

Remembrance Service

A joint statement from Tatsfield Parish Council and David Bishop

2020 has been and continues to be an extremely difficult and unprecedented year with the Coronavirus pandemic affecting all aspects of our lives, not least public events.

We are acutely aware how important it is for the people of Tatsfield, and beyond, to pay their respects every year at this time. With this year being no exception plans have been in place for a ceremony in the village centre on Memorial Green on Saturday 7th November. However, as we all know, in September the Government revised its COVID guidelines to limit gatherings, both indoors and outdoors, to six people so together we have had to revise our plans.

At a recent meeting, we jointly decided that an event will still take place although it will not be in its usual format and, unfortunately, it will not be a public one as in the past. Instead, there will be no road closure this year and a team of six, effectively forming a bubble, will conduct the whole service on Memorial Green. There will not be a live band but instead recorded music from the Cenotaph service will be played and a lone bugler will sound the Last Post.

The wreath laying will unfortunately need to be very different from previous years. Instead of individuals or organisations laying their wreaths around the Memorial Stone in the usual way, people will be invited to leave their wreaths on the pavement outside Ye Old Ship on the morning of 7th November, before 10.30am. Several members of the 'bubble' will then transfer them across to Memorial Green before the start of the service. The roll of names will be read, as is customary, and the wreaths will be positioned around the memorial by members of the team, who will be using appropriate PPE to minimise the risk of infection. No one else will be allowed to access Memorial Green during the ceremony. Any spectators will need to observe from Westmore Green.

Of course, the wreaths will stay in place around the Memorial Stone for some time after the 7th November and all are welcome to take a closer look, at the same time observing appropriate social distancing.

The Parish Council and I understand that this is not quite the event many had in mind but we have worked really hard to provide a legally acceptable alternative service for all those for whom this annual Remembrance event has become such an important feature in Tatsfield village life.

David Bishop
Event Organiser

Tatsfield Parish Council