



NATIONAL
MEMORIAL
ARBORETUM

Media Information Pack

The National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire is the UK's year-round Centre for Remembrance; it is a place which helps people to reflect and to be inspired, a place where they can celebrate lives lived and commemorate lives lost in service.

THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION



Explore - Discover - Remember



Armed Forces Memorial

Dedicated in the presence of Her Majesty The Queen in October 2007, the Armed Forces Memorial is the UK's tribute to the more than 16,000 men and women from the Armed Forces who have been killed on duty or as a result of terrorist action since 1948.

The names of those who have died are recorded in date and service order, grouped together with colleagues who died in the same incident. Over 15,000 names were carved by computer when the memorial was constructed and subsequent names are engraved by hand each year in advance of a service of Remembrance attended by the families of the fallen. Ranks are not recorded on the memorial as everyone is equal in death.

The walls of the Armed Forces Memorial are designed to allow a shaft of sunlight to fall across the sculpted wreath on the central stone at precisely 11am on the 11th day of the 11th month. The obelisk carries the inscription "They died serving their country. We will remember them".

About the Arboretum

The National Memorial Arboretum is a registered charity and part of The Royal British Legion. In October 2016, it opened an award-winning £15.7m Remembrance Centre, following a major fundraising campaign supported by numerous individuals and organisations, including Staffordshire County Council, the National Lottery Heritage Fund and The Royal British Legion. A new £8.1m state of the art conference and events building called Aspects was opened in October 2018 providing a dedicated space for events that matter in a place that matters.

Located in the heart of the country in the National Forest, with approximately 30,000 maturing trees and over 380 memorials across its 150-acre site, the free-to-enter Arboretum is a beautiful and lasting tribute to those who served, suffered and sacrificed on behalf of the Nation.

The Arboretum employs 60 staff, has over 260 volunteers (providing

a combined total of more than 4,600 hours of their time each month) and welcomes around 300,000 visitors from all walks of life including; service personnel, veterans, students, families, groups and individuals.

Approximately 250 events are held at the Arboretum each year. In addition to many commemorative services, there is a programme of family-oriented celebratory events including Armed Forces Day, Paws for Remembrance, the Summer Proms and Illuminated Arboretum – these events help the Arboretum reach a broad audience and encourage people to engage with the site and the importance of Remembrance in a variety of ways, appreciating that everyone remembers differently.

The Millennium Chapel is the only place in the UK where a Two Minute Silence is observed daily as part of an Act of Remembrance.

The Memorial Landscape

The Arboretum commemorates most recent conflicts in some way through its memorials. Although a large proportion of memorials have military links, emergency services, charities and civilian organisations also have tributes located at the site.

Some of the most visited memorials include:

- Shot at Dawn Memorial
- Far East Prisoners of War Memorial Building
- The Women's Land Army and Timber Corps
- The Sikh Memorial
- The Bevin Boys Memorial
- The Beat - a tribute to fallen police officers
- Royal National Lifeboat Institution Memorial
- The Bastion Memorial Wall
- The Basra Memorial Wall
- British Victims of Overseas Terrorism

Awards

The Arboretum has received many awards, including, most recently;

- Large Visitor Attraction of the Year (Gold) – VisitEngland Awards 2018
- VisitEngland Gold Accolade
- National Landscape Awards 2018
- Coach Friendly Attraction of the Year – British Coach Tourism Awards 2018
- Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (bestowed on volunteers in 2010)

The Remembrance Centre has also received several awards, including;

- RIBA National Award 2017
- RIBA West Midlands Regional Award 2017
- RIBA West Midlands Building of the Year Award 2017
- Overall Project of the Year – RICS Awards 2017 (West Midlands & National)
- Tourism & Leisure category – RICS Awards 2017 (West Midlands & National)



Learning Team - Preserving history and teaching the next generation

Visitors to the Arboretum are of all ages and from all communities and faiths. Over the past decade, the number of children visiting the site has increased significantly with many visiting with family members. Approximately 20,000 school children visit the Arboretum each year, a number which is expected to grow to 25,000 over the next ten years, boosted by events such as the annual Youth Festival that offers cross curricular workshops for students.

The learning team harnesses the site's assets – the memorials, landscape and wildlife – to generate a greater understanding of Remembrance in a relevant and engaging way. By providing support for schools across the country, students are encouraged to think about Remembrance, not only at the Arboretum but also in their daily lives, with the aim that they will visit on a regular basis.

A cross curricular programme of learning activities is available for visiting groups, covering History, Citizenship, Art, Geography and English Language areas of the curriculum.

The Remembrance Centre - Delivering a first-class visitor experience

The Remembrance Centre serves as a gateway to the site, offering a suite of visitor amenities, including a large restaurant, gift shop and coffee shop, dedicated learning facilities and several free-to-enter exhibition galleries. Practical support and advice for service personnel, veterans and their families is available from a drop-in point, permanently manned by staff and volunteers from The Royal British Legion.

Landscapes of Life - Developing an understanding of Remembrance

The Arboretum's permanent free-to-enter exhibition takes visitors on an emotional and engaging journey of discovery introducing the site and exploring the concept of Remembrance and how this crucial cultural pillar for humans has evolved over thousands of years.

Landscapes of Life features personal tales of heroism and sacrifice, valour and tenacity, each one certain to move and inspire. The exhibition showcases practices from the Bronze Age to the present day, with interactive and audio visual activities, historical artefacts, and a 'Memory Booth', where visitors can leave messages of Remembrance.

'The Drum' is home to an immersive film experience; personal stories of Remembrance are interwoven with scenes depicting the landscape of the Arboretum throughout the seasons, providing insights into how remembering is an important human need that spans millennia.

Seasonal Exhibition Programme - Engaging with Remembrance through art

Each year several temporary exhibitions are hosted at the Arboretum, providing new ways for visitors to engage with Remembrance through artistic and cultural mediums. This ever evolving programme has included; Silent Testimony - a moving and powerful exploration of the human impact of the Troubles by internationally renowned portrait artist Colin Davidson, Fashion and Freedom - an exploration of the dramatic changes in social attitudes and fashion style due to the First World War, and Tribute 100 - a tribute to the RAF on its 100th anniversary by modern aviation artist David Bent.



Colin Davidson: Silent Testimony



'Thank You' Youth Festival, 2018



Landscapes of Life - 'The Drum'

The Woodland Landscape

Still a young Arboretum, the 150-acre site comprises woodlands, landscaped gardens and wildflower meadows. A large proportion of the 30,000 trees are British native species, ensuring the site is a haven for wildlife to flourish and for nature lovers to enjoy.

The species of trees near to a memorial is often a careful and symbolic choice, for example Chestnut trees are prolific in the area of the Arboretum that commemorates the service of the Police as this type of wood was used to create the first police truncheons.

The adjacent River Tame, joining the Trent at the most northern point, further enhances the landscape and provides beautiful riverside walks throughout the year.



Charitable Objectives

The National Memorial Arboretum is a registered charity and is part of The Royal British Legion family of charities.

Its registered objectives are:

- To promote good citizenship among the public
- To promote the efficiency of the Armed Forces of the Crown
- To relieve the distress and suffering of those who are bereaved

- To provide and maintain an Arboretum as a public memorial to commemorate and honour those who have lost their lives or suffered injury, or put themselves at risk of loss of life or injury, in the service of the public
- To involve and educate the public and personnel of the Armed Forces of the Crown in recognising the importance of citizenship, military history, the effects of armed conflict, conflict resolution and reconciliation

The National Memorial Arboretum can support you by;

- Serving as a filming location
- Sourcing historical experts and case studies
- Providing high-resolution images from our library
- Supplying stock drone footage of the site
- Facilitating communication with more than 300 veteran and other connected organisations

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