

News story: PM words ahead of state visit: 3 June 2019

PM Theresa May's words ahead of the US President's state visit.



Speaking ahead of this evening's State Banquet at Buckingham Palace – the first to be hosted for a US President since 2011 – Prime Minister Theresa May said:

“This is a significant week for the special relationship and an opportunity to further strengthen our already close partnership.

“During his State Visit to the UK the President and I will be taking part in an historic commemoration of the D-Day landings and the sacrifice our armed forces made 75 years ago.

“And as we reflect on our shared history and honour those who fought so bravely on the beaches of Normandy, we also look to the future.

“Our relationship has underpinned our countries' security and prosperity for many years – and will continue to do so for generations to come.

“We do more together than any other nations in the world. We are the largest investors in each other's economies and our strong trading relationship and close business links create jobs, opportunities and wealth for our citizens.

“Our security relationship too is deeper, broader and more advanced than with anyone else. Through joint military operations, unrivalled intelligence-sharing and our commitment to NATO, our global leadership remains at the heart of international peace and stability.

“So I look forward to welcoming President Trump to the UK and to building on the strong and enduring ties between our countries.”

Press release: Statement by PM Theresa May and Taoiseach Leo Varadkar: 2 June 2019

“In our statement of 26 April, we announced a new phase of political talks in Northern Ireland.

“The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland Karen Bradley and the Tánaiste Simon Coveney have updated us on progress since then.

“We welcome the constructive engagement shown by all parties to date. It is clear to us that the Northern Ireland political parties wish to see the institutions of the Belfast / Good Friday Agreement restored, but operating on a more credible and sustainable basis. While broad consensus has been reached on some issues, other areas remain to be resolved.

“The Secretary of State and Tánaiste believe that there is a genuine but narrow window of opportunity to reach agreement in the immediate period ahead and that it is essential to continue and intensify talks to this end.

“As Prime Minister and Taoiseach, we will continue to monitor this progress closely. We believe it is imperative that the parties now move without delay to engaging substantively on the shape of a final agreement.”

Press release: Welsh Winners of the 2019 Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service announced

Three organisations in Wales have been awarded the prestigious Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service this year.

The number of organisations receiving the award across the country has risen again this year. It is granted to exceptional volunteer groups across the UK who are making a positive impact on the lives of others.

The Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service is the highest award given to volunteer groups across the UK to recognise exceptional service within their communities.

This year's recipients from Wales are:

- Friends of Pontypool Town: Making Pontypool a vibrant, safe and attractive place to live, work and visit, bringing the community back together.
- Amgueddfa'r Mor Porthmadog Maritime Museum: Working to preserve and display the ship building and seafaring heritage of the area.
- Welshpool and Llanfair Light Railway: Operating an eight mile steam railway demonstrating how it served its rural Mid-Wales community from Edwardian times.

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service Independent Committee Chair Sir Martyn Lewis, said:

The record number of nominations for this year's Queen's Awards for Voluntary Service proves that volunteering at a grassroots level continues to thrive. This year it is a real pleasure to congratulate 281 winners – all with strong reputations for successfully tackling a wide variety of issues and problems in their communities. They are powerful examples of real democracy in action. We know there are thousands more local organisations doing great work, and I would strongly encourage those people who have seen them in action or benefitted from their activities to consider nominating them for QAVS 2020. They are the highest our country can bestow on groups of volunteers.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

These awards highlight the tireless work of volunteers across the UK to serve their communities, and this year's Welsh cohort play a crucial role in educating people and demonstrate pride in preserving the heritage of their areas.

Congratulations to these deserving winners for the positive role they play in three communities across Wales.

Minister for Civil Society and Sport Mims Davies said:

Volunteers make an incredible difference to so many people's lives and their communities. These prestigious awards recognise the wonderful work being done by many voluntary organisations across the country. I'd like to offer my sincere congratulations to all the worthy winners for their continued hard work and dedication.

The recipients of the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service are announced every year on 2 June – the anniversary of the Queen's Coronation.

Any volunteer led group comprising two or more people that are making a positive impact on the lives of other people in an exceptional way can be nominated for an award. A group must satisfy the eligibility requirements before the nomination can be processed through to the assessment stages of the award. More details can be found on the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service website.

Nominations for the QAVS 2020 awards close on 13 September 2019.

[A full list of the UK winners can be found on the UK Government website](#)

Press release: Winners of the 2019 Queen's Award for Voluntary Service announced

From Orkney to Oxfordshire and Stranraer to Somerset, the number of organisations receiving a Queen's Award for Voluntary Service has risen again this year. It is granted to exceptional volunteer groups across the UK who are making a positive impact on the lives of others.

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service is the highest award given to volunteer groups across the UK to recognise exceptional service within their communities.

This year's recipients are incredibly diverse and innovative, from the Rural Coffee Caravan Information project in Suffolk, which combats rural isolation by providing a mobile community cafe and information centre, to Calum's Cabin in Rothesay that provides a holiday retreat on the Isle of Bute for children suffering from cancer and their families.

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service Independent Committee Chair Sir Martyn Lewis, said:

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We know there are thousands more local organisations doing great work, and I would strongly encourage those people who have seen

them in action or benefitted from their activities to consider nominating them for next year's awards. They are the highest our country can bestow on groups of volunteers.

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Any volunteer-led group comprising two or more people that are making a positive impact on the lives of other people in an exceptional way can be nominated for an award. A group must satisfy the eligibility requirements before the nomination can be processed through to the assessment stages of the award. More details can be found on the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service website.

Nominations for the 2020 awards close on 13th September 2019. Find out [how to nominate](#) an organisation.

Notes for Editors

For more information call DCMS Press Office on 0207 211 2210

Read the [full list](#) (PDF, 123KB, 14 pages) of the winners.

[Press release: UK prepares to host veterans and world leaders for unprecedented D-Day commemorations](#)

The UK is preparing to host unprecedented commemorations in Portsmouth this week to mark the 75th anniversary of D-Day.

Over 4000 personnel will be involved in D-Day events in the UK and France, making this one of the biggest mobilisations of the UK Armed Forces in recent years.

On Wednesday 5 June, world leaders will join Her Majesty The Queen, The

Prince of Wales and members of the armed forces to pay tribute to the bravery and sacrifice of the troops who fought to secure Europe's freedom.

Representatives from every country that fought alongside the UK in Operation Overlord – the Battle of Normandy – will attend one of the greatest British military spectacles in recent years, alongside over 300 veterans.

This includes President Trump – on the final day of his State Visit – President Macron of France, Prime Minister Trudeau of Canada and Prime Minister Morrison of Australia, as well as leaders and senior representatives from New Zealand, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovakia and Denmark. Chancellor Merkel of Germany will also attend, in keeping with previous D-Day anniversary events.

This is the first time the UK has hosted this many world leaders outside a formal summit since the 2012 Olympics.

Wednesday will see an hour-long performance on Southsea Common – produced by the BBC – telling the story of D-Day and the meticulous planning by allied forces that paved the way for the invasion of Normandy.

The event will feature testimony from veterans, theatrical performances and live music, culminating in a flypast of 24 aircraft – old and new – including the Red Arrows and the historic Spitfire.

During the performance the Prime Minister will read a letter written by Captain Norman Skinner of the Royal Army Service Corps to his wife Gladys on 3 June 1944, which was in his pocket when he landed on Sword Beach on 6 June. He was killed the following day, leaving his wife and two young daughters. The letter includes the following lines:

My thoughts at this moment, in this lovely Saturday afternoon, are with you all now.

I can imagine you in the garden having tea with Janey and Anne getting ready to put them to bed.

Although I would give anything to be back with you, I have not yet had any wish at all to back down from the job we have to do.

After the display the leaders will join veterans at a reception where they will have the opportunity to pay their respects to those who played a role in this critical moment in our shared history. Leaders will then sit down to a lunch together where they are expected to discuss the enduring importance of the western alliance, and the values that underpin it for our shared security and prosperity today.

Ahead of the D-Day commemorations, Prime Minister Theresa May said:

This week, people throughout Britain will pay tribute to the men

and women who gave their lives during D-Day and for the liberation of Europe in World War Two.

This year's commemoration will be particularly poignant and I am honoured to be able to mark the 75th anniversary of the landings alongside the veterans who were there.

It is the sheer scale of D-Day that made it such an awe-inspiring feat. Troops from around the world fought together with a common goal and with a shared ideal.

And so it is right that together we reflect on and celebrate the cooperation that helped to secure the freedom we cherish today.

Defence Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

It is government's hope that D-Day75 leaves a lasting legacy and provides an opportunity for people young and old to reflect on the achievements and sacrifice of our Second World War generation. Over the next few days it will be a privilege for us all to learn more of these extraordinary men and women.

Early on Wednesday evening, the 300 veterans – all over 90 years old – will leave Portsmouth on the MV Boudicca, a specially-commissioned ship chartered by the Royal British Legion and escorted by HMS St Albans – a Type 23 Frigate. The veterans will sail once again to Normandy – retracing the journey they made across the channel 75 years ago.

As the MV Boudicca emerges into the Solent it will be met by a flotilla of Royal Navy vessels – with sailors lining the decks in salute to pay their respects, while a lone Spitfire flies overhead.

The Prime Minister will be aboard the aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, which will be docked in Portsmouth for the commemorations, to wave off the veterans. The Defence Secretary and the First Sea Lord will join her on the deck to watch the historic sail-past.

In Normandy, Wednesday afternoon will see the Army's 16 Air Assault Brigade descend from the skies from RAF C-130 Hercules aircraft and C-47 Dakotas on Wednesday afternoon, alongside French Army paratroopers, to recreate the historic airborne landings. D-Day veterans will also be jumping from Dakotas as part of the re-enactment.

The Normandy commemorations will begin on Thursday 6 June in Arromanches at 0726 local time with a lone piper from the British Army marking the exact moment the first British soldier landed on Gold beach.

The Prime Minister will be in Normandy on Thursday to witness the inauguration of a new memorial to British servicemen at Ver-sur-Mer, alongside President Macron, and attend services of commemoration and

remembrance at the cathedral and cemetery in Bayeux – the first town to be liberated by the allied forces.