



War memorials are extremely emotive objects and, as a result, the issue of their relocation can be controversial and needs to be handled sensitively.

War Memorials Trust believes that, where possible, a war memorial should be preserved in its original location. The relocation of a memorial can be a high risk, as well as an expensive, project. The Trust only supports the relocation of a war memorial if its current position is putting the memorial at risk or if it is no longer accessible to the public for commemoration. It is important to think seriously about whether your war memorial **needs** to be relocated.

## Points for consideration

If relocation is the only option, then you should consider the following points:

- **Research the history**

Use local sources (e.g. parish records, local archives at libraries or museums, local newspaper archives) to establish the history of the memorial. Check whether the memorial was put in its current location for a specific reason; that there are no other items at the site (e.g. some have time capsules beneath them); that there are no legal requirements/legacies attached to the old and/or new site of the memorial; and that the proposed new site does not compromise the original intentions of the community or the memorial's original design.

- **Record the memorial**

Take photographs and make a record of the memorial in its current location, paying particular attention to the inscriptions, before any work begins in case it is damaged.

- **Establish 'ownership'**

Use local sources to establish if there is a formal transfer of 'ownership' to a community body (e.g. parish council, local trust, etc) in order to obtain permission for relocation. If this cannot be established, then the War Memorials (Local Authorities' Powers) Act of 1923 and subsequent amendments allow a local authority to carry out work to a war memorial within its area whether it 'owns' it or not and you may need to obtain permission from them. If the memorial is located in a place of worship or in its grounds then you may need to obtain permission from the relevant religious authority to relocate.

- **Check the listed status**

Check with the Conservation Officer at your local authority if the war memorial is listed or attached to a listed building. If it is then you will need listed building consent from the local planning authority before the memorial can be moved.

- **Notify the community**

The erection of war memorials has traditionally been organised by the local community. There are no set 'rules' and communities make their own decisions about their memorial. As a result,

decisions about the future of war memorials are generally felt to be the responsibility of the local community. The Trust strongly recommends that the local community is made aware of the relocation **before** any work begins (via a local newspaper, newsletter, notice board, etc).

- **Employ an experienced professional**

Always use a suitably qualified conservation/restoration practice to advise about the practicalities of relocation and to establish the costs of works. See War Memorials Trust's 'Conservation contacts' helpsheet for further information. You may also need to employ an architect or structural engineer so allow for the costs of their services. The Trust recommends that you obtain more than one quote for the works.

- **Establish a programme of works**

Before any work begins, clearly set out the steps of your project in order to avoid starting a project which cannot be finished. These should include: identifying and preparing the new site **before** dismantling; drawing up a detailed schedule of works for dismantling, moving, temporarily storing and re-erecting the memorial; identifying any restoration work needed once the memorial is in its new location; establishing that your contractor has the experience to complete the project; and making plans for the future of the memorial.

## After relocation

- **Plan for the future**

Establish a management plan for the future maintenance of the war memorial in its new site and consider insuring it. Contact the Trust's Conservation Officer for further maintenance information.

- **Inform the UK National Inventory of War Memorials**

The Inventory aims to compile a comprehensive record of all the war memorials in the UK. They should be informed of the relocation of a memorial once it is established in its new site (c/o Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ, T: 020 7207 9851, E: [memorials@iwm.org.uk](mailto:memorials@iwm.org.uk), W: [www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/search](http://www.iwm.org.uk/memorials/search))

## Finding new locations

- Think about the size and nature of your memorial and what will be required to maintain it.
- If applicable, contact the headquarters of your church/company to check if there are procedures in place for the preservation of memorials.
- Contact other similar organisations within the same geographical area (e.g. other churches in the same village or closest village).
- Contact local public buildings, such as libraries, museums, council-run buildings, the local town hall, community centres, etc.
- Ask the local community for suitable suggestions via a local newspaper, newsletter, etc.
- Contact local schools to ask if they have space to accommodate the memorial.
- Ask the local branch of the Royal British Legion or local ex-service clubs for suitable locations. You can find these in your local telephone directory.
- Contact the Conservation Officer at the local authority for advice.

## Funding the relocation

The Trust's grants scheme can help with the relocation of war memorials. Please contact the Conservation Officer to discuss the eligibility of your project. You may also wish to fundraise locally for your project. Please see War Memorials Trust's 'Helping your fundraising' helpsheet for further information.