



**OCTOBER 2015**

**A UK national commemorative event to mark the Centenary of the Battle of the Somme will take place at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Thiepval Memorial, France, on 1 July 2016.**

The event will be led by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, on behalf of the UK Government, and the French Mission du Centenaire de la Première Guerre mondiale, on behalf of the French Government, in partnership with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and The Royal British Legion.

The memorial is situated in Northern France, and the event will take place at 12:00 (11:00 UK time). It is anticipated that there will be 10,000 attendees, with significant public attendance.

Given the high level of interest in attending, this will be a **ticketed event**, with a public ballot for tickets. **The ballot launched on 28 September 2015 and runs until 18 November 2015**, after which time no applications will be accepted.

Due to tight timings between events and security arrangements, people should plan on only being able to attend one event on 1 July 2016.

**Key information:**

- Applicants can enter the ballot through this website: [www.somme2016.org](http://www.somme2016.org)
- Guests must have a valid passport to attend the event. If you do not have a passport at the time of applying you have until 18 November to get one and to pass the details to the organisers
- The ballot is open to residents of the **UK or Ireland** only
- However, successful applicants will be able to bring a guest who is not a resident of the UK or Ireland
- The French Government are leading on the distribution of tickets for residents of France; for more information please contact: [somme2016@centenaire.org](mailto:somme2016@centenaire.org)
- Those organisations which traditionally attend and contribute to the commemorative service held at the memorial each year will be represented on 1 July 2016
- Participant nations will all be represented on 1 July 2016, including Commonwealth representatives
- Tickets are free and will be distributed in pairs to successful applicants
- Full terms and conditions of the ballot, as well as key dates and other information, are available on the website: [www.somme2016.org](http://www.somme2016.org)
- Arrangements for disabled access will be available
- While we would prefer to receive applications online, if this is not possible you can also submit a postal entry. To request a postal entry form please write to:

Somme 2016  
HPower Group  
Stable House  
St Albans Close  
Windsor  
Berks, SL4 1UT



You must complete and return the form before 18 November 2015. If you have entered the ballot online, you will receive an e-mail notification. If you have entered the ballot by post, you will receive a written acknowledgement

#### **Other information and ways to participate**

- Due to the limited space at the site of the Memorial it is unfortunately not possible to invite all those who would hope to be there on the day, and given the 72,000 names on the memorial, and the huge numbers of families affected by the Battle, it will also not be practical to give preference to those whose ancestors fought in the Battle.
- The number of people wishing to attend the event means that it is not possible to make group applications, and individuals travelling as part of a group should apply for tickets individually, in the same way as other applicants. All attendees will have to travel to the event via the park and ride, however we will try to ensure groups with tickets are able to arrive and depart together.
- There will be a number of other ways for members of the public to participate in the Centenary events, both in the UK and in France. Plans are being formulated to broadcast the event live on 1 July to large screens in a number of towns across the Somme region to enable as many people as possible to see the event, including those who are not successful in the ballot.
- In addition to the event at Thiepval, there will be a range of commemorative events at cemeteries and memorials across the region on 1 July and on other dates. Many towns and cities within the region also have plans to mark the Centenary of the battles; an overview of some of these can be found on the Somme Tourism website:  
<http://www.somme-battlefields.com/>
- There also will be a commemorative event held every day in the region for the 141 day duration of the Battle of the Somme, as well as a wide programme of events taking place in the UK to mark the Centenary. Further details about how to get involved with these commemorative events will be released soon, and more details can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/first-world-war-centenary>

<http://centenaire.org>