

Public statement



War Memorials Trust

Western Road war memorial street trees

Date: 8th August 2017

War Memorials Trust is aware of the ongoing discussion about the future of the war memorial street trees on Western Road in Sheffield.

War Memorials Trust believes that war memorials should be protected and conserved for future generations. Many war memorials were paid for by public subscription then subsequently managed by a local custodian. Each and every war memorial is a unique representation of a community's act of remembrance and should be treasured. The estimated 100,000 war memorials in the UK come in many different shapes and forms creating a multitude of repair and conservation challenges which mean that each case is dealt with by the charity on its own merits. With a very small team of Conservation Officers the charity seeks to provide advice and guidance, underpinned by best conservation practice, to all those engaged with their war memorial heritage.

The charity was first alerted to concerns about the Western Road trees in November 2016. Since then it has provided advice to the public, engaged with the council and given information on available grants. It has monitored the situation and tried to offer its input as appropriate to its resources and remit.

In response to the Scrutiny Task and Finish Working Group report of May 2017 War Memorials Trust notes references to the charity with the main section on page 10. War Memorials Trust would confirm that:

- the charity would encourage the preservation of the original trees wherever possible as they have a direct link with those who lost family and friends. Appropriate maintenance should be undertaken to ensure these are managed within their environment
- if there is evidence that trees need to be replaced then trees of appropriate age, size, number and species type should be used to replace those removed
- if there is interest in reinstating trees previously lost this could be eligible for funding through grant schemes administered by War Memorials Trust. However, the charity is currently advising all those interested in grants that due to the centenary of World War I demand for grants is at record levels and it is not guaranteed that all eligible applications will be successful as available funding is limited. Detail of grants, and how to apply, can be found at www.warmemorials.org/grants
- the charity believes that decisions about war memorials should involve the community and the custodian. The Trust is an independent charity without any legal powers so cannot make decisions or force anyone to undertake a specific approach. As a conservation charity which gives grants, best conservation practice and respect for our shared war memorial heritage underpins advice and guidance given

As War Memorials Trust is aware of a potential grant application in regard to the Western Road trees the charity may be limited in the comments it can make about this case to avoid prejudging any assessment. The charity's Trustees are engaged with this case and staff are referring information as appropriate for their consideration.

Further details about this war memorial can be seen, and added to, at:
www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/memorial/249382

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