

Royal support for the national campaign to reduce war memorial theft

In Memoriam 2014 was delighted to welcome War Memorials Trust's Patron HRH The Duchess of Cornwall to the Royal Artillery Memorial. Her Royal Highness marked the memorial with SmartWater as part of a national campaign to protect war memorials.

Metal theft is currently estimated to be costing the UK economy in excess of £700million every year and cash-strapped local authorities are paying out hundreds of thousands of pounds a year to repair damage caused by metal thieves who have targeted historic buildings, including schools, churches and cemeteries.

[In Memoriam 2014](#) is a partnership between War Memorials Trust and the SmartWater Foundation to provide greater protection to war memorials across the UK. Each sculpture and plaque on the memorial will be forensically marked with SmartWater, assigning them with a state-of-the-art forensic signature that can only be seen under UV light. Once applied SmartWater is virtually impossible to remove and can withstand burning, sand blasting and long term exposure to UV.

Launched in November 2011 In Memoriam 2014 is offering SmartWater free of charge to the custodians of the estimated 100,000 war memorials across the country. Many war memorials have already been protected and In Memoriam 2014 is calling upon anyone yet to take up this offer to ensure their war memorial is protected.

HRH The Duchess of Cornwall met representatives of War Memorials Trust, the SmartWater Foundation and English Heritage, War Memorials Trust's Regional Volunteers who have been promoting the project in their communities and schoolchildren, from Knights Templar School in Baldock, engaged with war memorials through the Trust's educational work.

In Memoriam 2014 was launched to coincide with the forthcoming centenary of the First World War. The nation's valued war memorials are under increasing threat from thieves and vandals attempting to steal metal from monuments. Despite the metal having relatively little monetary value it is estimated that on average one war memorial a week is being targeted by thieves looking to illegally remove bronze, copper or other metals to sell on for scrap.

English Heritage is the custodian of the Royal Artillery Memorial and recently undertook a conservation project on the monument. It has given its permission for the memorial to be marked.

War Memorials Trust's Director, Frances Moreton, said: "War Memorials Trust greatly appreciates the support of HRH The Duchess of Cornwall. In Memoriam 2014 offers a simple and free way for communities to protect their war memorials. It is stimulating a greater awareness and recognition of this unique aspect of our national heritage which will play a significant role in the next few years as the nation turns its attention to commemorating the centenary of World War I."

Sir Keith Povey QPM, Chairman of the SmartWater Foundation, said: "The SmartWater Foundation is delighted to be working with War Memorials Trust on this project and we are hugely proud of what has been achieved thus far. War memorials are focal points for commemoration and we will continue to do all we can to protect these important symbols of our heritage. As the centenary of the First World War approaches, In Memoriam 2014 continues to encourage communities to reconnect with their local war memorials and remember the sacrifice that so many people made for their country."

English Heritage's Chief Executive, Simon Thurley, said: "English Heritage is pleased to welcome Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Cornwall to the Royal Artillery Memorial today. As the Great War and even World War II begin to recede from living memory, war memorials are more important than ever and yet the rise of metal theft puts them at greater risk than ever. We need to do all that we can to deter these crimes against the memory of those who gave their lives for this country."

Anyone wishing to take part in this project or register a war memorial can visit www.inmemoriam2014.org for more information.

ENDS

For more information, please contact

War Memorials Trust:

Frances Moreton, Director
T: 020 7834 0200 / 07586 920 153
E: frances@warmemorials.org
W: www.warmemorials.org

SmartWater Foundation:

Annette Gaykema, Project Officer
T: 07990 936 276
E: enquiry@inmemoriam2014.org
W: www.inmemoriam2014.org

English Heritage:

Beth McHattie, Head of Media
T: 020 7973 3254 / 07850 608994
E: Beth.mchattie@english-heritage.org.uk
W: www.english-heritage.org.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

- The SmartWater Foundation is donating a unique SmartWater forensic solution for the exclusive use of the 'In Memoriam 2014' project at no cost.
- The dramatic increase in the price of metals such as copper has been caused by soaring demand around the world, but especially in nations such as China.
- Metal theft is currently estimated to be costing the UK economy in excess of £700million every year
- Cash-strapped local authorities are paying out hundreds of thousands of pounds a year to repair damage caused by metal thieves who have targeted historic buildings, including schools, churches and cemeteries.
- SmartWater solution has been used to convict many criminals for crimes ranging from armed robbery to metal theft throughout the UK (for more information, visit www.smartwater.com).

About War Memorials Trust

War Memorials Trust works for the protection and conservation of war memorials in the UK. They provide advice and information to anyone with a war memorial enquiry as well as running grant schemes for the repair and conservation of war memorials. It is a registered charity with relies entirely on voluntary contributions to undertake its work. For further information visit www.warmemorials.org or telephone 0300 123 0764.

About The SmartWater Foundation

The SmartWater Foundation Ltd is a not for profit company established and funded solely by SmartWater Technology Ltd. The Foundation provides charitable donations of equipment and services to the UK law enforcement agencies in support of local crime reduction initiatives within hard-pressed communities.

About English Heritage

English Heritage has been running a heritage crime programme for two years with the aim of reducing the criminal damage to the nation's heritage. Under the strategic guidance of English Heritage, the Association of Chief Police Officers and the Crown Prosecution Service, a nationwide alliance is developing among enforcement bodies, local authorities, non-governmental organisations, professional groups and amenity societies to systematically tackle and reduce offences such as architectural theft, including metal theft, criminal damage, illegal metal detecting, graffiti, vehicle nuisance and arson. For further information visit www.english-heritage.org.uk/heritagecrime

