

Ian Lucas: Peter Mandelson's Oral Statement in the
House of Lords, 5 January 2009

Her Majesty The Queen's Diamond Jubilee

DRAFT

With permission Mr Speaker, I will repeat a brief and important statement made by my Rt Hon. and noble Friend, the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills about the Government's plans to mark Her Majesty The Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012.

My Lords, with your Lordships' permission, I would like to make a brief and important Statement about the Government's plans to mark Her Majesty The Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

2012 will be a landmark year for Her Majesty, Britain and the Commonwealth. Queen Victoria is the only British Monarch to have celebrated a Diamond Jubilee previously.

However modestly our present Queen might approach this celebration, I know that people across the whole country will want the chance to recognise this remarkable achievement; paying tribute to The Queen and celebrating with great pride and affection Her Majesty's sixty years on the throne.

It will also be an opportunity for us as a country to reflect on the incredible changes that have taken place, both here and around the world, over the last six decades.

We want this to be a nationwide celebration. And working with colleagues in Buckingham Palace and the Devolved Administrations, we are currently planning a series of fitting

events to enable communities all over the country to mark the Diamond Jubilee.

Although we are still in the early stages of organisation, I can confirm to the House that these celebrations will take place around the first week of June 2012.

In honour of Her Majesty, we will create a special Diamond Jubilee weekend - moving the late May Bank Holiday to Monday 4th June and adding an extra Bank Holiday on Tuesday 5th June.

In Scotland, national holidays are a devolved matter and we will work closely with the Scottish Government to help ensure that people across the United Kingdom can commemorate the Jubilee together.

In keeping with previous Jubilees, we also plan to issue a Diamond Jubilee medal. Over the next few months, we will be considering this in more detail.

In addition, we will be holding national competitions - to be launched later this year - for city status, a Lord Mayoralty and Lord Provostship.

Further details of these and other Government plans for the Diamond Jubilee are available online, via the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's website.

Finally, I can confirm that The Queen has agreed, as a mark of Royal favour, to confer Royal Borough status on the London Borough of Greenwich.

This rare honour is to be bestowed in recognition of the historically close links forged between Greenwich and our

Royal Family, from the Middle Ages to the present day, and the Borough's global significance as the home of the Prime Meridian, Greenwich Mean Time and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Further announcements will follow as our plans for the Diamond Jubilee are confirmed. This will be a truly historic occasion, a testament to the hard work and dedication of Her Majesty The Queen to this country and her people. We are committed to ensuring that celebrations take place, of which we can all be proud.