

Armed Forces Champion Report 2023/24 (May 23 to May 24)

This year I have received more emails than usual requesting housing support from Ex-Service personnel. I would like to thank Patrick Odling-Smee and his team for the support that the ex-Service Personnel have received.

We are very fortunate to have strong Royal British Legion Branches in Collier Row, Elm Park, Harold Wood, Hornchurch, Romford and Upminster. All these branches do excellent work for our veterans and their dependents and take the lead in organising the Remembrance Sunday Parades across the borough. I also thank the Metropolitan Police who assisted and gave their services for road closures at the parades in 2023.

Sadly, this year we lost a very good RBL member, David King. David was the President of the Hornchurch RBL for many years, and I know from experience he had helped many other RBL Branches in Havering with their Poppy appeals, God bless David. Carole Barrett, Chair of the Hornchurch Branch asked me to recite the Exaltation at David's Service of Remembrance, which I was honoured to do for such a loyal servant to the RBL, David was typical of the Legion motto "Service not Self".

War Memorial at St Andrews Church – it was good to see the War memorial was repaired after it had been vandalised, thanks to James Rose and the team in securing the grants to get this important memorial restored. Work has also started on the clock faces on the Rainham War Memorial which should be ready for this year's remembrance



Armed Forces Day Flag Raising at Havering Town Hall 19 June 2023

The Armed Forces Day Parade was held on Saturday 24th June and it was a pleasure to see all the cadet and youth organisations being part of the parade, with some large groups involved. The parade was led by the Romford Royal British Legion Band.



Civic Party waiting for the Armed Forces Day Parade to march past in Romford Town Centre



Michael Gosling, Spider, Simon Moore and Cllr Barry Mugglestone

Regarding the London Borough of Havering Parade Marshal; Simon Moore undertook that position for many years and carried the role out in a very professional manner until he stepped down due to work commitments last year. Sincere thanks must go to Simon, but I am sure we will see him about. It was a challenge to find a new Parade Marshal, but as in my last year's report I mentioned a person called Adam Thorne who received an award at the Armed Reserve Forces Association. When I spoke to him, he was very pleased to take the role over, so Simon passed the baton on to Adam.



Merchant Navy Day Flag Raising 1st September 2023



Merchant Navy Day Sunday 3 September 2023

Remembrance Sunday was commemorated all over Havering on 12 November 2023. As Chairman of the Royal British Legion Branch Elm Park I was, as usual with Branch members for 2 minutes' silence and then we paraded to St Nicholas Church for our annual service.



I am confident going forward Remembrance Parades will be well supported, sadly Elm Park RBL Parade will be no more, many factors in this is the amount of Legionnaires attending and no band, but in true RBL spirit, there will be a service outside the legion and then a Church Service in Saint Nicholas Church, Elm Park



Congratulations to Carole Lawrence who received an award at the Reserve Forces Annual event from the Lord Lieutenant Sir Ken Oilsa. The award was for “Stepping up as Unit Chair amidst uncertainty, revitalising the Hornchurch and Upminster Sea Cadet Unit”. I was very pleased for Carole, who insisted it was a team effort. I was also pleased to have been able to help the Unit negotiate a new lease as well as a new kitchen.



At the end of May 2024, I was very pleased to attend the Presentation of the Mayor's Cadet Pin to Archie Gurney after a very successful year when he fully supported the Mayor and also achieved best Cadet in his Unit.

Cllr Barry Mugglestone, Archie Gurney and Cllr Stephanie Nunn Mayor



Flag Raising for 80th Anniversary of D Day – 6th June 1944-2024



D Day Commemorations at the Normandy Veterans Memorial in Mercury Gardens

Armed Forces Covenant, I am still pursuing this and the CE Andrew Blake-Herbert has confirmed a report will be coming forward shortly. We as a Borough need to support all the Armed Personnel past and present and their dependents.

Councillor Barry Mugglestone

Armed Forces Champion