

# VE Day 80

## **Staffordshire Communities invited to celebrate 80th anniversary of VE Day.**

2025 will mark the 80th anniversaries of VE Day (Victory in Europe Day) on 8 May and VJ Day (Victory over Japan Day) on 15 August.

It is an opportunity for the county to come together to honour and pay tribute to the Second World War generation from across the UK and Commonwealth, through a series of national and local events and activities.

**Use this pack of information to find ways to take part and share the story.**

Communications team

Staffordshire County Council

**Residents, community groups, businesses and organisations are being invited to come together and celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Victory in Europe Day on 8 May.**



**Pictured: Sir Ian Dudson, Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire**

VE Day marks 80 years since the unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany, a moment of relief and celebration across Britain and Allied nations.

A series of events will mark the day across Staffordshire including a special weekend of celebrations at the National Memorial Arboretum, taking inspiration from the iconic street parties of 1945. Other activities include local services, a pop-up event at the Staffordshire History Centre and activities in local libraries.

Whether in a town, village or city, people are encouraged to join in, whether that be preparing community gardens, hosting craft events, sprucing up their local areas or encouraging children to draw pictures to put in their windows.

People are also being invited to share their photos and pictures of activity on the VE and VJ Day webpage and across social media using the #VE80 hashtag.

**Sir Ian Dudson, Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire, said:**

*"VE Day is an incredibly important anniversary and we want to bring our communities together to celebrate.*

*"VE Day signified the end of the war in Europe, bringing six years of global conflict to a close. The nation rejoiced but it remained a time of challenge with many*

people facing rationing, the return of loved ones from military service, and the enormous task of rebuilding their lives and towns.

*"We're encouraging people to get into the community spirit for the anniversary by either putting on their own events or taking part in the national celebrations. There's lots happening over the week, from local services, community activities and street parties including a fantastic week of celebration at the National Memorial Arboretum, which I will be attending on the 8th itself."*

**Darryl Eyers, Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills at Staffordshire County Council, added:**

*"This historic day marks the end of World War II in Europe and is an important time to remember the courage of those who fought for our freedom."*

*"We want everyone to join us in honouring our shared history and celebrating the peace we've enjoyed since. Events will be taking place across the county and I'd urge people to take some time and join the celebrations."*

*"We're particularly inviting people to visit the new Staffordshire History Centre where they can see a pop-up event and to visit their local library where there's lots of activities taking place."*

## **A video message from Sir Ian Dudson, Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire**



**[The video message is also available at this link](#)**

## About VE Day

Thursday 8 May 2025 marks 80 years since VE (Victory in Europe) Day when the Second World War came to an end in Europe.

The long anticipated news resulted in spontaneous celebrations breaking out across the nation. A national holiday was declared and people from all walks of life came together to mark the moment.

The war in the East did not end until 15 August 1945, when Japan surrendered. The day was celebrated across the world as 'Victory over Japan' (**VJ Day**).

The 80th anniversary of VE Day is a time for a nation to come together to learn about the stories of those that served and the VE Day generation, from the servicemen who fought, to children who were evacuated, and women on the home front

Marking this significant anniversary, VE Day 80 events and activity will be taking place across the country. Find out how you can **get involved** and pay tribute.

## How to get involved

Together, through a series of national and local events, we will commemorate and celebrate the VE and VJ Day 80th anniversaries, while also showing our gratitude to the men, women and children who dedicated their lives to the war effort.

These commemorations will also be an opportunity to honour our living Second World War veterans. It will be a time for us to come together to listen to their stories and reflect on their values, service and selflessness across our nation, that led to the Allied victory.

As it was in 1945, the heart of the VE Day celebrations will be focused on commemorating in our communities with the 5th of May being dedicated to nationwide community celebrations.



Four days of celebrations will then mark the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War in Europe in May.

There are many ways you can get involved with VE and VJ Day. Here are some of the things you can do and ways you can find out more:

### **Tip Top Towns: share how your community is coming together for VE Day 80**

Whether you live in a town, village or city in Staffordshire, we're encouraging the public, volunteer networks and community groups to join together ahead of Monday 5 May to take part in activities that will get your area ready for VE Day 80.

From making your own VE Day 80 decorations to joining a local community group to plant flowers in communal gardens, we want to hear from you on how you are getting in the VE Day spirit.

[Share how you're making yours a Tip Top Town for VE Day](#)

### **VE and VJ Day events and in your home**


Use the dedicated [toolkit](#) for resources and branding for your activity, including the official logos and materials to help you put on a fabulous local event or celebration.

[Find activities near you and share details of your own event](#)

### **The Year was 1945...**

The National Memorial Arboretum will be reflecting upon and remembering the significant events that brought about the end of the Second World War and marking the anniversaries of both VE and VJ Day.

*The Year Was 1945*, is a series of exhibitions, events, services, talks and tours will open a window in time to 1945, sharing the stories of those who lived and served 80 years ago.



The week of events and exhibitions can be explored at the dedicated NME 'The Year was 1945' website here

## **Discover your local Second World War history**

Staffordshire History Centre is hosting a morning of pop-up activities as we mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day on 8 May 2025.

Free to visit and join in, no need to book just drop-in to the activity room 10.30 - 12.30

- **WW2 Object Handling** - explore artefacts from the second world war including uniform
- **Mindful Crafts** - create your own bunting over a cup of tea and chat to fellow visitors with our conversation starters and quiz sheets.
- **Pop-up display** - take a closer look at a range of historic objects and documents that tell stories about life in 1945 or how we have marked VE day over the years.

Plus...

Spotlight talk at 1pm in the William Salt Library (Eastgate Street at War), look out online for our video sharing some of our favourite VE Day photographs from across Staffordshire and special offers in our book shop.

The Staffordshire History Centre is also the hub for accessing over 1,000 years of the county's history, archives and heritage.

- More at [www.staffordshirehistory.org.uk](http://www.staffordshirehistory.org.uk)

## **Staffordshire Libraries to host celebration events for VE Day 80th anniversary**

Families are being invited to a series of activities at the county's libraries to celebrate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day.





**Library visitors can enjoy historic talks, crafts sessions, creative writing sessions, exhibits and even a flypast of a Lancaster bomber.**

- **Taking place at Cannock library on Wednesday 30 April, 'A Family at War' Is a fascinating free talk about WWII and VE Day by Andrew Lound.**
- **At Uttoxeter Library from Wednesday 7 May to Saturday 10 May, from 10.30am to 4pm each day, people can join free drop-in activities to commemorate the anniversary. Children and adults can join watercolour art sessions or brush up on their creative writing at special workshops. The volunteers who look after the garden at the library also have a VE Day theme for the Britain in Bloom judging.**
- **At Burton Library on Tuesday 6 May from 1pm to 4pm, people are invited to a free VE Day themed tea party. Then, on Saturday 10 May, families are invited to a free arts and crats session from 10am to 11.30am.**
- **Visitors to Perton library on Saturday 10 May can see a flypast of Lancaster B1 PA474. The bomber , part of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, is one of the only two remaining airworthy Lancaster Bombers out of the 7,377 that were built. The flypast is due around 1.30pm weather permitting.**
- **At Leek library, on Wednesday 7 May 10am-12pm and Newcastle Library, Thursday 8 May 11am-2pm, families can enjoy a themed tea party with crafts and other activities such as quizzes, music, photos, poems and letters.**
- **At Stone Library, on Thursday 8 May at 2.30pm, people can join Kath Reynolds. She will be delivering a talk on life during the Second World War. The event is free but reservation is required.**

Further details are available on the libraries plans for [VE Day celebrations webpage](#) or on their social media pages.

## Learn more about the history of VE & VJ Day

The Royal British Legion's [Teaching Remembrance Learning programme](#) supports young people across the UK to learn about who, why and how we remember with free resources and online events for young people and their teachers, youth groups and families.

You can use these additional online resources to discover your local and family Second World War histories and connections:

- [Imperial War Museums](#)
- [The National Archives](#)

## Share your Second World War history

In partnership with Imperial War Museums, Letters to Loved Ones invites you to get involved, by sharing historical letters from your VE and VJ Day generation relatives.

On social media

Share your Second World War stories, family histories and messages of remembrance on social media.

Use #VE80, #VJ80 and #Victory80 to join the conversation now

[Learn more about how to participate in 'Letters to Loved Ones'](#)

## Find your local memorial

You can use these resources to find out more about memorials near you:

- IWM's [War Memorials Register](#) allows you to search over 100,000 UK war memorials and the names of more than 1.5 million people. To search for your local war memorials type



in the name of your village, town or city and click search. You can narrow down the results by using filters which include, location, war commemorated and memorial type.

- Find your nearest **Commonwealth War Graves** - The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) cares for over 170,000 war graves across 13,000 locations in the UK and Northern Ireland. From beautifully maintained cemeteries reminiscent of those on the Western Front to dedicated war grave plots in public cemeteries and individual graves in local churchyards, all are searchable on the CWGC website.
- You can also discover some of the personal stories behind the names and submit your own on CWGC's **For Evermore** platform.

If you find out more about your family's history or your local community's contribution and would like to share what you've learned, use #VE80, #VJ80 and #Victory80 or email us at [vevjday80@dcms.gov.uk](mailto:vevjday80@dcms.gov.uk)

## Plan and host a Great British Food Festival

Celebrate our freedom by sharing food together. This could be a small gathering with friends, a Big Lunch street party with neighbours, a food festival in your community or even a BBQ.

With the launch of The Big Lunch Guide to Bringing People Together, full of event planning resources and tips, craft activities and conversation prompts for communities hosting local celebrations, planning your event has never been easier.

[Get tips and materials to help you host](#)

## Help the next generation learn about VE Day

*Our Shared Story* is a collection of educational resources to support young people to engage with VE and VJ Day 80th



commemorations, both inside and outside the classroom. We want every school child in the country to have the opportunity to connect with the stories of the end of the Second World War.

Sign up to download the education starter pack to understand the range of opportunities for schools to participate in *VEVJ Day 80: Our Shared Story*. Whether you are planning a school-wide assembly, classroom discussion, street party, or creative project, you'll have access to adaptable resources to create a meaningful and educational commemoration of VE Day.

[Download the education pack](#)

You can also access more about everything connected to VE and VJ Day commemorations at the [official VE/VJ DAY 80 website here](#)

