

Media Release

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Plans for Liberation Day radically re-shaped

Plans for Liberation Day will be re-shaped in line with the island's efforts to combat coronavirus.

Following consultation with the organisers of a number of events and in conjunction with the Bailiff, the Committee *for* Education Sport & Culture has decided to halt plans for the organisation of large public events. Instead, organisers will develop a programme of events to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Liberation that recognises the importance of the occasion whilst heeding advice from Public Health Services.

Those who lived through the Occupation and the War years will be acknowledged and there will be a focus on the survivors of that generation all of whom, by reason of their age, are vulnerable in the pandemic. Medical advice will be followed to ensure they are not placed at additional risk.

The Island will still have an opportunity to commemorate the 75th anniversary and Guernsey's National Day. This will be done in a manner that does not pose a risk to public health. The coronavirus pandemic is still evolving so the details of what will take place are not decided. However, technology will be used wherever possible and, for example, plans will be made to ensure that islanders can enjoy the events and participate in the commemorations from their own homes if that is necessary.

In the light of the coronavirus pandemic, the Lieutenant-Governors of Guernsey and Jersey deemed it appropriate to cancel the planned visit in May of Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester.

Bailiff Sir Richard Collas said:

‘While it is too soon to state explicitly what the re-shaped day will look like, the community can rest assured that we remain committed to marking Liberation Day with due regard to the significance of the occasion and to the recognition our war-time generation are rightly due. We hope to be able to continue with the morning

wreath laying and church service, and by broadcasting them rather than having large numbers of people in attendance, but at this stage it is too soon to say for certain.'

The Lt-Governor, His Excellency, Vice-Admiral Sir Ian Corder said:

'We are naturally disappointed that the planned visit of Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester has been cancelled; however, we recognise that it was a necessity to do so given the current global pandemic that we must all combat together as a community. While it is too soon to know exactly how we will commemorate the 75th anniversary of our Island's Liberation, we will probably seek a greater focus on marking the day at the home and making full use of the broadcast media in particular.'

Deputy Matt Fallaize, President of the Community for Education, Sport & Culture, said:

'I appreciate there are many islanders who are looking forward to Liberation Day and all the amazing events planned, so there will be an understandable disappointment however much the community understands the need to re-shape events. We will do everything we can to ensure the day is appropriately commemorated while at the same time aligning events with the advice of Public Health Services, conscious that circumstances are currently changing daily and Liberation Day is several weeks away.'

END

Notes to Media

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