# Royal British Legion's new 'gay' Poppy Appeal badge sparks row



The Royal British Legion has ignited a heated debate with the release of its newest Poppy Appeal badge, priced at £8, which incorporates the Progress Pride flag alongside the traditional red poppy. This move has faced criticism from both veterans and gay rights campaigners, who view it as an unnecessary departure from tradition.

The controversy stems from the inclusion of the Progress Pride flag, a symbol that acknowledges not only the LGBTQ+ community but also includes references to binary, intersex, and trans communities, as well as other marginalised groups. This flag has been selected instead of the more recognised rainbow flag that has represented the homosexual community for decades.

Dissenters of this new badge argue that the poppy, a long-standing emblem of remembrance for those who have served and sacrificed in conflict, was already inclusive and did not require additional symbols. Critics have characterised the decision as a "political gesture" and "wokeism" that detracts from the original purpose of the poppy.

One vocal critic, Jeff Williams, a 67-year-old former Royal Marine sergeant major and veteran of the Falklands War from Birmingham, expressed his disapproval. Williams stated that the poppy should serve as a remembrance for all service members, regardless of gender, race, or sexuality, and should not be entwined with political messages.

In contrast, some LGBTQ+ advocates have shown support for the inclusion of the Progress Pride flag. Caroline Paige, representing the organisation Fighting with Pride, emphasised that the change is not intended to disrespect the poppy. Instead, it aims to ensure that LGBTQ+ veterans are recognised and visible within the wider veterans' community.

Kate Barker, from the LGB Alliance, voiced her concern that the Progress Pride flag represents a shift that marginalises gays and lesbians within their own movement, which traditionally has not focused significantly on gender identity ideology.

The Royal British Legion has defended its decision by revealing that the development of the badge involved consultation with LGBTQIA+ members of the Armed Forces community, their LGBTQIA+ staff network, membership branch, and external partners. A spokesman for the Legion stated that the Intersex Inclusive flag was deemed the most appropriate and inclusive representation for sexual orientation and gender identity at present.

The poppy has been a symbol of remembrance since its adoption after World War I, commemorating the fallen soldiers and their contributions. The recent discourse surrounding the updated badge reflects broader societal conversations about inclusion and representation within longstanding symbols and traditions. As the Royal British Legion continues its Poppy Appeal, this discussion remains at the forefront for both supporters and those in opposition, each debating the appropriate balance between tradition and contemporary inclusivity.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.thepinknews.com/2024/10/25/british-legion-poppy-brooches-lgbtq/> - Corroborates the release of the Pride Poppy brooch by the Royal British Legion and the controversy it has sparked.
* <https://thecritic.co.uk/the-royal-british-legions-day-to-forget/> - Details the inclusion of the Progress Pride flag in the new poppy badge and the criticism it has received from various groups.
* <https://www.spiked-online.com/2024/10/25/get-your-progress-pride-poppy/> - Discusses the controversy surrounding the new poppy badge and the accusations of promoting gender identity ideology.
* <https://thecritic.co.uk/the-royal-british-legions-day-to-forget/> - Quotes Kate Barker from the LGB Alliance expressing concerns that the Progress Pride flag marginalises gays and lesbians within their own movement.
* <https://www.thepinknews.com/2024/10/25/british-legion-poppy-brooches-lgbtq/> - Mentions the support from some LGBTQ+ advocates for the inclusion of the Progress Pride flag in the poppy badge.
* <https://thecritic.co.uk/the-royal-british-legions-day-to-forget/> - Explains the Royal British Legion's defense of their decision, including consultations with LGBTQIA+ members of the Armed Forces community.
* <https://www.spiked-online.com/2024/10/25/get-your-progress-pride-poppy/> - Describes the design of the Progress Pride flag and its representation of various marginalized groups.
* <https://www.evangelical-times.org/royal-british-legion-sells-rainbow-poppy-pride-badge/> - Provides additional context on the controversy surrounding the new poppy badge and its connection to gender ideology.
* <https://thecritic.co.uk/the-royal-british-legions-day-to-forget/> - Highlights the historical significance of the poppy as a symbol of remembrance and the recent discourse about inclusion and representation.