



Media Information Pack

The National Memorial Arboretum located within the National Forest in Staffordshire is the Nation's year-round place to remember. Home to more than 420 memorials, the Arboretum is a dedicated space to celebrate lives lived and commemorate lives lost in service. It is an inspirational place where everyone can remember together.





About the Arboretum

The National Memorial Arboretum is a UK registered charity and part of the Royal British Legion. Since it opened to the public in 2001 it has grown into an inspirational living landscape, freely open to all.

Located in the heart of the country, within the National Forest in Staffordshire, the Arboretum's 150-acre site is home to approximately 25,000 maturing trees and over 420 memorials. It is a constantly evolving, inspirational living landscape that tells the extraordinary stories of service and sacrifice of members of the Armed Forces, Emergency Services, and civilian organisations.

Open 364 days a year, the Arboretum is managed by a dedicated team. Hundreds of volunteers also donate tens of thousands of hours of their time

in roles across the organisation. More than 300,000 visitors from all walks of life are welcomed each year, including service personnel, veterans, students, families, groups and individuals.

Hundreds of events are held at the site each year, organised by the Arboretum team and third parties. In addition to commemorative services, the Arboretum hosts seasonal activities, informative exhibitions, and celebratory events like Armed Forces Weekend and the Illuminated Arboretum winter light trail. These events and activities bring families and friends together to enjoy the woodlands and garden spaces, creating opportunities for reflection as they forge new memories.

The Arboretum's Millennium Chapel of Peace and Forgiveness is the only place in the UK where a two-minute Silence is observed daily at 11am as part of an Act of Remembrance. Everyone is invited to participate and reflect on the sacrifice of those who have given their lives in service to the Nation.

Opened in 2016, the award-winning Remembrance Centre provides a gateway to the Arboretum, offering excellent visitor facilities alongside exhibition galleries and dedicated learning spaces. It is complemented by Aspects, a purpose-built events and conference centre, which won VisitEngland's Business Events Venue of the Year 2023 (Gold) and provides a dedicated space for events of up to 500 people.

Armed Forces Memorial

Dedicated in the presence of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in October 2007, the Armed Forces Memorial is the UK's tribute to those from the Armed Forces who have given their lives in the service of the country since the end of the Second World War. On its walls are the engraved names of over 16,000 Armed Forces personnel who have been killed on duty, died in operational theatre, or as a result of terrorist action since 1945.

The names are arranged first by year and then in service order: Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force. The names are engraved in date order and alphabetically, ensuring that those who died together are recorded and

remembered together. Over 15,000 names were carved by computer when the memorial was constructed. Since 2007, subsequent names are engraved by hand each year and dedicated at a special service of Remembrance attended by the families of the fallen. The name and initials are shown without ranks, but where appropriate, honours such as the Victoria Cross are also included.

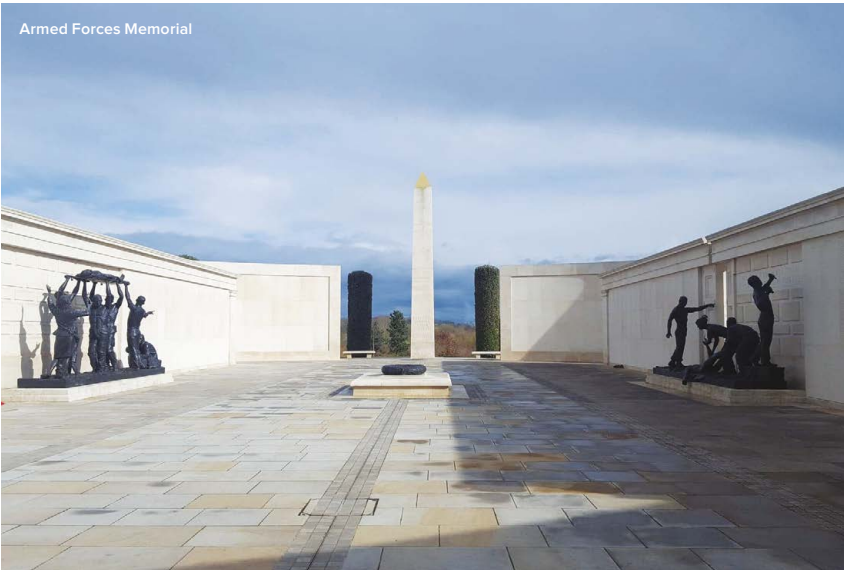
In recognition of Armistice Day, a gap has been left in the two southern walls which allows a shaft of sunlight to fall through onto the bronze wreath in the centre of the memorial at the eleventh hour, of the eleventh day, on the eleventh month of the year.



Awards

The Arboretum has received many awards for its grounds and visitor experience, most recently:

- Large Visitor Attraction of the Year (Gold) – Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Tourism Awards 2025
- Accessible & Inclusive Tourism Award (Silver) – Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Tourism Awards 2025
- Best UK Attraction - Group Leisure & Travel Awards 2021, 2022, 2023
- Experience of the Year (Tailor Made Tours) (Gold) – Enjoy Staffordshire Tourism & Good Food Awards 2024
- Large Visitor Attraction of the Year (Gold) – Enjoy Staffordshire Tourism & Good Food Awards 2024
- Business Events Venue of the Year (Aspects) (Gold) – VisitEngland Awards for Excellence 2024
- VisitEngland Gold Accolade 2024
- Green Flag Award 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025
- Green Innovation Business of the Year (Regional Winner) – Chamber Business Awards 2024



The Memorial Landscape

The Arboretum is home to a diverse collection of more than 420 memorials commemorating the service and sacrifice of the Armed Forces, Emergency Services, and civilian organisations.



UK Police Memorial



Shot at Dawn Memorial

Some of the most visited memorials include:

- Armed Forces Memorial
- UK Police Memorial
- 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
- Royal Air Forces Association Remembrance Garden (RAFA)
- 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
- Naval Services Memorial
- The Burma Railway Memorial
- The Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces Memorial



The Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces Memorial



Naval Services Memorial



Woman's Land Army and Timber Corps Memorial



The Sikh Memorial

Delivering a world-class visitor welcome

The Remembrance Centre serves as a gateway to the site, offering a suite of visitor amenities, including a Restaurant, Gift Shop, toilet facilities, Changing Places Facility and a separate Coffee Shop accessible from Heroes' Square. Three exhibition galleries and classrooms for learning groups are also located in the building.

Accessibility and inclusion sit at the heart of the Arboretum's charitable mission. By removing barriers to participation and championing inclusive programming, the Arboretum provides a welcoming space where the stories of everyone who has served our Nation are shared.

Seasonal Exhibition Programme – Engaging with Remembrance through art and storytelling

In addition to the Arboretum's permanent Landscapes of Life exhibition which introduces the site and explores the concept of Remembrance, a programme of seasonal exhibitions take place throughout the year.

These exhibitions provide new ways for visitors to engage with Remembrance through artistic and cultural mediums. Recent exhibitions have included:

VE Day Street Party at Cherry Tree Road

An immersive journey back in time to relive the sense of joy and community that swept across the country in 1945.

Through Their Eyes: 80 Years On

A powerful exhibition sharing the personal reflections of those who were still serving while the war continued in the Far East as peace returned to Europe following VE Day.

Letters From the Frontline

An exhibition produced in partnership with BBC radio stations across the Midlands, gives a voice to wartime correspondence, sharing the changing experiences and emotions of Armed Forces Personnel and their families during the final months of the Second World War.

Prisoners of War – A Chaplain's Portraits

A series of portraits drawn by Army Chaplain Fred Stallard during his time as a prisoner of war in the Far East, accompanied by personal stories that reveal the harsh realities of captivity and the fates of those depicted.



Major Annual Events

The Arboretum hosts a variety of events throughout the year, ranging from family-friendly activity days to poignant services of Remembrance. In June, a two-day celebration for Armed Forces Weekend honours all Armed Forces personnel and features live performances and activities for families. Armistice Day and Remembrance Sunday are significant events held at the Armed Forces Memorial, where a two-minute silence is observed at 11am. The service is broadcast on a large screen in Heroes' Square, ensuring everyone can participate. In December, Illuminated Arboretum takes visitors on a journey with a difference as mesmerising light and sound are used to bring the stories shared at the Arboretum to life in a meaningful and memorable way.



Learning and Participation – Passing on the baton of Remembrance to future generations

Visitors to the Arboretum come from a wide geographical area and its customer profile is diverse. Approximately 25,000 school children visit the Arboretum each year, many of whom engage with a programme of free activity days and workshops linked to the content themes explored onsite.

Commissioned programmes support life-long learning and spotlight previously hidden Remembrance stories, encouraging reflection, tolerance and understanding.



Talent in the Ranks, the Arboretum's artist development programme for serving personnel, veterans and military families, uses performance and creative reflection to share stories. Participants say that the programme is life-changing and has helped improve their wellbeing and build confidence.





The Woodland Landscape

Still a young Arboretum, the 150-acre site comprises woodlands, landscaped gardens and wildflower meadows. A large proportion of the 25,000 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 Horse 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 Arboretum has been awarded National Plant Collection status by Plant Heritage for its Hamamelis

(Witch Hazel) collection, and its Amelanchier collection holds Provisional status, with plans to apply for a full status within a year.

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

Charitable Objectives

The National Memorial Arboretum is a UK 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

Corporate Partnerships

From in-kind support, to volunteering, financial donations to advocacy, the Arboretum routinely partners with businesses and organisations to support the delivery of strategic projects. This has included the refurbishment of the iconic Shot at Dawn memorial and the creation of the Amelanchier Walk.

The National Memorial Arboretum can support the media 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 memorial holders

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