



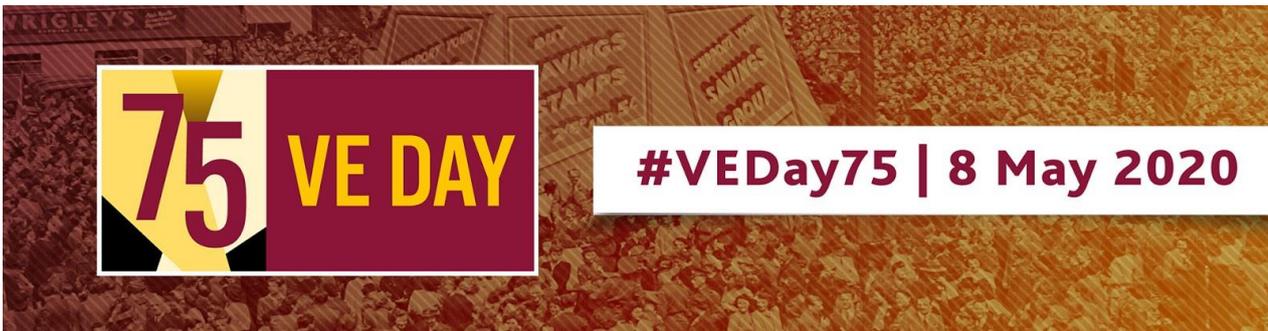
Department for  
Digital, Culture,  
Media & Sport

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[To all MPs]

29 April 2020



Dear colleague,

### **THE 75th ANNIVERSARY OF VICTORY IN EUROPE: FRIDAY 8 MAY**

Today I set out plans for marking the 75th anniversary of Victory in Europe on Friday 8 May. Sadly, social distancing means we are no longer able to put on some of the major events that we had originally planned but I am confident that the revised programme will ensure a fitting tribute to the greatest generation.

The health and well-being of the public was my highest priority in developing this revised programme. Whilst we will now need to enjoy it from the safety of our homes, we still have an engaging range of events and activities and the veterans of the Second World War will still be centre stage.

The revised programme will include: a two-minutes' silence at 11.00am; a moment of reflection and prayer led by the Archbishop of Canterbury; the broadcasting of extracts of Sir Winston Churchill's VE Day speech, followed by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales reading an extract from his grandfather King George VI's diary from 8th May 1945; and, finally, Her Majesty The Queen will address the nation. Members of The Royal Family, the Prime Minister and I will also take part in video calls with Second World War veterans and those who served on the Home Front. Our NHS Volunteer Responders will also be deployed to call a number of Second World War veterans to thank them and hear their stories.

I would appreciate your support in promoting the many exciting ways that your constituents can get involved on the 8th May from the safety of their own homes:

- Observe the two minutes' silence at 11am on the 8th May, joining their neighbours in standing on their doorsteps or in their window to mark the moment of remembrance.
- Tune in to the BBC to watch the VE Day 75 special broadcasts which will include extracts from Churchill's famous victory speech and Her Majesty The Queen addressing the nation at 9pm.
- Take part in the national singalong of Dame Vera Lynn's 'We'll Meet Again'. Members of the public are being encouraged to open their doors and join in safely.
- If they have children, take part in the creative activities including making bunting and posters to decorate their homes and display them in their front windows using the toolkit on our website: <https://ve-vjday75.gov.uk/>
- Hold a 1940s style afternoon tea party at home with those in their household, complete with homemade VE Day bunting, original recipes, games, and educational and creative activities for children using the template pack available online via the website above.
- Print off a 'Thank You' card from the toolkit on our website and post a message of thanks to the Second World War generation on their social media channels.
- Research their family history using Ancestry.co.uk who will be making their resources available for free between 4-10 May and share their stories online.
- Historian Dan Snow has set a VE Day challenge for young people, members of the public can use the link on our dedicated website: <https://ve-vjday75.gov.uk/get-involved/> to access the challenge.
- Dan Snow will also host a daily history lesson on different aspects of the Second World War live on YouTube for children from Monday 4 May at 11am each morning on his History Hit YouTube channel, which DCMS will share on social media.

Please encourage your constituents to share their VE Day activities on social media using the #VEDay75 hashtag and tag @DCMS on Twitter or @dcmsgovuk on Facebook and Instagram. Where possible, I would be delighted if you could share the link to the resource pack so we can ensure as many people as possible are able to join in the commemorations at home: <https://ve-vjday75.gov.uk/get-involved/>.

I would appreciate your support in promoting this programme of activities to your constituents in the hope that communities and individuals feel able to participate in this historic national moment.



**RT HON OLIVER DOWDEN CBE MP**  
Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport