

Thanks from No. 10

The Prime Minister expressed his thanks to the people of Wootton Bassett at an informal meeting this week when he invited Wootton Bassett Mayor, Councillor Mary Champion, to join him at No. 10 Downing Street.

Mr Cameron wanted to offer thanks to the residents of the Market Town for the unswerving respect shown to fallen military personnel who are repatriated and journey through their High Street.

The Mayor, who was accompanied by Deputy Mayor Councillor Paul Heaphy and Town Clerk, Johnathan Bourne, was pleased to accept Mr Cameron's invitation and said, "I am proud to represent the people of Wootton Bassett and to receive on their behalf the gratitude of the Prime Minister."

Nearby RAF Lyneham is set to close as a military base later this year, and mindful that the closure will also mean a coming to an end of the spontaneous gathering of Wootton Bassett residents, the Prime Minister also touched on how this might be marked. The possibility of a Parade in the town, which would be the second such event, was briefly discussed.

"An Appreciation Parade in October 2009, with Bands of the Army, Navy and the Royal Air Force, was wonderful," Mary Champion says, "and was really something very special in Wootton Bassett."

James Gray, MP for North Wiltshire, who is campaigning for the continued use of the Lyneham base, either by the Army or commercially, also joined the Mayor at the meeting.

"People from all over the country have expressed their support for the dignified way in which the people of Wootton Bassett stand quietly to pay their respects to those who have lost their lives," continued Councillor Champion, "It is something that many do in their own way wherever they may be."

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