

# Press release: Wales' National Rugby team shows its support for Wales' Armed Forces

With just under two weeks to go, towns and cities across Wales are preparing to mobilise to show their appreciation for the UK's Armed Forces.

Armed Forces Day (24 June) is an opportunity to say thank you to the entire Armed Forces community for the outstanding work they do; Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and women, both Regulars and Reservists, Cadets and veterans.

In its ninth year, Armed Forces Day is the national day dedicated to honouring the work of the Armed Forces. From fighting Daesh in the Middle East, to guarding the UK's skies and seas, the UK's Armed Forces will be saluted at a record number events across the UK and at the National Event, which this year takes place in Liverpool.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns will join thousands of people at the South Wales celebrations in Caerphilly (Saturday 24 June) to honour the work and dedication of our brave Servicemen and women deployed around the world. Armed Forces Day will be marked in North Wales on 17 June during a Drumhead Service in the shadows of Caernarfon Castle. The day will start with a military parade through the town centre, and will include representatives from all the Armed Forces plus Standard Bearers, Veterans and youth organisations.

## **Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:**

Armed Forces Day is a special occasion when we gather together to recognise the dedication of those who work tirelessly to secure our nation's security.

These are extraordinary men and women who risk their lives at home and overseas to protect our way of life. The exciting programme of events planned right across the country provide great opportunities for us to show our appreciation to those directly and indirectly involved in conflict. I hope to see thousands of people all over Wales joining in with the celebrations.

In the build-up to Armed Forces Day, rugby-mad Servicemen and women from Wales met up with members of the Welsh Rugby Union Squad ahead of their summer tour fixtures against Tonga and Samoa. Star players such as Alex Cuthbert joined representatives from the Army, RAF and Royal Navy to encourage people to go out and enjoy Armed Forces Day events.

Colonel Lance Patterson, Deputy Commander 160th Infantry Brigade and

Headquarters Wales in Brecon and RAF Corporal Kelly Veryard, 27, from Mynachdy, Cardiff and were among the personnel who met members of the Welsh squad at their elite training base in the Vale of Glamorgan.

### **Colonel Lance Patterson said:**

For more than three and a half centuries men and women from across Wales have served their nation in what we would recognise as the Armed Forces.

The Armed Forces in Wales continue to play a major part in Welsh society and are amongst the largest employers in Wales with individuals employed in both the Regular and Reserve organisations from the Royal Navy, Army and the Royal Air Force.

There are also a considerable number of dependents along with a significant veterans' community. The cadet organisations are also very important with nearly 5,000 in Wales, supported by more than 1,000 adult volunteers.

The Armed Forces are proud to be recognised throughout Wales and truly appreciate the support shown. This is always evident but especially at events such as Armed Forces Day which provides a valuable opportunity to celebrate that bond between the Armed Forces and Welsh society.

I know that all Welsh men and women serving in the Armed Forces, either in Wales, elsewhere in the UK or across the globe are grateful for the support and recognition that Armed Forces Day brings.

### **Corporal Kelly Veryard said:**

I'm a massive rugby fan and it was a real pleasure to meet the team before they flew off on their summer tour. As members of the Armed Forces we appreciate so much the support we get from the public and that recognition from our national rugby team is also very special indeed.

I'm delighted to see people across the United Kingdom coming together to mark Armed Forces Day. The day is a chance for people to say thank you to the extraordinary men and women, stationed across the globe who dedicate their lives to defending their country and keeping British people safe.

UK Armed Forces are currently involved in over 20 Operations in more than 25 countries, from South Sudan to Iraq. But many of those back at home will be

in attendance at events across the country.

Also present will be many veterans that make-up the estimated 2.56 million Armed Forces veteran community living in the UK. Young Cadets will be present too; together the Sea, Army, and Air cadet forces have almost 100,000 members, many of which will be at events up and down the country.

**Notes to Editors:**

To find local events in Wales, please [click here](#)

Further information on Armed Forces Day, including a full list of events, can be found on the dedicated [website](#)