



The question of ownership or custodianship of war memorials can be quite difficult to answer. However, the following points offer some guidance about establishing ownership.

- **Research the history of the war memorial**

As the majority of war memorials were created by public subscription through committees formed for their commissioning (and usually dissolved after completion), the ownership can only be established if a formal transfer of responsibility occurred after the war memorial's dedication/creation.

War Memorials Trust recommends researching the history of the war memorial to establish if a formal transfer occurred. The majority of war memorials were created by a local community. These communities maybe geographical or based on a workplace, place of worship, school or social group. Therefore research will need to be focussed on that community. Use local sources of information (e.g. parish records, local archives at libraries and museums, local newspaper archives, company records, etc). Please see War Memorials Trust's 'Researching the history of a war memorial' helpsheet for further information.

You could also contact the War Memorial Register (c/o Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ, T: 020 7207 9851, E: memorials@iwm.org.uk, W: www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/search). The Inventory aims to compile a comprehensive record of all war memorials in the UK and may hold information about your war memorial.

If the war memorial is located in the premises or grounds of a particular group or organisation (e.g. a place of worship, bank, post office, scout hut, etc) then contact the relevant authorities to establish if they are responsible for the memorial.

- **The law and war memorials**

If a formal transfer of ownership at any point in the war memorial's history cannot be established, then the War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act of 1923 and subsequent amendments enables local councils to carry out work to war memorials within their area whether they officially 'own' them or not. However, please note that, although this Act gives such powers to local authorities it does not give an obligation to do so. Please see War Memorials Trust's 'Parliamentary acts related to war memorials' helpsheet for further information.

The Trust would suggest contacting the Conservation Officer at your local authority (normally in the conservation or planning departments) for further clarification on their involvement with local war memorials.

If you are concerned about a war memorial and cannot conclusively establish ownership/custodianship, please contact the Conservation Officer at War Memorials Trust for further advice.

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