



A picture tells a thousand words. Perhaps an overused phrase but not for War Memorials Trust.

Photographs are an important part of our work and used:

1. To assess the work that needs to be done to a war memorial which is the subject of a grant application
2. To assess the level of concern about the condition of a war memorial and to determine what action to take.

Therefore supplying good quality images allows the Trust to speed up its work and respond more quickly. This helpsheet is designed to assist you in taking the right type of photographs for War Memorials Trust. It should be read in conjunction with the examples shown on our website at www.warmemorials.org/photographs.

Please note, we do not keep photographs of war memorials where there is no cause for concern or for general recording and information purposes. On occasion we will forward photographs to the UK National Inventory of War Memorials if we think it is more appropriate for them to be held there. We will let you know if we pass them on.

Taking photographs

Grant assessments rely heavily on the photographs provided as the charity does not have the capacity to visit every applicant. Good photographs will help your application be processed more quickly and enable us to make informed decisions. We need to see evidence that the works you are proposing to do are for genuine conservation problems and the extent of those problems.

If you are taking photographs to support a grant application or to report a concern, please ensure you have the following:

- The memorial in its surroundings
- The war memorial in full
- The problem areas where work needs to be done
- The inscriptions

The surroundings

Whenever possible, or relevant, take into account the background and surrounding features. Is there a difference if you take it with the street in front of you or behind you? Is there a nice garden or flowerbed surrounding it? It may not be relevant, for example if you are photographing a plaque on a wall, but it is always worth checking.

If possible, avoid distracting additions to your photographs such as cars and people.

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The war memorial

It sounds obvious but it is important you get the whole war memorial in your photographs. Some freestanding war memorials are very high so can only fit in the frame if taken from some way back or if you take the photograph from lower down looking up. A photograph of a war memorial without its top is not much good to us!

However, if the memorial is not that large, you have to make sure you are not too far away. Filling the frame often makes for a better photograph.

Problem areas

Often the Trust receives blurred photographs of unidentifiable sections of memorials. The main areas where work needs to be done need to be identified so it is important to have close ups that are in focus and clearly labelled. We do not need a photograph of every single crack or loose piece of mortar, but clear, good quality representative examples.

Weather conditions

A glorious sunny day is obviously a great time to take photographs but there are different factors that can influence the quality of a photograph. Generally early morning or late afternoon are the best times to take a photograph. The midday sun can be too bright for the right balance. Keeping the sun behind you is a useful rule of thumb although you need to keep an eye on your shadow. If it is an overcast day then try to avoid too much sky appearing in your pictures; this stops the photograph looking washed out against a dull background.

Flash photography

Although flash might enhance a photograph in the right conditions, it can also sometimes work against it. A reflective surface, such as a glass cabinet containing a roll of honour, will send the light straight back. Stand slightly to the side, or take the photograph at an angle – taking the photograph opposite such a surface will not work. Similarly shadows can be generated if you are too close to a wall or partition.

Digital vs. film

We accept most formats although we prefer digital images where possible. If you do send us digital images please make sure they are high quality. If you have access to photo software programmes please send at least 72dpi resolution, preferably 300dpi, and not exceeding 3MB each. Jpeg, Bitmap or TIF formats are accepted.

If you are sending hard copy pictures please print them on photograph paper as plain white paper can mean the images appear low quality. Please note we will not return prints to you unless you specifically request this. Make sure you put the name or reference number, your name and the date taken either on the back or in the title of a digital file.

Copyright and labelling

It is very helpful if War Memorials Trust has your permission to use photographs in publicity material, the Bulletin, online etc. so if you are happy for us to do so then please let us know.

Whenever you send War Memorials Trust photographs please ensure they are submitted with your details. This ensures we can identify the photographer and credit whenever necessary.

Please note that this helpsheet is intended to offer informal advice and is a distillation of experience. The information contained in this helpsheet is not exhaustive and other sources of information are available.