

PARISHES LIAISON
Wednesday 19 February 2014

Commemoration of the Centenary of the start of World War One

Purpose of this briefing:

- For information
- Invitation to parishes to join in with plans for the year
- Request to parishes to contribute information on any planned commemorative events

Introduction

2014 is the centenary of the start of the First World War (WW1). The centenary date, marking the outbreak of war, is **Monday 4 August 2014**. The Dept for Communities & Local Govt has given direction to local authorities as follows:

- *Centenary programme has as its overarching themes: **remembrance, youth and education***
- *Three-pronged approach to mark the centenary: **identifying key dates for commemoration, development of a Centenary education programme, and a series of community-based activities***

The Chief Executive and the Leader have approved outline plans for how Bath & North East Somerset will mark the centenary. Events and activities are being co-ordinated by a working group comprising relevant Council officers, Bath Abbey, and British Legion.

The Council sees the centenary as a significant anniversary for all our communities, and it is an opportunity not only to commemorate the losses of WW1 but also to contemplate broader themes as they apply to the present day.

It is an opportunity to:

- Join the national commemoration on Monday 4 August 2014
- Work with the Armed Forces and Veterans through the Community Covenant
- Mark the centenary in each village or community in B&NES, in whatever way each community wishes
- Engage children and young people through work with schools
- Provide information about community events and other activities, such as exhibitions, undertaken by local organisations

Parish Clerks were contacted 10 January.

Key events and dates for commemoration

Bath Abbey special service: Monday 4 August, late evening appx 22:00hrs
There will be national service in Westminster Abbey, in the late evening of Monday 4 August, and the directive is for all cathedrals and churches to conduct their services at the same time.

Civic ceremony in Bath: Monday 4 August, early evening appx 18:00hrs
There will be a civic ceremony at the War Memorial in Royal Victoria Park - details to be confirmed. The time 18:00hrs is proposed because this is a normal working day and early evening is probably best to enable most people to attend.

Community commemoration ceremonies elsewhere

Towns and villages in B&NES will want to do similar ceremonies on the same day, or on Sunday 3rd.

Commemoration of Victoria Cross recipients

Dept for Communities & Local Govt have commissioned specially designed commemorative paving stones which will be presented to Councils, to be placed in the home towns or villages where First World War Victoria Cross recipients were born. In B&NES district we have one VC recipient, in Paulton – Oliver Brooks, awarded 8 Oct 1915. The instruction from DCLG is that the stones are to be laid on the centenary of the date awarded.

Exhibition in Bath, summer 2014

There are plans for a small exhibition of photos and memorabilia contributed by local residents, possibly displayed in the central library exhibition room and/or using the windows of empty retail premises. There will be more information about this from April.

Parishes - community-based activities

Parishes will want to create their own church services, community events and other projects, and Ward Councillors are likely to be involved in activity for their Wards.

B&NES Council will shortly issue a press release, inviting communities and organisations to tell us their plans. There will shortly be a page on the B&NES Council website where we will list all events, exhibitions etc.

Paulton Councillors and the Parish Clerk are considering how they will commemorate Oliver Brooks in 2015.

Ann Cullis
Arts Development Manager
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