

News statement



War Memorials Trust

Government funding for war memorials

Date: Tuesday 24th October 2017

Status: Immediate release

Starts

War Memorials Trust registered as a charity in May 1997. Since then, it has relied on the generous donations from individuals, members, charitable trusts and others to enable it to support communities protect and conserve their war memorials. The charity acts as a facilitator, helping the custodians of the estimated 100,000 war memorials across the UK.

War memorials have always been the responsibility of the communities of those who erected them, whether these be geographical, work places, faith groups or other types of community. Public subscription paid for these memorials with people donating and communities, often led by committees, deciding on design, location and arrangements for their own war memorials. There has never been a national directive around war memorials – local people make decisions, which is why the UK's war memorial heritage is so amazingly varied.

Through the centenary of World War I, the charity has received one-off additional funding through the First World War Memorials Programme supported by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. This funding has enabled the charity to support the distribution of an extra £2 million of grant funding for repair and conservation works to First World War memorials in the UK. In addition, the Centenary Memorials Restoration Fund in Scotland, supported by Historic Environment Scotland and the Scottish government, has seen a further £1 million available for grants to all types of war memorials in Scotland.

War Memorials Trust has greatly appreciated this additional money to distribute during a period of heightened interest in the nation's war memorial heritage. The centenary of World War I has generated increased demand, which could not have been met without this funding. The charity, its supporters and beneficiaries are grateful for this.

However, the charity recognises that this is a one-off situation related to the centenary. It is important that the connection between local communities and their war memorials is not lost. The charity has never given grants to cover project costs fully because it feels that local communities should have some engagement with the fundraising for, or payment of, the works needed on their memorials to retain their involvement with them. Those who lost loved ones paid for these memorials; their maintenance, repair and conservation is our shared ongoing tribute today.

Following the centenary of World War I, and the end of the levels of government funding currently received, War Memorials Trust will revert to its previous position of seeking funds through its own fundraising efforts. It has been fundraising through the centenary alongside the government funding as that government support has been for additional activity rather than the Trust's core activity. The charity's ability to make grants post centenary will depend on the funding it can secure and it is currently undertaking a strategic review to identify how it will deliver its work post centenary. War Memorials Trust hopes that those who support its efforts to protect and conserve war memorials will donate or become members of the charity to 'do their bit'.

Ends

Contact

Frances Moreton, Director War Memorials Trust

Telephone: 020 7834 0200 / 07586 920 153

Email: frances@warmemorials.org

Website: www.warmemorials.org / www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk

Notes to editors

1. War Memorials Online is seeking to create a greater understanding of the condition of war memorials. Identifying war memorials in 'Poor' or 'Very bad' condition will help target resources at those memorials that need help. The public can also raise concerns through the website which are passed to War Memorials Trust to follow up. The map search on the website can be searched to show war memorial condition in your local area, www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/memorials.
2. War Memorials Trust is an independent registered charity. Established in 1997 due to concerns about neglect and vandalism, it works to protect and conserve war memorials. It provides advice, information and administers grants schemes that assist the repair and conservation of war memorials across the UK. As a charity the Trust relies on voluntary contributions to undertake its work. Supporters include annual and life members, donors, charitable trusts and corporate contributors.