

Her Majesty The Queen to send a message to the nation to mark 75th anniversary of VE Day

- His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales will read an extract from King George VI's diary from 8 May 1945 □
- Members of The Royal Family, the Prime Minister and the Culture Secretary will take part in video calls with Second World War veterans □
- Churchill's famous victory speech will be broadcast as part of BBC special programming□
- A national moment of remembrance will take place with a two minute silence as Culture Secretary calls on the public to mark the occasion at home□
- Second World War veterans will receive calls from NHS Volunteer Responders□

The UK Government has announced revised plans to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE Day which will include an address from Her Majesty The Queen.

In line with government guidance, the original plans for [VE Day 75](#), which included a veteran procession, had to be adjusted due to the ongoing coronavirus outbreak.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden has announced a new programme that will allow members of the public to remember and give thanks to the Second World War generation from the safety of their own homes.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the greatest generation that served in combat and on the home front during the Second World War.

Whilst we now need to celebrate VE 75 in our homes and on our doorsteps, rather than in parades and street parties, I know the nation will come together to mark this historic occasion.

In these difficult times, acts of remembrance are even more poignant and I am sure that millions will want to join me to remember and give thanks to those who gave so much to secure peace, freedom and prosperity in Europe.

To mark this historic occasion, Her Majesty The Queen will send a message to the nation at 9pm on BBC One, the exact moment her father, King George VI, gave a radio address in 1945.

His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales will read an extract from King George VI's diary from 8 May 1945 which describes the day including The Royal Family's iconic Buckingham Palace balcony appearances.

Members of The Royal Family, the Prime Minister and the Culture Secretary will take part in a series of video calls with Second World War veterans and those who served on the Home Front. First Minister of Wales Mark Drakeford will also host calls with veterans in Wales. The official commemorations will begin at 11am with a national moment of remembrance and a two minute silence.

Other plans for the day include:

- As part of special BBC programming, extracts from Sir Winston Churchill's victory speech will recreate the moment peace in Europe was announced 75 years ago at 3pm and the Prime Minister will speak about the importance of VE Day. □
- The Archbishop of Canterbury will record a special reflection and moment of prayer for VE Day. □
- Her Majesty The Queen's 9pm address to the nation will be followed by a national singalong of Dame Vera Lynn's 'We'll Meet Again'. The public will be encouraged to open their doors and join in with this national moment of celebration. □
- The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has produced a [template pack](#) so that the public can hold a [1940s style afternoon tea party at home](#) complete with homemade VE Day bunting, original recipes, games, and [educational and creative activities for children](#). □
- NHS Volunteer Responders will be deployed to give a number of Second World War veterans a call and provide an opportunity to share their stories. □
- Historian and broadcaster Dan Snow will host history lessons for children from Monday 4 May. At 4pm on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, Dan will host a History Hit live on YouTube's Timeline channel that will focus on a different aspect of the Second World War and aim to teach the public about the importance of VE Day. □
- The Government and Ancestry are working together to encourage the public to join together in commemorating VE Day by discovering their own connection to the Second World War. As part of this, all UK historical records available on [ancestry.co.uk](#) will be free for the public from Monday 4 May until Sunday 10 May, giving people the opportunity to uncover the personal stories of the Second World War and the roles their families played. □
- Legion Scotland and Poppyscotland will broadcast a virtual Service of Remembrance followed by online tributes from a range of performers. □
- The First Minister of Wales will host a video call to veterans. □
- A number of commemorative events will also take place across Northern Ireland. □

The Royal British Legion's Assistant Director of Commemorative Events, Bob Gamble OBE, said:

As we face some of the most challenging times since the Second World War, now more than ever it is important to unite in recognition of people's service to the nation, just as communities did 75 years ago.

With members of the public unable to attend VE Day 75 events, we are calling on people across the UK to mark the anniversary from home and take part in these national moments of remembrance and thanksgiving. There is no right or wrong way to take part in the Silence at 11am, some people may wish to stand at their windows or step outside their front door, but we hope that individuals and families across the UK will embrace the opportunity to share in a national moment of reflection.

Russell James, Family History expert at Ancestry®, said:

> VE Day is one of the most significant moments in British history and Ancestry is proud to be working with the UK government to help the nation commemorate its 75th anniversary from their homes. Stories of WWII are something we share not only within our families, but as a nation, so using this time to learn about those experiences through historical records and speaking to our relatives gives us all an opportunity to feel connected – to our family and to people all over the country.

Graeme Dey, Scottish Government Minister for Veterans said:

The upcoming 75th anniversary of VE Day is a fantastic opportunity to remember and thank our Second World War generation for the many personnel sacrifices they made – both at home and abroad, both in and out of uniform.

If it weren't for their efforts, we wouldn't enjoy the many freedoms which we now take for granted. I look forward to joining with the rest of the nation on May 8th to pay tribute to them.

First Minister of Wales Mark Drakeford said:

We wouldn't be where we are today without the determination of our veterans and those who contributed to Britain's efforts during the Second World War. As we remember and thank them, let's find inspiration in their bravery to guide us through our own

extraordinary moment in history.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

- The BBC will broadcast two special programmes on BBC One to mark VE 75 which will be shown at 14:45 – 15:45 and 20:00 – 21:10.□
- All events will be pre-recorded. Journalists and the public are not encouraged to travel to watch events being filmed. The public are reminded not to travel to watch events and must adhere to the Government's social distancing and travel guidance. Everyone must stay at home, protect the NHS and save lives. □
- You can download DCMS's commemoration [afternoon tea party guide](#) here and [activity pack for children here](#).
- You can see and [take part in Dan Snow's creative challenge for children here](#).