Wales Armed Forces Day 2025

Why should Abergavenny host Armed Forces Day Wales 25?

We are very aware, that in presenting a bid for holding the Wales Armed Forces Day in Abergavenny in 2025, we are taking on the task on behalf of Wales. If the event comes to our town we will show Wales and the rest of the UK that a small band of dedicated people can organise and run a spectacular event which will increase public support and appreciation of all those who serve and have served in HM Armed Forces.

We are a market town and on the face of it, have little contact with the military. But there is already a strong feeling for the military and for many sons and daughters of Abergavenny the military is still looked on as a worthwhile and rewarding career.

There is a growing determination that we deserve to be allowed to show our support for our Armed Forces.

There is a large percentage of people living in and around the town who served in the Armed Forces and we are capable of putting together an event which will be the envy of much bigger towns. Abergavenny boasts a new and popular Veterans Breakfast Club to supplement the Royal British Legion which will provide the bulk of the manpower and the steering committees so necessary for an undertaking of this magnitude. We will have two committees, one executive and one practical. We have a dedicated group of ex-service people who are used to organising and who understand the needs of both the military and the local community. Local business is also represented on the committees which will be invaluable in going out to Welsh business for sponsorship. One member of the committee who served as the Senior Public Information Officer at the Army’s HQ in Brecon also served on the committee which brought the first UK National AFD to Cardiff, and three subsequent Wales days after that. We also have invaluable support from the towns highly successful Steam Rally held in Bailey Park which attracts thousands of visitors from all over Wales, the Midlands and south of England.

Abergavenny is known as the Gateway to Wales, with good road and rail links from the Midlands and south of England. Links with the rest of Wales have been vastly improved with the new Heads of the Valleys road to the west, and the M4 links. Traffic routes from north Wales are also steadily improving.

Bailey Park is right in the centre of town and is well served with car parks. Drawing on the experience of the highly popular Steam Rally which runs in Bailey Park on the last Bank Holiday in May, we will have our own manned AFD car park in walking distance by the Thursdays football ground. We have the committed support of the Abergavenny Steam Rally Committee and its access to tentage, barriers, mobile toilets, communications, fire fighting equipment and external road signs.

We plan to have two committees, one gold, one silver. Gold will be the executive committee, with representation from all three services in Wales, county and town councils. This committee will be responsible for the input and commitment of the military and sponsorship under the aegis of a Sponsorship Manager. The chair of this committee will also chair the silver committee which will be the practical physical planning for the event. Sponsorship will be a Wales-wide commitment and really needs to start as soon as possible. A brochure will be produced, offering three tiers of sponsorship depending on the amounts involved.

We are conscious that we are showcasing the event for Wales, and we are showing the public support from Wales for the Armed Forces. But we will also be aiming to appeal to the very many people from across the border who will wish to join us in the celebration of our Armed Forces.

We will create a web site, and have a team dedicated to social media input, regular press releases to all news outlets, including the newspapers of Wales and the Marches, radio and TV stations. Wales Tourist Board will be approached for promotion of the event to people taking their holidays in Wales. Large hotel groups will be targeted to persuade them to include AFD as a grand day out during a stay in Wales. We had great success in the nineties with a town promotion based on the Marty Wilde song “Takin’ a Trip up to Abergavenny”.

Once the budget and sponsorship becomes clearer, printed material, leaflets, large posters will be circulated throughout Wales, the Marches and the big cities from Birmingham down to Bristol and Somerset, Bath and Swindon. Bus companies will be targeted to persuade them to offer a day trip, or a longer tour into Wales with Abergavenny the first stopping off place.

Armed Forces Day Wales 25 will be a big task and will need a dedicated team to truly do it justice. Here in Abergavenny we have that team, all volunteers and all dedicated to showing the support there is for our Armed Forces, past and present.

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME FOR WALES AFD25 ABERGAVENNY

Monday 23 June Flag raising ceremony Abergavenny Castle

Representatives from 3 Armed Services, Reserve and Cadets, Monmouthshire CC, Abergavenny Town Council

Invitation to local schools

24th – 27 June Sporting events involving service teams

 Rugby, Wales Borders XV versus 1 Royal Welsh

25th – 27th Three Day cricket match, Combined Services versus Monmouthshire Invitation team

25th June Combined Services display at King Henry VIII school

26th June Armed Forces Covenant and the Welsh NHS conference St Mary’s Priory

27th June Combined Services display in Brewery Yard car park behind Town Hall

 Royal Welsh band play in Market Hall

28th June 10.30 Parade forms up at 3rd Monmouthshire Regiment, War Memorial, Frogmore Street and salute taken outside Town Hall. Parade then proceeds down High Street, turning left into Cross Street, and dismissed in Bailey Park arena.

Contingents from Armed Forces, Reserve, Cadets, Veterans and standards, military bands.

Entertainment, activities and displays through the town.

12.00 Drum Head Service in the arena.

12.30 – 1600 A spectacular Military Village showcasing vehicles, equipment showcasing interactive displays.

Arena events to include active participation from Armed Forces. Selected local bands to play in a separate marquee during the afternoon.

Opportunities to meet armed forces charities and organisations to find out about their work and the support they provide. Displays from local companies.

Public beer tent and food concessions

1900 A Proms style music Concert in Market Hall, local artistes to support celebrity entertainer.

Participation from local organisations will be encouraged, for instance WI has already promised a display of wartime domestic cooking. A local dance club will demonstrate and invite volunteers for “new wartime dances from America”. Computer service to find old military records.