio)

Broadcast media need an advisory notice rather than a press release. The aim is to give a taste of the broadcast opportunity, so you need to explain what there is to see or hear. Less is more – this doesn’t need to be longer than one page.

Use a similar template to the one below, focusing on **why** your story is newsworthy while explaining **what** is available: video and audio details, spokespeople, logistics and talking points.

Boilerplate

This is an explanatory paragraph included at the end of every press release or advisory. We recommend the following:

To mark the end of the First World War centenary The Royal British Legion is leading a movement to say ‘Thank You’ to the generation who served, sacrificed and changed our world. Individuals, groups and organisations across the country are running activities to show their gratitude.

The WW1 generation gave us the freedom we have today. Be part of your history and do something, big or small, to say Thank You. Further information is available at www.rbl.org.uk/thankyou.

Media release template

EMBAGOED UNTIL [TIME/DATE OF COVERAGE]

Write a headline, keep it short, and sum up the story

Your intro paragraph should sum up the story essentials: what is the news? Why does it matter? 1-2 lines (around 30 words) is an ideal length.

Your following paragraphs should go into more detail on the story – key facts & figures including the five ‘Ws’: who, what, when, where and why.

Frame your activity as part of The Royal British Legion’s Thank You movement and keep to 2-3 lines per paragraph. Use short, simple sentences.

A spokesperson for The Royal British Legion said: “Make sure to use quotes that sum up the essence of the story, including the spokesperson’s full name and title to put them in context.”

If you’re writing to a broadcast outlet, make sure to describe all relevant details:

- What are they able to film or record, where and when?
- Which spokespeople are available?
- Do you have any existing footage or imagery?

Finish with a brief summary of the details about your event or activity.

-ENDS-

Add your boilerplate here (see above)

Contact details

- Include your telephone/email so journalists can get in touch with you/spokespeople.

Notes to Editors

- Add any relevant details, facts and figures that don’t fit in the main release here.

Images

- Include existing images (or even video) wherever possible, ensuring that it is clear, in colour, and at least 1MB in size. Be sure to provide captions with names.