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|  |  | Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP  Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport  4th Floor  100 Parliament Street  London SW1A 2BQ  E: [enquiries@culture.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@culture.gov.uk)  [www.gov.uk/dcms](http://www.gov.uk/dcms) |
| [to all Parliamentarians] |  | 27 February 2020 |
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| Dear Colleague,  **VE Day 75**  On Sunday we announced a series of events to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE Day on 8 May.  The VE Day anniversary events will allow the nation to come together and celebrate the greatest generation which saved our nation from tyranny. Our nationwide programme will tell the stories of those who served in the Second World War at home and abroad, and honour their memories as we reflect on 75 years since the Allies restored peace in Europe.  As well as the national events I am also keen to ensure that all local communities have the opportunity to come together and commemorate these important days in our shared history, with street parties, beacon lighting or other commemorations. I am aware that many local plans are under development. In order to support commemorations in your area, I would ask you to:   * **encourage your local communities to organise events to commemorate VE Day** and **upload their events to** [**DCMS’s digital map**](https://ve-vjday75.uk/)**,** which allows the public to search for what is going on during VE Day across the UK; * **use the #VEDay75 hashtag** when posting about events and activities near you in the run up to and during VE Day; * **direct those veterans in your constituency who wish to take part in VE day events in Central London to apply via the** [**Royal British Legion**](https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/remembrance/remembrance-events/ve-day-75) who are coordinating veteran attendance. Please note however that the ballot for these events closes shortly on 2 March.   On 8 May, commemorations in London will begin at Westminster Abbey at noon with a service of thanksgiving attended by hundreds of veterans, including those who served on the Home Front as well as in the Armed Forces.  At 3pm, extracts from Sir Winston Churchill’s victory speech will be broadcast along The Mall, recreating the iconic moment the Prime Minister addressed the crowds in London, before veterans take part in a procession. Events include a fly past featuring the Red Arrows and Battle of Britain Memorial Flight followed by a tea party in St James’ Park. Throughout the weekend, an area of St James’ Park will be turned into ‘Victory Park’, where the public can learn more about historic military vehicles and life in the Armed Forces during the war. Alongside this will sit a Military Village with interactive displays showcasing military capabilities from all three Services.  Street parties and beacon lighting will take place in local communities across England, and on the evening of 8 May, public buildings across the country will be lit up. In addition, the Devolved Administrations in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast plan extensive activities, including:   * + **Scotland:** a VIP reception for veterans in the Assembly Rooms, followed by a veterans parade culminating in a concert in Princes Street Gardens (all Friday 8 May)   + **Wales:** Drumhead Service followed by a military march past Cardiff Bay (Friday 8 May) with a National Service of Thanksgiving at Llandaff Cathedral (Sunday 10th)   + **Northern Ireland:** Plans to be developed   + A fly past will also take place in each capital city on 8 May.   More details of the programme to commemorate VJ Day on 15 August will be announced in due course.  I look forward to working with colleagues across the House to celebrate this very special moment in our national life. If you have particular comments or ideas please do not hesitate to contact me.    Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP  **Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport** | | |