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My Lords, with your Lordships' permission, I would like to make a brief, but important Statement about the Government's plans to mark Her Majesty The Queen's Diamond Jubilee in 2012.

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

My Lords, we want this to be a nationwide celebration, and we are currently planning a series of fitting events to enable communities from all over the country to mark this 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.

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

In addition, My Lords, 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, My Lords, 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.

My Lords, 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 celebrations, of which Her Majesty and Britain can be proud.