

News story: D-Day 75: events to mark 75th anniversary of Normandy Landings announced

Events to commemorate the 75th anniversary of D-Day in June 2019 have been announced at an event at The D-Day Story in Portsmouth.

Vice Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir Gordon Messenger announced the official commemorations during a visit to The D-Day Story in Portsmouth. The Ministry of Defence has worked with The Royal British Legion and Portsmouth City Council to organise a series of events to take place in Portsmouth and Normandy.

The centrepiece of the D-Day 75 programme will be a specially-chartered ship which will carry D-Day veterans to key commemorations in Portsmouth and Normandy in June. The ship, chartered with funds from The Royal British Legion and a LIBOR grant from HM Treasury, will offer the veterans and their carers accommodation and travel for the duration of their visit at no cost to them.

Welcoming the announcement, Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

75 years ago the forces of 13 Allied countries gathered in Britain before launching the historic operation to liberate Europe. Winston Churchill rightly said that D-Day was “undoubtedly the most complicated and difficult” operation that had ever taken place. This June we will show our veterans that the debt to them is never forgotten for the price they paid for the freedom and peace we now enjoy.

The key commemoration events will include an inauguration at the site of the Normandy Memorial Trust’s British Normandy Memorial and The Royal British Legion’s services at Bayeux Cathedral and Bayeux Cemetery. The commemorations will conclude with an evening of music and entertainment for veterans beside the beaches at Arromanches.

Portsmouth, from where much of the D-Day landing force sailed in 1944, will be the focal point of the UK commemorations and will host the UK national event on 5 June 2019. Portsmouth City Council is planning a series of events over five days to reflect the area’s unique role in one of the largest and well-known military operations in history.

Cllr Gerald Vernon Jackson, Leader, Portsmouth City Council said:

This June the city will be the focal point for reflection on the events of 1944. Veterans, military personnel and civilians will

commemorate those lost and celebrate the achievements of the operation that sailed from Portsmouth 75 years ago. It's fitting that we're revealing the programme of events for D-Day 75 at The D-Day Story – the museum which has captured the human stories of those involved in that epic event.

D-Day veterans or those who would like to help a veteran attend the commemorations are asked to register with The Royal British Legion using the forms available [on their website](#).

The Royal British Legion's Commemorative Events Lead, Bob Gamble OBE, said:

As we mark 75 years since the largest seaborne invasion the world has ever seen we salute the bravery and sacrifice of all those who took part in liberating Europe. We invite those who wish to attend the events to commemorate their historic achievements to get in touch with the Legion and join our all-costs-covered journey by ship back to France. The veterans will be the VIPs at this event and we will make sure their every need is catered for as they travel back to Normandy to take part in this landmark event.

Earlier today, the Defence Secretary published [an open letter](#) to D-Day veterans inviting them to register to take part in the commemorations.

Press release: Brighton drug-dealer jailed after Solicitor General's intervention

A man who dealt drugs to the Brighton party scene has today had his sentence increased after the Solicitor General, Robert Buckland QC MP, referred it to the Court of Appeal for being too low.

Police were called to the flat of Daniel Lewis, 30, after Aimee Spencer, 27, fell from his kitchen window, sustaining injuries which resulted in her death. Lewis was under the influence of drugs when police arrived, and a search of the flat revealed large quantities of drugs and drug-related paraphernalia.

They also found information which led them to a rented garage where Lewis was storing more drugs. The drugs found included high-purity cocaine and prescription medications.

Lewis was originally sentenced in November 2018 to 2 years imprisonment

suspended for 2 years at Lewes Crown Court. He was also ordered to complete 300 hours of unpaid work, 15 days of rehabilitation activity requirements, and to be on curfew for 4 months. The Court of Appeal has today jailed Lewis for 3 years.

Commenting on the increase, the Solicitor General said:

“By selling large quantities of dangerous, high-purity drugs, Lewis was destroying the lives of others to support his own lavish lifestyle. I am pleased that the Court of Appeal has seen fit to bestow a custodial sentence on him today.”

[Press release: Minister for Europe calls for investigation into persecution of LGBT community in Chechnya](#)

The Minister for Europe's remarks come following further disturbing reports of the continued persecution of LGBT people in Chechnya, concerns which previously surfaced in 2017.

The most recent reports suggest that a further 40 individuals have been detained, alongside two deaths in custody following torture. These must be investigated urgently.

FCO Minister Sir Alan Duncan said:

The persecution of LGBT people in Chechnya is utterly appalling. Recent reports indicate that two people have died in custody following torture, and a further 40 remain in detention – all simply for their sexual orientation. Persecution for being LGBT, in any country in the world, is abhorrent.

The Russian authorities must protect their people from these human rights abuses, and conduct a credible investigation into these reports immediately. There should be no climate of impunity for those who commit these abuses.

We and the international community have repeatedly called for the Russian Government to conduct an investigation and hold those responsible for human rights abuses in Chechnya to account, including through the 2018 OSCE Moscow Mechanism.

All decent people very much hope that Chechnya can put an end to this sort of barbaric persecution and step into the modern world of civility and tolerance.

Following similar reports in 2017, the OSCE Moscow Mechanism, invoked by the UK and 15 other countries in 2018, set out recommendations to Russia. We urge the Russian Government to implement these recommendations as a matter of urgency, and to uphold its international human rights obligations to its people.

Further information

[News story: Welsh Government launches policy to deal with radioactive waste](#)



Engineers at work – Peirianwyr yn gweithio

Geological disposal is one of the UK's largest ever environmental protection projects, which will provide a safe and secure long-term solution for the disposal of higher activity radioactive waste.

In support of the [Welsh Government's policy announcement](#), RWM has published information for communities including:

In addition, we have also launched a consultation on how we will evaluate sites in Wales:

A community meeting – Cyfarfod cymunedol

Anyone interested in learning more about geological disposal and what it could mean for their community should visit our [website](#) or contact RWM via gdfenqcymru@nda.gov.uk

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Press release: St Helens estate agent jailed for 4-and-a-half years

Richard Charles Hall (45), from Ecclestone, St Helens, was sentenced on Monday 14 January at Liverpool Crown Court following a joint investigation between the Insolvency Service and Merseyside Police. In total, he was found guilty of seven offences.

Across two trials, in October and December 2018, the court heard that Richard Hall traded as an estate agent through the company Brooklands Sales and Lettings Limited.

However, Richard Hall defrauded several people to the value of more than £40,000 through his business dealings.

Richard Hall also dishonestly sold Brooklands Sales & Lettings Ltd in May 2014, claiming he owned the full company, despite having received investment from a third party. Furthermore, Richard Hall sold the business just two months before he was made bankrupt for a second time.

The court then heard that Richard Hall had first been made bankrupt in 2012, with the restrictions lifted in 2013. But when he was made bankrupt for a second time in July 2014, he attempted to undermine the Official Receiver's investigations into his affairs.

He tried to conceal a bank account from the Official Receiver and his shares in Brooklands and once investigators found the account, they discovered Richard Hall was operating a sole trader company called Brooklands Sales alongside the company he had sold unbeknownst to the new owners of Brooklands.

He then continued to thwart the Official Receiver's investigations into his bankruptcy. He told investigators that he never held shares in Brooklands, even though his name was on the public Companies House register.

And at court, he produced banking material intending to convince the Court that he had paid back monies for the sale of Brooklands.

His Honour Judge Watson QC commented that there should be a high degree of trust and integrity in estate agents but that in this case, Hall had lied and exploited others, while abusing his position of trust and responsibility.

The Judge added that Hall deliberately withheld important information from the Insolvency Service by concealing property then deliberately tried to pervert the course of justice

Prior to his sentence, Richard Hall had received a suspended prison sentence

in 2013 for possessing an offensive weapon in a public place and in 2015 he was also convicted of a battery offence.

John Fitzsimmons, Chief Investigator of Criminal Investigations for the Insolvency Service, said:

Richard Hall's behaviour has been deceitful and calculating throughout, whether that was defrauding landlords or undermining the Official Receiver from doing their job.

This has been an extensive investigation covering many areas of criminality and we welcome the sentence handed down by the courts, which we hope serves as a warning to those who think they can renege on their responsibilities toward the Insolvency Service when bankrupt.

Detective Inspector Steve Ball, Merseyside Police, said:

We are pleased that Richard Hall has been sentenced and hope it brings some comfort to the victims of his crimes that he is now behind bars.

Hall played on peoples trust, defrauding them of large sums of money and exploiting them for his own financial gain. This sentencing brings to an end an extensive investigation carried out together with the Insolvency service and I hope it reminds the public that we will always act on information about fraud to bring offenders to justice.

Victims may sometimes feel embarrassed about coming forward but I want to reassure people that we will treat any allegations with sensitivity and compassion, through specialist officers and alongside our partners.

If you have, or are being subjected to fraud, or feel like you, or someone you care for, is being scammed, please get in touch.

The first trial took place at Liverpool Crown Court on 9 October 2018 in connection with the landlord frauds. Richard Hall was found guilty of three fraud offences.

The second trial, also at Liverpool Crown Court, followed on 10 December 2018

and was held in connection with a further fraud offence, two counts of obstructing the Official Receiver by perjury and doing an act with intent to pervert the course of justice.

The Insolvency Service administers the insolvency regime, investigating all compulsory liquidations and individual insolvencies (bankruptcies) through the Official Receiver to establish why they became insolvent. It may also use powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK. In addition, the agency deals with disqualification of directors in corporate failures, assesses and pays statutory entitlement to redundancy payments when an employer cannot or will not pay employees, provides banking and investment services for bankruptcy and liquidation estate funds and advises ministers and other government departments on insolvency law and practice.

Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is [available](#).

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on: